

# Socialist Worker

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## MINERS KILLED FOR PROFITS DEATH IN THE MINES



ORANGEVILLE, UT—  
On Wednesday, December 19, a mine fire sealed the escape route of 22 miners and 5 company officials at the Willberg mine, owned by the Emery Mining Company.

Five days later, rescue attempts were abandoned. All 27 were dead, and the continuing fire made rescue attempts futile.

### RECORD

The miners died attempting to set a one-day production record for longwall coal mining. The longwall method produces high yields of coal by mechanically stripping the coal from extended veins. Emery already held the single-day record of 14,699 tons—set on August 13, 1979.

"What the hell's the push for production when people's lives are at stake?" exclaimed Annette Grimm, a relative of one of the miners.

Calling the deaths a "senseless tragedy," Richard Trumka, president of the United Mine Workers, which represents the Emery miners, blamed management's emphasis on increased production.

"When a coal operator becomes so concerned with setting short-term coal production records, safety is made an afterthought and miners are needlessly killed."

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# HEALTH CARE IN THE U.S.: FOR PROFIT, NOT NEED

By Dr. Dena Magoulias

Shortly after his inauguration in 1981, Reagan promised that "those who must depend on the rest of us—the poverty-stricken, the disabled, the elderly, all those with true need—can rest assured that the social safety net of programs they depend on are exempt from any cuts."

But Reagan has not kept his promise. He recently announced that in order to lower a growing federal budget deficit without decreasing military spending he was going to cut Medicare by \$2.8 billion in 1986 and Medicaid by \$1 billion.

## TARGETS

Medicare and Medicaid have been targets for budget-cutters for years. In the 1930s, a study proved the obvious—that health care was distributed according to income, with the rich seeing a physician two times as often as low-income people. Illness was bankrupting families, and hospitals were forced to close during times of economic depression.

The American public has favored a national health service to provide free health care to all. But the American Medical Association has defeated every bill proposed, calling it "socialized medicine." Private insurance began expanding to the working and middle classes in the 1940s, but left the poor and elderly still uncovered. Medicaid and Medicare, finally enacted in 1965, were compromise measures to satisfy demands by unions, civil rights and senior citizens groups for equal health care.

Medicare covers those people over the age of 65 and those on disability. It is funded by the Social Security tax. Part A covers hospitalization, and Part B, which is optional coverage paid for by the individual, partially covers doctor's bills.

Medicare actually pays less



Health care workers often must strike for higher pay and better patient care.

than 50% of the health care bills of the elderly—not covering preventive care, eye-glasses, hearing aids, dental services, prescription drugs or nursing home expenses. The average senior citizen on Medicare pays \$1,500 per year out of his or her own pocket for medical expenses.

## POOR

Medicaid covers the eligible poor—those on Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the disabled or the impoverished elderly. It is paid for by federal and state matching funds from income taxes.

About a third of the poor do not qualify for Medicaid due to eligibility requirements which are becoming more stringent all the time. The poor who do not qualify are adults between the ages of 21 and 64 who are not parents of minor children, two-parent families who do not meet the AFDC test of unemployment, undocumented workers and working people without health benefits.

Medicaid and Medicare have helped to improve access to health care—with the rich and poor now visiting clinics with about equal frequency. However, because many doctors refuse to accept Medicaid reimbursement (which is lower than Blue Cross and other private insurance programs) the poor usually must go to hospital clinics, which means travelling long distances, long waits and impersonal care.

In a capitalist country, the medical system is based on profit. So it was inevitable that the Medicaid and Medicare programs would be exploited.

While the poor used to be treated as charity cases, if they were treated at all, doctors and hospitals soon found they could charge exorbitant rates to Medicaid and Medicare to care for these same patients. The "customary charges" of physicians rose until now doctors make an average of \$108,000 a year.

## FINANCE

Medicaid began paying for

unnecessary hospitalizations and tests—charges which helped finance hospital and nursing home expansion. In 1980, hospitals collected \$36 billion (one-third of their total revenues) from Medicare and Medicaid, nursing homes collected \$11 billion (greater than one-half total revenues), and doctors collected \$10 billion (21% of total revenues).

Federal spending for Medicare and Medicaid rose from \$4 billion in 1965 to \$65.7 billion in 1980. State and local spending grew from \$4.8 billion to \$31.3 billion. Some of this rise in cost resulted from the increasing numbers of elderly and poor, inflation, and high-technology equipment. However, much of the cost was an inevitable result of profiteering.

Medicaid, because it covers low-income people with little political power, has long borne the brunt of budget cuts. It is supported by state and federal taxes and taxpayers often do not want to support a program they do not benefit from. Since

there are no federal guidelines, Medicaid coverage is controlled by individual states. Until recently, states like Arizona provided no coverage, while New York had generous coverage.

Medicare, on the other hand, has more public support since it covers elderly from all social classes and all will eventually benefit from it. It is federally controlled, so its provisions are consistent throughout the country. However, now Reagan is even cutting Medicare.

## LOGICAL

The most logical solution would be to take medicine out of the realm of profit-making ventures and create a publicly controlled national health service. Under such a service, Medicaid, Medicare and private medical insurance would be eliminated.

Everyone would have free health care without having to show an insurance or identification card. Rich and poor, young and old would be treated alike. Doctors would be salaried employees, and hospitals would be publicly owned so that profiteering would end.

This health service could easily be financed by money that is now going to pay for redundant nuclear weapons.

It is up to us not only to fight Medicaid and Medicare cuts but to go further and demand that a national health service be developed.

In recent years, there have been many attempts to contain costs and access to Medicaid and Medicare. Some of the proposals include:

- Freezing reimbursement rates to doctors and hospitals which can limit quality of care.
- Restricting eligibility (many states have raised the income limit necessary to qualify for Medicaid, and there is talk of raising the age of Medicare to 67).
- Raising the price of Part B of Medicare—already Part B only covers 80% of doctors' bills.
- Introducing deductibles which force patients to pay a percentage of Medicare hospital bills.
- Instituting utilization review procedures in which hospital patients' records are reviewed to prevent hospitals from padding expenses and prolonging stays.
- Instituting "diagnostically related groups"—payment plans by which hospitals are reimbursed prospectively according to what it should cost to care for a patient with a certain disorder.
- Requiring pre-admission screening so that elective admissions would have to be approved beforehand to avoid unnecessary hospitalizations.
- Requiring certification of need before a hospital can expand.

## New York nursing home workers win a partial victory

NEW YORK, NY—A ten week strike by nearly 2,000 private nursing home workers has defeated their employers' associations' attempts to bust Local 144 of the Hotel, Hospital Nursing Home and Allied Services Unions.

The three-year contract ratified November 30, 1984, includes a 6.5 percent pay raise retroactive to July 15, 1984, and a 7 percent increase on July 15, 1985—more than double the wage increase New York City is offering to public hospital employees and other non-uniformed city workers.

The nursing home bosses, represented by the Southern New York Health Care Facilities Association, also lost in their bid to assume control of the workers' health and pension funds. Instead they settled for joint employer-

union administration, which is standard in other Local 144 contracts.

But the new pension board undermines Local 144's future bargaining strength. In the past, all wage and benefit standards were set in Local 144's contracts with the much larger Greater New York Health Care Facilities Association, which includes more than 60 nursing homes.

Separate negotiations with different employers in the state industry can only sap a union's strength.

The contract also allows the Southern Association to sharpen divisions on the shop floor. Lump sum ratification bonuses included \$275 for blue collar workers, \$375 for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and \$425 for Registered Nurses (RNs).

The employers' leverage in the contract stems from

Local 144 officials' unwillingness for an immediate stand against concessions. Union leaders kept workers on the job even after the Southern Association stopped paying into the union pension fund when the old contract expired last March 30.

## SOLIDARITY

Local 144 president Peter Ottley passed up a chance to bring out the nursing home workers in solidarity with District 1199's 50,000 striking hospital workers, remaining at the bargaining table for over five months.

"That was the union's first big mistake," said Ngen Brito, a cook at Manhattan American Nursing Home for 14 years.

"We should have been out there together." Meanwhile, nursing home bosses prepared for a strike.

Despite cold autumn weather, and several incidents of police brutality, rank and file solidarity stymied the bosses' attempt to break Local 144. Only about a dozen of American's 250 workers crossed the picket line.

Complaints from patients and their families also forced the Southern Association to moderate its demands and settle.

But the workers' partial victory has only postponed the employers' offensive. The rank and file of Local 144 must begin to organize for the 1986 negotiations now—the experience of 1984 has shown that the union officials will not do so.

As American Nursing Home worker Benjamin Rodriguez pointed out during the walk-out, "If the union doesn't get pressured, they hold back the strike." □

# Reagan's budget: more guns, less butter

Declaring "I am willing to lead the charge," Ronald Reagan unveiled a long list of budget cuts last month which he expects to get from a compliant Congress in 1985.

And it is plain to see where he's leading the charge: directly into programs which benefit workers and the poor.

## STAGGERING

The cuts are nothing short of staggering, totalling \$34 billion. They include:

- A 5% slash of all 2.1 million federal civilian workers' pay.
- Elimination of cost-of-living increases for almost 50 programs, including veterans' pensions, food stamps, child nutrition and supplementary aid to the elderly poor.
- Elimination of urban and community development aid, legal services for the poor, and the Job Corps training programs.
- A "freeze" or cuts into programs for educational aid to the poor and disabled, the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program, college financial aid, and Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements for hospital care for the aged and poor.

And the list goes on. Congressional Democrats rushed to show "fiscal responsibility" by endorsing the budget-slashing spirit of the Reagan wish-list.

"We will be constructive and open to compromise as we have been in the last two congresses," said House Speaker Tip O'Neill.

## "COMPROMISE"

In the last two congresses, being "constructive" and "open to compromise" meant that large blocs of Democrats went for Reagan's unprecedented attack on federal social programs. In fact, Democrats provided the margin of victory for Reagan's plans in 1981, which succeeded in lopping 450,000 people from welfare assistance rolls.

The leadership of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the major government workers' union, has opted to oppose the wage concessions with a lobbying

effort. Rather than preparing for a strike, AFSCME leaders passed out petitions to bolster the pressure AFSCME lobbyists are hoping to exert when the Congress opens again in January.

Reagan says the slashing is necessary to bring down the more than \$200 billion budget deficit which threatens to pull down the current economic "recovery."

A "freeze" on spending for a number of government programs actually means a cut in food and housing aid as living costs increase. As a Reagan administration official put it, "From a public relations stance, we don't mind the word freeze, but in reality, it's a misnomer."

## MILITARY

Reagan has ruled out major cuts in the military budget—the chief cause of the deficit in the first place—and Social Security old-age pensions. That leaves approximately 20% of the budget open to cuts—the part which includes all social programs tailored to workers and the poor.

Some right-wing ideologues have called for the complete abolition of all such programs. The Reagan strategy is a watered-down version of that prescription.

The experience of the 1981-1982 Reagan cuts should suggest what is in store for the future. Since 1981, government spending on poverty programs has decreased by more than 7%. Owing to the Reagan cuts, more than a million people lost food stamp assistance—at a time when the economy fell into the worse recession since the 1930s.



Real disposable income of the poorest fifth of the population declined by 8% since 1981 due to the impact of the cuts and of pro-rich changes in the tax code.

"Everyone — Republicans and Democrats alike—knows that poverty programs bore the brunt of cuts in 1981 and 1982," said Urban Institute economist Isabel Sawhill. "And they know that poverty has been going up."

Official Census Bureau poverty figures place the number of Americans below the poverty line at 35 million—more than 15% of the population and up from 1973's low of 11.1%. Congressional studies show that nearly one in four Americans—and a majority of the elderly—would fall below the poverty line without government income-support programs.

## MEAN-SPIRITED

Mean-spirited as these attacks on the poor sound, they do not result from Reagan's or the rest of the U.S. ruling class' mean-spiritedness. In fact, the proposed cuts are perfectly "rational" from their point of view.

The cuts are part of a larger strategy of confronting world economic crisis. Corporate profit margins are shrinking and U.S. "productivity" is sliding. The U.S. economy faces much stiffer international economic competition than during the 25-year postwar economic boom.

Cuts in welfare programs help to reduce labor costs by forcing recipients into the labor force under the ultimate "work incentive": starvation. Those forced off welfare programs most often end up in minimum-wage service jobs, hardly the first step to pulling oneself "up by the bootstraps," as Reagan would have it.

A worker holding down a full-time job at the minimum wage would make (before taxes) around \$7,000 annually, far below the official poverty line of \$10,178 for a family of four. While the minimum wage has remained at \$3.35 per hour since 1981, living costs have increased by 21%.

These workers are increasingly forced into competition for low wage jobs with the "new poor," those laid-off workers from unionized industries forced into low-paying jobs when unemployment benefits run out.

Coupled with union-busting and high unemployment, the program cuts help to enforce a general attack on workers' living standards—the bosses' solution to their eroding profits.

But there are limits to the Reagan administration's ability to slash benefits—the most important factor being a fight against the cuts.

It is this kind of activity—not dependence on congressional maneuvering or promises from Democrats, the born-again budget cutters—that holds the potential not only for a rollback of the Reagan cuts, but also for an end to the broader employers' offensive against workers' living standards. □



The budget cuts will continue to produce new victims.

## DEATH IN THE MINES

Continued from page 1

Trumka also criticized the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) for approving the design of the Emery Mining Company's Willberg mine. The mine had only two entry-ways instead of four, which the union has said is the minimum acceptable to insure adequate ventilation and emergency exits.

"Production contests without concern for safety and health are an unacceptable race toward death," he said. Nevertheless, the extent of Trumka's complaint is to call for a congressional investigation of the incident.

## WORST

The accident is the worst since 38 miners were killed in Hyden, Kentucky in 1970. It raises the death toll in coal mining in 1984 to 123. In 1983, there were 70 miners killed.

The Willberg mine had averaged 11.48 accidents for each 200,000 man-hours worked in 1984 before the accident. This is slightly above the national average of 10.06. But in 1982, Willberg's rate was 27.23—nearly four times the national average.

Recent coal dust readings in the Willberg mine showed that the concentration of coal dust was more than 50% above the standard set by the MSHA. The most common cause of mine fires is an accumulation of coal dust, which is highly volatile. This occurs when conveyors are not kept clean—most likely when a high volume of coal is being produced.

"You're supposed to have men who patrol the belts, and water lines are supposed to be electronically tripped in case of fire. It is a very hazardous

operation, especially if you are running a heavy volume of coal," said an official of the Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

## VIOLATIONS

The MSHA said that in the 12 months ending September 30, the Willberg mine was cited 14 times for violations of combustible material regulations, 52 times for violations of electrical regulations, and 28 times for fire protection regulations.

But despite all the violations, the Willberg mine is allowed to operate—and murder its workers—for profits.

In today's capitalist America, profits come before safety—even if it means the unnecessary death of workers. The system will continue to kill and maim workers—until it is changed. □

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# THE HISTORY AND POLITICS OF BLACK AMERICA

## A system built on slavery

By DEBORAH ROBERTS



From the beginning of European settlement in the America, slavery played an essential role in the development of capitalism. As Karl Marx wrote, "the veiled slavery of the wage workers needed for its pedestal slavery, pure and simple."

The rapid growth of plantation farming in the American South gave rise to a huge need for laborers to work the fields. These plantations increasingly produced crops for the English market, especially rice, tobacco, indigo and cotton. The latter two raw materials were essential to the burgeoning English textile industry.

Laborers in large numbers were required to work the enormous holdings, and cotton cultivation, in particular, was extremely labor-intensive until modern mechanization in the mid-twentieth century.

### LABOR POWER

American colonists attacked, with characteristic capitalist energy, the basic problem of providing the necessary labor power to cultivate huge fields and harvest the highly profitable crops. Having tried and failed to find in Indian slaves and indentured servants a stable and sufficiently numerous supply of field hands, planters fell upon African slaves as the ideal workers to exploit and live upon.

### Second in a new series

Later, the Northern industrialists satisfied their mass demands for labor power by mass "voluntary" immigrations from Europe, as the planters met their own demands by forced immigration from Africa. The common interests of these two immigrant laboring populations are clearer today than ever before, however obscured by the ideology of white supremacy and class division perpetrated by the small class which benefits from it.

From the beginnings of the slave system, the capture, marketing and work of slaves was enormously profitable, producing much of the accumulated capital on which the subsequent development of industrial capitalism was based.

In Volume I of *Capital*, first published in 1867, Karl Marx argued that profits from the slave trade were the most important source of the primitive accumulation of British capital, on which the eventual worldwide system of capitalism was originally based.

In simple terms, the slave trade provided the resources which financed the Industrial Revolution in England, and later in America. The acquisition of human slaves, whether through capture or purchase, cost about \$50 in Africa. These same slaves were sold in the Americas for up to \$400.



The labor of slaves was essential for the accumulation of wealth in this country.

As Marx wrote in *Capital*, the roots of "democratic," bourgeois capitalism lie in the intense exploitation and enslavement of peoples:

"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black skins, signaled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation."

As the English shipmasters and slave traders reaped huge profits from the expanding slave system in the colonies, so too did the Puritan and Quaker shippers of New England. Especially after the British monopoly on "Black ivory" was broken in 1698, New England slave traders rose to prominence as the New World's greatest industrial leaders.

Southern slavery functioned not mainly to produce for the rulers' consumption, as ancient slavery and feudal serfdom had done, but to produce tobacco, cotton and other products for sale on the world market. The slaveowner was essentially a capitalist big farmer, despite his use of slave labor. Correspondingly, as the system developed, the slave became a member of the proletariat.

Marx stressed the interrelationship of factory and plantation systems of exploitation: "Whilst the cotton industry introduced child-slavery in England, it gave in the United States a stimulus to the transformation of the earlier, more or less patriarchal slavery, into a system of commercial exploitation."

### ALLIANCE

The crucial rise in profitability of the slave trade during the colonial period helped to found an economic and political alliance between Southern slaveholders and Northern merchant-industrialists, an alliance which for all

its contradictions persisted in various forms through the Civil War.

During the whole period of slavery, capitalist merchants and industrialists in the North based their growth on the profits of slavery, as did the plantation "aristocrats" of the South.

From beginning to end, these ruling strata cooperated in building the basic institutional framework for modern American capitalism. This system is today linked through the continued superexploitation and special oppression of Black workers with the extraction of surplus value from all workers.

The sons and grandsons of these first exploiters are known today as the Founding Fathers of "our" country. Most of the Northern "founders were slaveholders right through the War for Independence, and Southern members of the North-South ruling alliance were active slave-masters until the Civil War.

The alliance between exploiters of "free" factory labor and the exploiters of slaves characterized the American ruling system until the Civil War, and the historical peculiarities of this alliance still haunt our society—reflected in the continuing oppression of Black people and the persistent racist attitudes on the part of white workers which contribute to crucial divisions in the American working class.

### IDEOLOGY

Racist ideology has been used since the beginnings of American slavery to justify the conquest of Africa as well as the slave system which it made possible. At first denying that Africans were human, ruling class beneficiaries of Black exploitation and oppression later declared that the slave trade in fact liberated the souls of the heathen. Capitalists and planters—as well as their friends in the universities and churches—fatted on the profits of slavery, and white workers were fed the poison of white supremacy to reconcile them to their rulers.

precautions were taken to safeguard the slave system.

The intense cruelty and dehumanization practiced by slave traders and slave-owners were essential to keeping the system intact. In reality, slaves were both extremely valuable as instruments of production and capable as human beings of active rebellion and insurrection.

### MUTINIES

Documentary evidence exists of at least 55 slave mutinies on shipboard and more than 250 revolts on American plantations, some to the point of insurrection. These revolts show that human beings will want freedom and will fight injustice even in the most desperate conditions and against the greatest odds.

Capitalism could not have been built without the systematic exploitation and oppression of the working class, including, crucially, the super-exploitation and special oppression of Black slaves and their descendants. Right up to the present day, American capitalism depends on racism both materially—for the profits it generates, and ideologically—for the divisions it creates within the working class.

Like Marx, we must understand that the condition of Black people in capitalist America is a life-and-death problem for the whole working class. Workers must see our own class as the key to humanity's future.

The period of slavery and since reflect the willingness of Black workers to fight the system that keeps us all down.

White workers have no long-term chance at a decent life while our class is divided by capitalist definitions of supposed superiority/inferiority within our ranks, whether on racial, sexual, or any other grounds.

Divided amongst ourselves on any basis, we are all victims. United—on the basis of equality, our collective humanity and our power as producers—the future belongs to us, to every one of us. □



Slaves being auctioned off.

# Bhopal disaster not an isolated event

"Without chemicals, life itself would be impossible."

Monsanto spent millions of dollars on this slogan in the wake of adverse publicity for the chemical industry following Love Canal and litigation over Agent Orange.

If it sounded bizarre before, the slogan now appears downright cynical. More than 2,000 people have died in Bhopal, India, after toxic methyl isocyanate swept through an area inhabited by 200,000.

Tens of thousands of others will suffer permanent ailments—including blindness—as a result of exposure. 100,000 people required immediate medical treatment.

Bhopal is only the biggest of recent major industrial disasters. It is hardly an isolated incident.

On November 19, a liquified gas explosion in Mexico City cost over 450 lives.

On December 6, the third major mining disaster in Taiwan in less than six months occurred at the Haishan mine near Taipei. Ninety miners were trapped by a mine fire and poisonous gas one and a half miles from the surface—all died. A shaft collapse at the same mine claimed the lives of 74 miners last June.

And last month, the mine disaster in Utah claimed the lives of 27 miners and company officials.

## LIFE

Union Carbide, the owner of the Bhopal plant is the third largest chemical corporation in the U.S. and the 37th largest overall. Now it is fighting for its corporate life. It will take years for the company to untangle itself from the legal aftermath of the disaster. This—and not the fate of the victims in Bhopal—is the concern of both Union

**The huge industrial disasters at Bhopal and Mexico City are the most recent of many:**

**September, 1921:** BASF chemical plant explosion in Germany kills 561.

**April, 1942:** Gold dust explosion at the Honkeiko mine in China kills 1,572.

**April, 1947:** Fertilizer ship blows up in Texas City killing 561.

**August, 1956:** Dynamite trucks ignite at Cali in Colombia killing 1,100.

**June, 1974:** Chemical plant explosion at Flixborough in Britain kills 28.

**December, 1975:** Explosion at the Chasnaia mine in India kills 43.

**1976—Sveso, Italy:** 700 evacuated.

**1979—Novosibirsk, Russia:** 300 rumored to have perished from Anthrax leakage at a chemical weapons plant.

# isolated event

**SPECIAL REPORT  
BY  
GLENN PERUSEK**

Carbide and the larger business community.

"Many companies have called to offer us sympathy," a company official said.

"The Bhopal tragedy is without precedent," offers Carbide president Warren Anderson. "But it is believed that, considering both the insurance and other resources available, the financial structure of Union Carbide is not threatened in any way."

Union Carbide is making it clear that its business is going to be avoiding paying victims and their relatives—not finding ways to avert such disasters in the future.

## PROFIT

But given that the priority for capitalism is profit and not safety, no company can be expected to eliminate the risk of industrial accidents. As *Business Week* remarked coldly, there is little that can be done to make plants dealing with highly hazardous material more safe. In such plants, the typically accepted level of risk is now one chance in a million of a serious accident in any given year. But risk analysis is not a precise science—such calculations can be off by a factor of 10 or 100. So a chance in a million could, in reality, be one in 10,000.

There are approximately 6,000 chemical plants in the U.S. alone—and this represents one half of the world total. The mere possibility of accidents is transformed by such numbers into a statistical probability.

The risk analysts are worried that the time span between accidents is becoming dangerously short.

It has been argued that the safety precautions at Union Carbide's Indian plant were inferior. Pesticides similar to the ones produced in Bhopal can be made without the deadly



Top right: Union Carbide Chairman Warren Anderson. Above: Some of the victims of the explosion at Bhopal. Below: The closed Union Carbide plant.

methyl isocyanate. One Japanese corporation produces such pesticides with other chemical reactions. Another uses a continuous process which consumes methyl isocyanate as fast as it is made.

A plant in France, owned by Union Carbide itself, stores the deadly chemical in small cylinders, instead of the huge tanks used in Bhopal. But the corporation still insists that alternative processes—including the ones employed in the U.S.—are not superior to those of Bhopal. Some create different safety hazards, such as much more hazardous waste.

## "GRIM LESSON"

The "grim lesson of Bhopal" so somberly discussed in the press is that industrial accidents can happen anywhere—and cannot be prevented. But what is not discussed is why this must be so.

All industrial corporations must factor in the cost of safety equipment and procedures with

other costs of production. If these rise too high, they eat into profits. In a competitive industry, this spells disaster for the company. Thus, there is a continual pressure to keep safety costs down—it is the same pressure which forces wages down and working hours up. If costs of production can be minimized, a larger surplus can be extracted—and bigger profits made.

Union Carbide made only "meager" profits of \$79 million in 1983—its worst year in a decade. It is involved mainly in petrochemical and industrial gas production—industries which today are plagued by overcapacity. This means that there is no money for increased safety precautions.

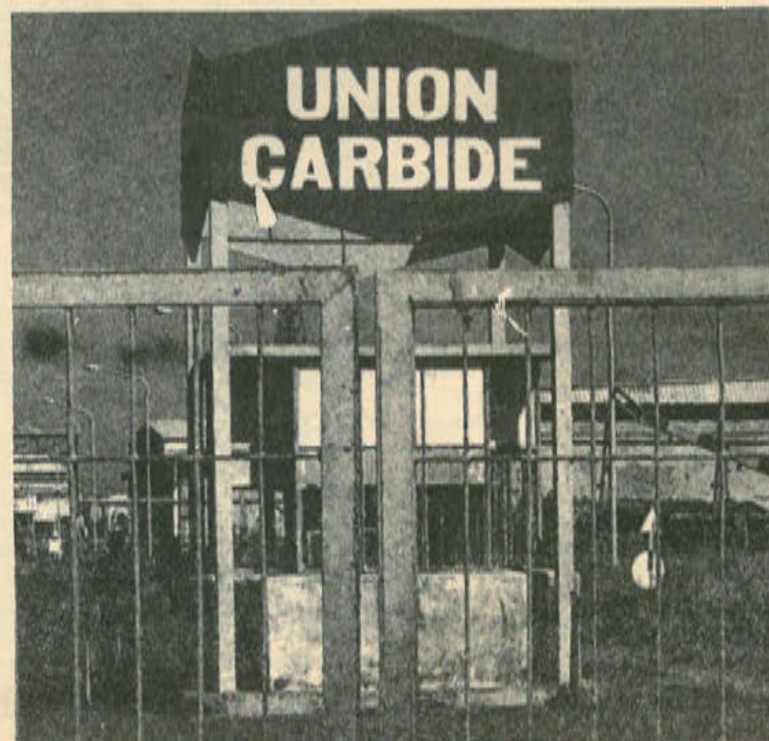
Instead of more safety, we will be subject to a high level of hype for several months. The company will assure us it is "doing everything possible." Congressional hearings on safety regulations will demand "stringent controls."

But the ability to actually implement safe conditions is beyond any agency—public or private. Corporations must be concerned with their profitability—and the expense of really safe processes is prohibitive. The government cannot, given its priorities, actually police industry.

## ENFORCEMENT

In recent years, money for enforcement of safety regulations has been drastically slashed. In any event, OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, has never inspected plants with previously "safe" records. It could not do so—again, the costs would rise too high.

Thus, as long as industry is competitive industry for profit, industrial accidents will be a regular occurrence. They are a built-in aspect of the system of competitive accumulation—they cannot be effectively opposed outside of opposition to that system. □



## UNION CARBIDE IS A CORPORATE KILLER

Union Carbide, the third largest chemical manufacturer in the U.S., is a world class corporation.

The corporation also has a long history as a killer of workers. Its 1930-1932 tunnel project at Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, is now known as the "greatest short-term occupational loss of life in U.S. history."

The tunnel was dug through silica rock. Silica dust causes silicosis. Because of this hazard, silica has been worked "wet" to limit dust creation.

But Union Carbide's con-

tractor for the Gauley Bridge tunnel violated state law which required digging through silica "wet." By 1936, approximately 500 workers had died.

The contractor actually had so many dead workers on his hands that he hired an undertaker just to dispose of the bodies.

An especially low price of \$55 per burial was agreed upon. The undertaker told a congressional hearing that he agreed to such a low price because "the company had assured him there would be a large number of deaths."

## Talking about socialism

# Socialism is about human freedom

One of the arguments against socialism is that it destroys individuality by reducing everything to a dull conformity.

A recent Wendy's television advertisement—complete with Lenin's picture in the background—compares the sameness of other fast food establishments to life under dull Russian "socialism."

Capitalism proclaims individuality as the highest virtue. But this individuality is limited to the very few who sit at the top of this society—corporate owners and their counterparts in high government positions.

The rest of us are expected to work for these firms doing largely boring, routine jobs on assembly lines or in offices with as little individuality as possible.

### DESTROYING

In fact, capitalism could only develop in the first place by systematically destroying the individuality of its workers.

The assembly line started by Henry Ford at the beginning of this century required a workforce disciplined to sameness. And before Ford—in the textile mills, the iron foundries and the slaughterhouses—workers were forced to regard work as their primary aim in life, and to sacrifice small personal pleasures to endless toil.

It was only with the rise of unions that limits were placed on capital's push to squeeze the workers every waking moment into production for the employers.

Modern capitalism is no different. It seeks to impose a discipline on the majority that will serve its own interests—not those of individuals.

In the schools, for example, what matters most is not how well the student learns to express his or her own ideas or develop individual abilities. Instead, children are measured against one another in terms of how well they conform to certain standards—so that they are graded like eggs or potatoes. Many schools, often the most outspoken opponents of socialist "conformity," require their students to wear uniforms.

### STOP-WATCH

Capitalism spends large sums of money on managing its workforce. Jobs have been created in factories and offices that do nothing more than reduce workers' movements to the markings on a stop-watch.

United Parcel Service epitomizes worker uniformity. Not only do its delivery personnel all wear a dull brown uniform and drive brown trucks, but each step a worker takes is timed by a stop-

by BILL ROBERTS

watch and compared to standards set by management.

Time and motion studies are standard practices in most work places today. Even government offices engage in stop-watch studies on paper-pushing productivity.

In surveys questioning people's reasons for seeking other jobs, the most frequent response, besides more money, is the need for change. Boredom and routine are the work experience of most people under capitalism.

But, if monotony and conformity characterize capitalism, why do most people believe that these are essential features of socialism?

In part this is because many of the countries claiming to be socialist are marked by features of sameness and are clearly organized to cramp and eliminate individuality. This is not because they are socialist. It is because the bureaucratic ruling groups that run these societies are actually trying to do what capitalists do in the west—develop their economies at maximum speed by holding down workers' living standards, so they can compete with the west and with one another.

The results are societies marked by many of the characteristics of capitalism, often in an even more intense form than in the west.

### DIFFERENT

Real individuality, the full and complete development of the distinct capacities of each individual, will only be possible when a completely different sort of society has been built.

It would be a society in which the individual and society would not be opposed to one another, in which people would no longer compete with each other, and would no longer be forced to function under relentless pressure to work ever harder.

Massive wealth is created in the modern world. But only a handful of parasites benefit in a way that frees them from the everyday worries of most people. The wealth is largely wasted by the blind competition between rival firms and rival states. In their attempts to out-compete one another, these demand ever tighter control over and ever greater efforts from their workers.

Real human individuality will only be possible when workers internationally have combined together—using their collective power to destroy the existing ruling classes and reorganize society—so that it is based upon satisfying human need and not the demands of competition. □

# "DEATH WISH VIGILANTE" BECOMES MEDIA HERO

by LEE SUSTAR

NEW YORK, NY—When is a racist a hero? When he shoots four young Black men who allegedly asked him for \$5 on a New York City subway.

Bernhard Goetz, 37, confessed to the December 22 shooting which severed the spine of 19-year-old Daryl Cabey, permanently paralyzing him from the waist down.

Although he is charged with four counts of attempted murder, Goetz is the toast of the town's media for "standing up to the would-be muggers." Three of the youths were found to be carrying sharpened screwdrivers.

The right-wing tabloid *New York Post* christened Goetz the "Death Wish Vigilante" in reference to a movie about a pistol-packing citizen who guns down street criminals.

Television news programs have featured endless interviews with Goetz' supporters, almost all of whom are white.

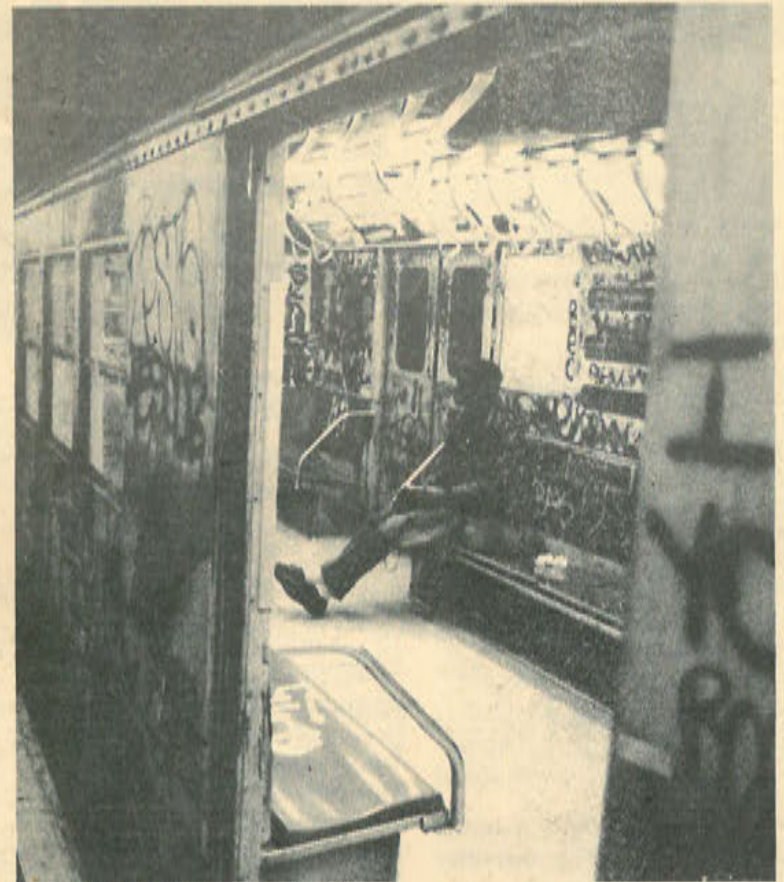
"I'm sorry, but it had to be done," Goetz told reporters. The media apparently believe that paraplegia is the appropriate punishment for a Black youth's \$5 threat to a white businessman.

The glamorization of the Goetz shooting has nothing to do with justice. It is rather an attempt to legitimate the racist ideas influencing New York police officer Stephen Sullivan when he murdered Eleanor Bumpurs with a shotgun blast in an attempt to evict the 66-year-old Black woman from her home on October 29.

Like Sullivan, Goetz accepts the notion that all Blacks are potential—or actual—criminals and that deadly force must be used to keep them in check.

Never mind the fact that according to the Urban League, one out of four Blacks in New York City lives below the poverty line—even though the city is in the midst of perhaps its greatest economic boom ever.

Never mind that Goetz' four victims live in the South Bronx, where the few jobs available pay near minimum wage. It is

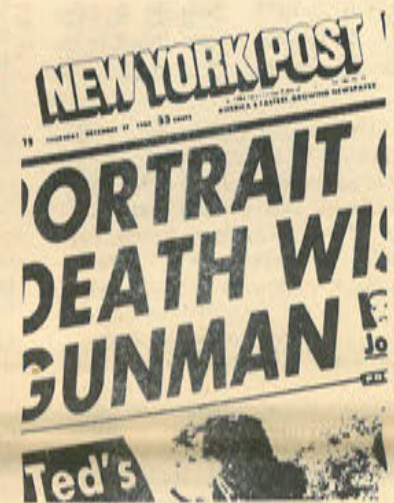


racism pure and simple to applaud the shooting of Blacks for a petty crime—or on the suspicion that they might commit one.

Only the most reactionary people could approve of the Bumpurs murder, but the Goetz shootings make racist violence respectable.

Goetz is popular with a wide section of middle class and working class people because he appears to provide a solution to the skyrocketing incidence of crime in American cities. But he provides no such solution. Vigilante violence cannot stop the cause of crime: poverty, unemployment and a society which offers no possibility for secure, decent jobs for the majority. Goetz, a self-employed electronics expert, has carried a gun since being mugged four years ago.

Rev. Al Sharpton, president of the Brooklyn-based National Youth Movement, was on the right track when he called Goetz a "Symbol of the Ku



Top: New York subway. Above: The New York Post applauded the racist violence.

Klux Klan." If Goetz is cleared of the shootings, it will be license for every white bigot in the country to go hunting for Blacks, Sharpton said. □



### Madison Avenue Blues

Presidential image-maker Michael Deaver followed through on earlier pledges to quit the Reagan administration last month. It seems that Deaver was disappointed in his salary—finding it hard to make ends meet at \$72,000 per year. □



Michael Deaver resigns.

### Military Intelligence?

With the military budget scheduled to top \$34 billion this year, a few people in Congress are trying to see where the money is going. A lot is simply wasted. Ompal Chauhan, an industrial engineer with Boeing Military Airplane Co., explained: "With all that money being pumped into defense, you have to use it somehow." □

### Who's in Charge Here?

With the opening of the new GM-Toyota auto plant in Fremont, California, the "new unionists" in the labor bureaucracy are touting "labor-management cooperation" stronger than ever. Forget all that stuff about wages and benefits, they're saying, unions have more important things to worry about. A labor consultant put it this way: "We have a culture of mismanagement, and it's going to be the role of unions to make management do its business." □

### Merry Christmas!

Postal supervisors in Brighton, Michigan have been harassing Frank DePlanche, a 29-year veteran letter carrier, ever since he filed a claim for workers' compensation in 1980. But last month, the postmaster fired him.

For seven years, DePlanche has passed out holiday cards to the residents along his route—the offense for which he was fired this year. His crime, according to the postal supervisors? Not putting stamps on the cards.

After an appeal, DePlanche has been reinstated—on the condition that he pays for the postage to cover his greeting cards. □

Ferdinand Marcos, the U.S.-backed dictator of the Philippines, is facing growing opposition. BRIAN KELLY reports.

# Marcos: a dictator "loved" by the U.S.

Among the string of right-wing thugs and military dictators that have been paraded in front of White House garden parties in recent years, none personifies the qualities of ruthlessness, corruption or personal greed better than the Philippines dictator, Ferdinand Marcos.

In keeping with official parlance—in which "Peacekeeper" is the name of a nuclear missile—in 1981, George Bush greeted Marcos with the toast: "We love you, sir. We love you for your adherence to democratic principles and democratic processes."

As Bush well knows, Marcos presides over the country with the worst income inequality in Southeast Asia, where those who dare to speak out in opposition to the regime run a very good chance of being murdered.

Recent events, especially the massive upsurge in protest since the murder of opposition leader, Benigno Aquino, have placed the future of the regime in doubt. And with Marcos' health failing, it seems certain that his days in power are numbered. The most forward-thinking section of the American ruling class recog-

nize this. The real question is who will rule after Marcos.

News reports from the Philippines have focused on accounts of Manila businessmen leading demonstrations against the regime and ticker-tape parades for which employees in the business district are given the afternoon off.

While it is true that large sections of the Filipino business community, for their own reasons, are active in the opposition to Marcos, the reports have ignored the very significant opposition based in the working class, and particularly in the newly-revived trade union movement. □



## WHY THE OPPOSITION IN THE PHILIPPINES GROWS

To understand the nature of Marcos' opposition today, we have to look back to the late 1960s, when the World Bank targeted the Philippines to test its model of economic development for the third world. The plan was called Export Oriented Industrialization (EOI), and its main purpose was to integrate developing countries into the world economy by making them attractive sites for foreign investments.

The key to this strategy was the continuing supply of cheap labor, so the heart of the plan was a strict policy of wage restraint and of decapitating the trade union movement. Along with this, corporations were offered a whole array of incentives, including tax exemptions, duty-free imports of raw materials and ready-made plant facilities.

The EOI strategy began to meet serious problems in the early 1970s. Filipino industrialists, who before EOI had made comfortable profits producing for the domestic market, now found themselves unable to compete with multi-national corporations.

The dismantling of protective tariffs and two World Bank-ordered devaluations of the peso crippled local businesses even further. Hundreds of Filipino

businesses went bust.

Compounding this situation was Marcos' policy of favoritism. "High level corruption," wrote *Fortune* magazine in 1981, "pervades Philippine life like jungle rot."

The sight of small-time gangsters becoming wealthy overnight due to their personal loyalties to Marcos infuriated less fortunate businessmen. These, then, are the origins of the bourgeois opposition to Marcos' rule.

The deepening schism between sections of the Philippine ruling class along with rumblings of discontent from the working class and poor peasants led to the situation in which Marcos declared martial law in September, 1972.

### POLARIZATION

The World Bank characterized the days leading up to martial law as "a time of deteriorating law and order, increasing polarization between opposing political tendencies and an increasingly violent confrontation between the government and its masked opponents in the streets."

The combination of pressure from national industrialists and protest in the streets by growing numbers of workers, students and

peasants forced the court to hand down the 1972 ruling that all property acquired by Americans since 1946 was subject to confiscation. The World Bank decided that enough anti-Americanism was enough. Martial law was declared shortly thereafter.

The working class had not figured very prominently in the events leading up to martial law. Through the early years of EOI, as peasants were forced off the land, there was a continuous influx of new workers into the urban areas which made organizing more difficult.

But it was undoubtedly the urban working class which bore the brunt of martial law repression. By 1972, the crisis in the Philippines deepened as world recession set in. Shrinking markets for export goods meant that wage restraints became even more critical. Strikes were banned in all vital industries. In practice, this meant all industries.

### LABOR CODE

A new labor code, severely biased towards the employers, included a clause for "preventative suspension," under which workers who "posed a serious threat to the life or property of their employer" could be fired. In 1977 alone, 6,000 trade unionists found themselves placed on the preventative blacklist. In 1976, Marcos formed his own government-controlled union, the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines. Of 7,000 in the then-existing unions, 5,640 were refused recognition by the new congress.

By the mid-1970s, conditions for Filipino workers were desperate. Between 1960 and 1975, the years of World Bank intervention, real wages had declined by 50%. The average hourly wage of Filipino workers was 49¢ an hour, lower than anywhere else in Southeast Asia. In metropolitan Manila, almost 6 million people, 30% to 40% of the population, were squatters housed in tin and cardboard shacks.

Compounding the general repression of the martial law regime, special treatment was meted out to the working class. The military was used extensively to break strikes. In some cases, regular constabulary units were assigned to specific workplaces to ensure that proper work discipline prevailed.

And by 1980, at least 37 labor activists had been executed by the regime since the imposition of martial law. □

## WORKERS AT CENTER OF THE STRUGGLE

While workers bore the brunt of martial law, they were also key in forcing the lifting of martial law in 1981.

A successful strike at Filipino-owned La Tondena distillery in 1975 let loose a wave of strikes across the Philippines. In 1979, the showcase Bataan EPZ, a multi-national export processing firm, was hit with a wave of militant rank and file unionism.

Seven hundred workers at the Ford body stamping plant launched the first strike in the EPZ's history. Four hundred workers were arrested during that successful struggle.

The regime responded to the upsurge with an attempt to cool things down. Labor hearing boards were set up to diffuse the situation. Workers in the home industries were given a raise while those employed in the export sector remained at the same rate.

Finally, in January, 1981, martial law was lifted. To test the waters, workers took part in over 200 strikes in the first half of the year, and, bowing to pressure from below, Marcos revoked the ban on strikes.

### DICTATORIAL POWERS

While martial law has technically been lifted, Marcos retains dictatorial powers. And preventative detention—under which a person can be arrested and put away without charge or trial—remains on the books. In addition, the regime is willing to resort to murder to save its skin.

Since Aquino's assassination, the opposition has grown in strength and numbers. The Kilusang Mayo Uno (May First Movement), a left-wing trade union organized during the upsurge of 1979-1980, has grown to a membership of several million members. But even though the working class has shown its strength time and again, the KMU and other prominent left organizations remain committed to a coalition with the bourgeois opposition.

The KMU, for instance, speaks in their literature of the "eventual victory of the struggling workers, peasants, students, professionals and nationalist businessmen." They contrast the militant demonstrations in the cities with "a higher form of struggle in the countryside," apparently a reference to the Communist Party's armed wing, the New Peoples Army.

### KEY

For revolutionary socialists, the working class is the key to socialist revolution. Tying them to nationalist businessmen can only lead to betrayals at best, and quite possibly to their slaughter in large numbers.

The crisis in the Philippines poses the possibility of workers power. For that reason, socialists, trade unionists and workers the world over must lend them their support and, wherever possible, concrete solidarity. They are fighting for us all. □



Above: Oppositionists to Marcos' regime celebrate. Right: Aquino being shielded from an attack shortly before his murder.



# A NEW STEP IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID

One of the biggest strikes in South African history spread throughout the Black working class townships in November of last year. Thousands participated in the actions called by a committee of unions and community organizations. These recent developments are the most significant upsurge of Black resistance in South Africa since the Soweto uprisings of 1976.

But the current struggles are different from those of Soweto or of previous years, because the Black working class and its power to paralyze the apartheid regime are right at the center of the movement.

ALEX CALLINICOS analyzes the strategy and potential of these important events.

The disturbances have been centered on the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging region (PWV), the vast industrial complex in the Transvaal which accounts for half the country's gross national product.

To understand the significance of these events, it is necessary to compare them with what happened in 1976. The Soweto rising was largely spontaneous. Discontents accumulating for years against the apparently unbreakable white supremacy suddenly exploded in June, 1976.

The uprising occurred at a time when the organized Black resistance was extremely weak. The underground organization of the banned African National Congress (ANC) had just been hit with a wave

of arrests.

Leadership was largely provided by young militants influenced by the intellectuals of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM).

Steven Biko and other BCM leaders had neither the strategy nor the organization needed to give the rebellion a coherent direction. So, despite the heroism and energy of the youth of Soweto and other townships, the movement eventually fizzled out, hammered by increasingly severe repression.

The situation is very different today. The past eight years have seen the growth of a variety of Black community and trade union organizations.

Black political life has enjoyed a renaissance which recalls the struggles against the

imposition of apartheid in the 1940s and 1950s. This revival has been given a degree of cohesion by the United Democratic Front (UDF).

The UDF was formed last year to coordinate opposition to President P.W. Botha's new constitution.

## CONSTITUTION

Under the constitution, which came into force in September, the minority Asian and Colored (mixed race) communities have been given chambers in the previously all-white parliament.

One of the UDF's chief successes to date was to organize a highly effective boycott of the elections to the new chambers.

The UDF is heavily influenced by the underground ANC. The ANC enjoyed a revival after 1976, recruiting many black youths radicalized by the rising who wanted to serve in its armed wing, *Umkonto weSizwe*.

ANC's guerrilla strategy suffered a severe blow after the loss of its main base, in Mozambique, following that country's non-aggression pact with South Africa, signed in March. Still, the ANC's influence inside South Africa seems to be growing.

The other main change in the situation is the growth of the Black trade union movement. The 1976 rising did spill over into the workplaces. There were no less than three stay-at-homes (political general strikes)—two in the Transvaal in August, 1976, each involving something over 100,000 Black workers, and one in September, 1976, embracing half a million African and Colored workers in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape. But the movement was largely community-based, centered on the black youths of the townships.

## FOCUS

The focus of the recent disturbances has also largely been in the townships, particularly those of the Vaal Triangle south of Johannesburg, notably Sebokeng, Sharpeville and Boipatong, where the trouble began, and of the East Rand, around Pretoria. But the November 6 and 7 stay-at-home represented a major shift.

The strike was called by a committee of 38 community organizations and trade unions. Crucially, the two main independent union

federations, the Federation of South African Unions (FOSATU) and the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA), backed the call.

These two groupings are the main beneficiaries of the explosive growth of black trade unions over the past ten years. FOSATU claims 106,000 members, CUSA 148,000.

FOSATU, in whose development radical white intellectuals have played a central role, has tried to develop strong workplace-based organization. To this end, it has made a number of compromises with the white employers and the state which have drawn it into the highly collaborationist official industrial relations machinery.

CUSA, heavily influenced by the BCM, is mainly based in the Transvaal. Its most important affiliate is the new Black National Union of Mineworkers, whose members struck briefly in August.

Both groups had steered clear of the UDF, no doubt wary of its ANC links and, in FOSATU's case, worried about crossing the line between trade unionism and politics. Their support for the stay-at-home was therefore of great significance.

## INVOLVEMENT

Involvement in the strike was massive. Some factory managers reported that only 10 percent of their employees went to work. Support was estimated to be highest in the Vaal Triangle, where 90 percent stayed away.

In the East Rand, where the FOSATU-affiliated Metal and Allied Workers Union has a strong base, 85 percent of the workforce backed the strike.

The stay-at-home was weakest in Soweto itself, which has been relatively quiet during the recent unrest.

As in the past, the unevenness of the movement is one of its chief weaknesses. Outside the Rand, the disturbances have been the worst in the Eastern Cape, traditionally a strong ANC area and the center of the South African auto industry.

The multinationals based in the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage area—Ford, General Motors and Volkswagen—have fed the discontent by laying off thousands of workers in their assembly plants and putting thousands more on shorter weeks.



Black workers are fighting back

However, Durban, the country's second largest industrial area, has kept quite calm. This may be because of the influence of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, boss of the Kwazulu tribal homeland, and leader of the predominantly Zulu movement *Inkatha*, which claims a million members.

Durban's townships are part of Kwazulu. Buthelezi has been performing his usual balancing act, denouncing both the new constitution and the UDF.

Should Botha ever feel compelled to make political concessions to the African majority, then Buthelezi would be the logical partner.

But such a situation is still far off.

## MISTAKE

It would be a mistake to underestimate the repressive capacities of the apartheid regime. The recent clamp-down has been mild compared to the early 1960s or 1976-7.

Moreover, the stay-at-home is a comparatively traditional tactic in South Africa, and one which the regime's formidable security apparatus has long experience against.





# THE FIGHT AGAINST APARTHEID



Protesting apartheid in Washington, D.C.

## WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MOVEMENT TO BUILD

by STEVE LEIGH

Any campaign against apartheid is a positive step. It raises the issue in public consciousness and opens the possibility that more effective actions—such as strikes against companies doing business with South Africa—can take place.

However, the recent tactics adopted by many today—symbolic actions based on civil disobedience—are, while heroic and selfless, fundamentally elitist. They are designed, on the one hand, to make particular religious, political and labor leaders look good, and on the other to discourage mass militant activity by limiting participation to a chosen few.

### PROBLEM

For labor leaders, they are a way around the problem of attempting to seriously mobilize their members on political issues. Labor officials cannot and will not organize effective action even on immediate economic issues facing the rank and file. In fact, they often urge their members to accept concession contracts rather than striking. And when workers adopt militant tactics, these officials come in to squelch them.

Statements and actions are welcome if they help mobilize real, concrete support for South African workers among workers here. But they are not an end in themselves as some solidarity activists believe.

The most effective opposition to apartheid will come when workers at the point of production threaten the interests of corporations. The corporations profit by investing in South Africa. They will only withdraw if their profits or their power are hurt more by continued investment than by pulling out.

### LESSON

Ironically, the leaders of the "Free South Africa" campaign have missed the main lesson of the current struggle in South Africa. The present unrest is the deepest and most effective yet because it is based on the Black work-

ing class.

Thousands of workers have struck again and again, severely hurting the economic interests of the South African rulers and of U.S. corporations. This is what has struck fear into the hearts of the ruling classes of both countries—not civil disobedience or statements of prominent people.

If the solidarity campaign in the U.S. is to be effective, it should aim to involve workers here at the workplace—where they have potential power. Of course, this will not be easy. But, in the long run, it will be more effective than controlled symbolic protest.

Moreover, if the motivations of the labor leaders in this campaign are often cynical, the motivations of the politicians are even worse. Liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans have stepped forward to condemn apartheid.

Why now? Apartheid has existed for 36 years. Thousands of Blacks have been killed by the South African army and police, even when they were only engaged in peaceful protest. Strikes are outlawed. Unions themselves have been legal for Blacks for only a few years.

### BASIS

The very basis of South African society is the most extreme racism, cruelty and deprivation of the most fundamental human rights. Yet, with all this, the politicians have generally been quiet about apartheid or have limited themselves to pious statements. But now, even Reagan criticizes apartheid publicly. Why?

The answer was given quite clearly by conservative Republican Congressmen who are threatening South Africa with sanctions if it doesn't reform. They are scared by the strike wave. They fear the apartheid regime may not survive if it fails to make more concessions to the Blacks.

Some of the liberal politicians probably do sincerely oppose racism and apartheid. In the best of all possible worlds, they would like to see them disappear. But their lib-

eral sentiments fade in face of a real challenge to the system by Black workers, for they also oppose revolution. They fear the threat to U.S. corporate interests that a South African revolution would involve, and they fear that the USSR's influence in the region would grow.

So in practice they will follow the same strategy as the conservatives: pressure the South African regime for limited reforms to stave off the unrest.

### ANGLE

There is another angle to their strategy if, in spite of their efforts to reform it, the apartheid regime falls. They don't want U.S. interests to fall with it. They want the U.S. to appear to be on the side of progressive change in South Africa, and so be able to keep its right to invest there (the right to exploit Black labor) and to maintain the strategic military connection.

In South Africa, they want to avoid what happened in Iran where they sided with the tyrant until he was overthrown and then lost all influence with the new regime.

But for those who sincerely want an end to apartheid, the reform strategy is a losing one. As Reagan himself said, "You can't expect any government to reform itself out of existence." Under pressure, the regime may grant cosmetic reforms. But it will take a revolution to end their economic exploitation. Those with the wealth will not give it up without a fight, and they have, in the past, fought bitterly to hold on to their power.

### POWER

In South Africa, those who hold the wealth are whites, and the vast majority of workers are Black. So as long as the private ownership of wealth exists in South Africa, racism will be used to enforce it.

Only the workers of South Africa have the potential power and interest to overturn that society. This revolutionary strategy is the one we should support—not the machinations of the politicians to preserve apartheid through reform. □



Despite tremendous repression.

The limitations of the tactic were pointed out by South African revolutionary socialists writing as long ago as 1961.

"Firstly, the people of the townships cannot stay at home indefinitely. To do so is to starve. . . . The townships can be sealed off and starved out only too effectively by small detachments of the army and the police. . . ."

"Secondly, by staying in the townships, the worker surrenders all initiative. He cuts himself off from his fellow workers in other townships. He divides himself from his allies in the rural areas, and he surrenders the entire economic center to his enemies."

The fundamental weakness of the stay-at-home strategy is that it centers the struggle in the community. This fits well with the ideas of ANC, both in the 1950s and today, to mobilize a broad alliance of all Black classes and of white "democrats" against the regime.

But it is the collective economic strength increasingly exercised by Black workers in production which represents the only force

capable of overthrowing the regime. This power underlies the growth of the black trade unions.

### DEPRESSION

The economic depression afflicting South Africa has caused trade union militancy to fall off somewhat.

1982 saw more strike-days (141,517) than any other year since the great 1973 Durban strikes. A succession of bitter strikes were fought, notably in the metal industry.

The employers won most of them. Strike days more than halved in 1983, falling to 64,469 under the impact of economic recession.

Retreat on the economic front may help to explain the willingness of Black workers in the Rand and Eastern Cape to take part in broader community-based movements.

The South African economy is expected to begin reviving in 1985. This will provide an opportunity to rebuild and extend the power of the Black trade unions.

Only if this power is mobilized against the white state will apartheid ultimately be broken. □

# Columbia resists workers' staff union drive

**NEW YORK, NY**—As the May 4, 1983 union certification vote at Columbia University drew closer, clerical workers began to receive as many as four letters a day from President Michael Sovern telling them why they should not vote for unionization.

Despite the university's tactics, however, the union—District 65 of the UAW—won the election, 468-442. Columbia challenged the vote and brought the case to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The union won at the lower level, but Columbia appealed that decision to the federal level. Not only is the federal board of Reagan appointees very likely to reverse the local board ruling, but a record backlog of 1,300 pending cases could delay the decision for years—effectively tying the hands of the union at Columbia.

## TIE-UP

In the meantime, Columbia has taken advantage of the tie-up in Washington to cut benefits and pensions. The university not only refuses to recognize the union, but it even failed to inform the clerical workers themselves of the cuts—departments and supervisors alone were told. District 65 has threatened to strike, and will walk out if the university refuses to negotiate.

**"It is from the ranks of clerical workers—largely women and racial minorities—that much of today's union successes are coming."**

Columbia has been careful to disguise the cuts as much as possible to make the new "changes" appear to be beneficial to the workers. Under the guise of "updating" affirmative action policies—to match the looser regulations of the Reagan administration—maternity leave has been cut from one year to six months to establish "parity" with paternity leave.

The university has switched to a cafeteria-style medical plan, giving workers more choices and greater flexibility, but making them pay for more of their coverage. Whereas workers used to have to wait ten years before they were eligible for the pension plan,

by **ELEANOR TRAWICK**

the time has now been cut to three years—but Columbia has at the same time drastically lowered its contribution.

Clerical workers at Columbia are the last of the university employees to be unionized.

The division of workers into many different unions, of course, works to the university's advantage, for it makes it all the more difficult for any one group of employees to shut the university down. The university is also strengthened by its ability to use work-study students and graduate assistants to do the work of the support staff; such students cannot join the union, and organization among them is virtually impossible.

## MILITANT

Workers at Yale University voted for unionization at the same time as those at Columbia. They won their fight for recognition and went out on a militant strike in September. The Yale workers returned to their jobs in December, but have decided to go back out this month. District 65 at Columbia has planned its walkout at about the same time.

Robert Early, vice-president for personnel management, has claimed that Columbia workers have it better than their corporate counterparts and really don't need a union. "I'm probably a nicer person to work with and so is Paul Carter and Michael Sovern," Early explained rather unconvincingly, comparing the Columbia bosses to industrial executives. "I certainly don't keep the workers chained here."

Early also argues that union recognition would eliminate merit bonuses and "force" the university to treat all workers alike: "Unions always work for the lowest producers in a unit."

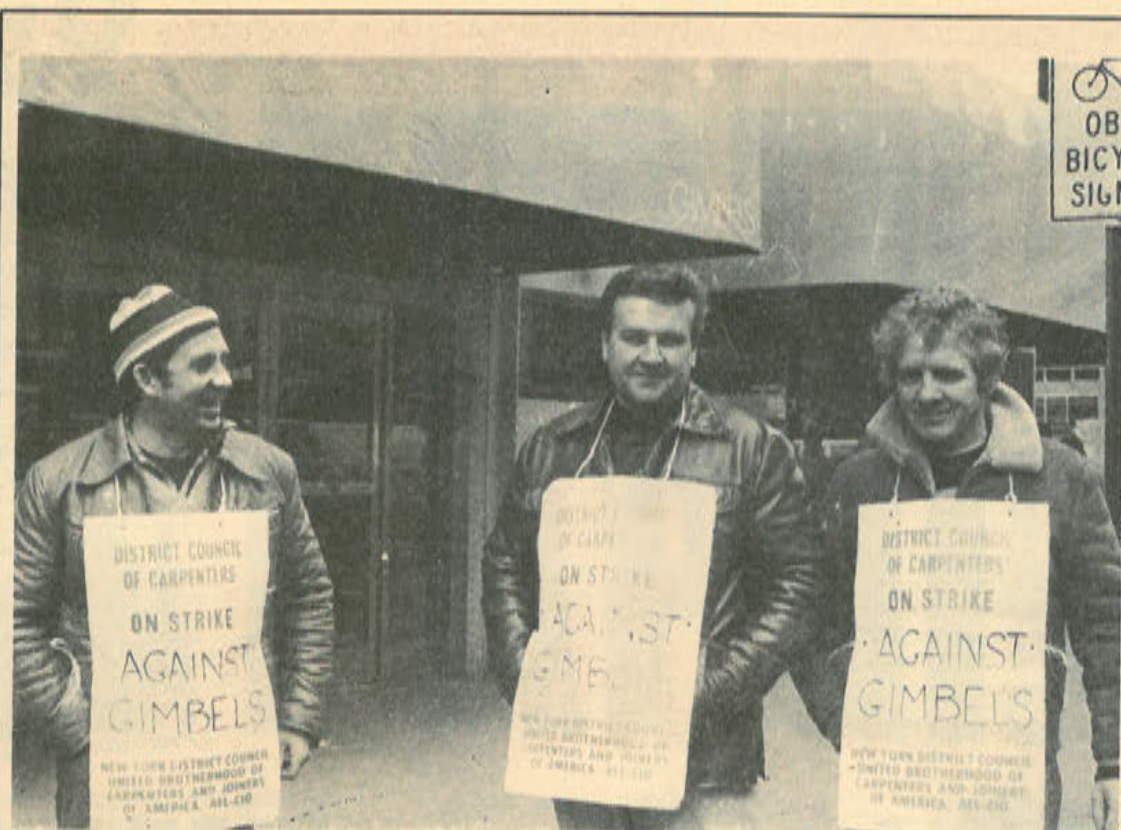
## WHITE-COLLAR

Both Yale workers and the Columbia support staff represent the rising tide of white-collar unionization. It is from the ranks of clerical workers—largely women and racial minorities—that much of today's union successes are coming.

District 65 can win its strike, provided that it is willing to hold fast and really shut the university machinery down. Their success is ultimately dependent on how much faculty and student support it can muster, and how willing the other campus unions are to cooperate. □



Staff workers in many universities are beginning to organize.



Union carpenters picket Gimbel Bros. store in New York City.

# "THEY TOOK OUR MONEY, JUST WHEN WE NEEDED IT"

**NEW YORK, NY**—After watching Gimbel Bros. Department store layoffs—nearly thirty carpenters one by one—for nearly six months, the District Council of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters called a strike against the store in December.

Only three union carpenters remained at Gimbel's main Manhattan store when the union ordered the walkout over the company's refusal to renew its contract without a wage freeze. The contract that expired last June already gives to Gimbel's carpenters' highly skilled labor at a bargain rate—their workers received only about 80% of the prevailing on-site construction wage and received substantially reduced benefits.

## FIRST

"This is the first time in my life I ever had to do anything like this," said George Guariglio, who has built displays at Gimbel's for the past 17 years. "They took our money away in December—just when

we needed it most."

Guariglio was frustrated by the union's delay in calling the strike and the ineffectiveness of the picket line. "We had one big picket. The carpenters from Macy's came across [33rd Street] when Gimbel's had a day and night sale just before Christmas.

"But it didn't mean much," Guariglio said, as truck drivers and loading dock workers carried goods passed two picketers. "Some of the Teamsters won't deliver here. But most of them do."

Few, if any, displays have been built since the carpenters struck, Guariglio said. "They have the stock clerks carrying down the ones they don't need—and that is union work," he said. "But their contract—and ours—doesn't allow for sympathy strikes."

## CLERKS

But the clerks will soon find themselves in the middle of their own dispute, Guariglio said. The Gimbel's contract with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers expires in June, and Gimbel's has made it clear that it will seek a wage freeze for all its

workers. "They will probably end up out here with us," Guariglio said. "Gimbel's is pushing union people out of jobs, hiring non-union, part-timers to take their place."

Several dozen District Council carpenters suffering seasonal unemployment have recently joined the Gimbel's picket line. But passive picketing is not enough. The thousands of union carpenters idled by the winter weather have ample time to build mass pickets that could force Gimbel's to sign a contract.

## BUSIEST

The media thus far has ignored the strike, and Gimbel's would like things to stay that way. The company is anxious to avoid the publicity that would follow a confrontation at what is called "the world's busiest corner."

But the foot-dragging by District Council officials in calling the strike shows that such action must be initiated by the workers themselves. Only through rank and file action can the carpenters and other Gimbel's workers turn back their employers' demand for concessions. □

# Anti-abortionists bomb three Florida clinics

Early Christmas morning, the only three clinics in Pensacola, Florida offering abortion services were bombed by four religious fundamentalists described as "upright and clean-living citizens."

According to the defendants' attorney, "They said God spoke to them, and they did what they did to save innocent lives of unborn children. They have a one-on-one relationship with Jesus Christ, and they have responded to His revelation."

## SECOND ATTACK

For one of the clinics, a women's health counseling center that has offered pregnancy tests and abortion services since 1974, this was the second attack this year. The building was severely damaged by a bombing last June which occurred after anti-

abortionists picketed the center.

Then on New Year's Eve, an abortion clinic in Washington, D.C. was bombed. A group calling itself the "East Coast Division" of the Army of God claimed responsibility for the bombing and demanded that the Washington Post print a statement expressing support for the defendants in the Flori-

da bombings.

These attacks are only the latest in a string of such incidents. Law enforcement officials cite 24 bombings or fires at abortion clinics in 1984, while abortion rights activists place the figure at a minimum of 28. There were at least 100 reports of serious vandalism or harassment in 1984, causing some clinics to close. □



# THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM

Exiled from his own country by Stalin's regime, and cut off from regular and reliable news reports, Leon Trotsky watched the development of the fascist threat in Germany from afar. But despite his isolation, Trotsky analyzed the situation more astutely and recognized far earlier than any other the shape of things to come.

"The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany" is a collection of Trotsky's writings on the subject from 1930 to 1940, the bulk of them before Hitler came to power in 1933.

CHRISTINA BAKER looks at this important work.

The rise of fascism in Germany came in the wake of a sustained period of crisis and the failure of socialist revolution in that country.

In 1919, the ruling monarchy crumbled under the impact of the first world war and an immense upsurge of workers and soldiers. A republic was declared and the monarchy abolished. But the new republic was unstable. In 1923, a crisis shook Germany which could have brought the workers to power, but the Communist Party waffled, and the opportunity was lost. It is from this setback that the Nazis began to grow.

## DEPRESSION

A new depression beginning at the end of 1929 spelled the end of the Weimar Republic. Unemployment soared to three million. And with growing support from the big industrialists, the fascists were growing. By the end of 1930, they had 100,000 storm troopers.

Trotsky understood by 1930 that Germany was in the grip of a severe social and economic crisis. He attempted not only to analyze the critically important situation, but also to convince workers—whether members of the German Communist Party (KPD) or of the reformist Social Democratic Party (SPD)—that victory of the Nazis (NSDAP) was not a foregone conclusion.

It was this attempt to intervene in history, rather than to merely observe, which makes this work so important. As Trotsky's biographer, Isaac Deutscher, wrote: "Trotsky's attempt to arouse the working class of Germany to the danger that threatened it was his greatest political deed in exile." In volatile times, Trotsky saw that masses of people become open to ideas, both right and left, which they would not have embraced in more stable times.

But Social Democracy, reformist to the core and frightened to the



point of paralysis, actually served as a stumbling block to a real resistance against fascism. And the KPD, under Stalin's iron fist, repeatedly failed to grasp the nature of the crisis and the tasks necessary to turn the tide of events. So while crisis opened up the possibility of a revolutionary upsurge, Trotsky could see that without a party to organize and lead such an upsurge, the door to fascism was wide open.

The KPD, under Stalin's "guidance" failed utterly to either understand the situation or to point the way forward. The line of the Comintern in 1928 was that only capitalist crises and working class revolutions were the order of the day. What followed from this was

the position that Social Democracy was at least as bad and probably worse than fascism since it deluded the workers, and that victory for the Communists was inevitable.

In 1930, the SPD vote was down 6% and the KPD vote up 40%, but the Nazi vote was up a stunning 700%. Nonetheless, Stalin called this a victory.

## CRISIS DEEPENED

In 1932 the crisis deepened. Unemployment rose to 5 million, and wages and unemployment benefits were slashed. With an argument of "lesser evilism," the SPD supported Hindenburg in the presidential election against Hitler. This lesser evil candidate was the man who would, the very next year, appoint Hitler as Chancellor.

In the November 6 Reichstag (parliament) election, the Nazis lost two million votes, and their total was now less than the combined vote of the SPD and the KPD. This was the last free election of the Weimar Republic. Trotsky had consistently argued that the Nazis would never come to power by democratic means—despite their constant protestations to the contrary—and he was right. On January 30, 1933, Hindenburg appointed Hitler as Chancellor.

Hitler got Hindenburg to dissolve the Reichstag with new elections set for March. KPD meetings were banned and their press shut down. The Nazis took over the Prussian police force, flooded it with storm troopers and proceeded to break up SPD meetings. In February, those parts of the constitution guaranteeing freedom of expression, the press, assembly and association were suspended. And finally, on March 23, Hitler asked the new Reichstag to grant him dictatorial power.

It did. On May 1, SPD and KPD members participated in Hitler's



National Day of Labor parade. The next day, the Nazis took over the whole trade union movement and sent its leaders off to concentration camps.

## PRODUCT

Fascism, for Trotsky, was the product of a particular historical period. He argued that its rise was the expression of the crisis of late capitalism—crisis in the very conditions of production. In the heyday of capitalism, particularly where there is a level of workers' organization, bourgeois democracy—universal suffrage, the right to organize and to strike, civil liberties and the like—is quite logical, but it does require the maintenance of a difficult balance. When capitalism goes into crisis, that balance can be lost—giving rise to the threat of revolution.

In the face of such crisis, higher centralization becomes necessary for the ruling class. But since workers by far outnumber the rulers, a process of drastic centralization cannot be merely technical. Instead, the ruling class needs a movement which can actually destroy workers' organizations, and the backbone of this movement must be the petty bourgeoisie, or that class between the tiny class of rulers who actually own the factories and control production and the vast class of workers who survive only by selling their capacity to work.

The ruling class cannot be the troops of such a movement since they are too tiny in number. The workers cannot be the key since such centralization requires the destruction of workers' organizations. At least until a fascist movement has been built, most workers will not be organized around the destruction of their own organizations.

## FASCIST ORGANIZATION

Instead, the heart of fascist organization is the petty bourgeoisie—doctors, lawyers, small-shopkeepers and the self-employed.

The petty bourgeois support the status quo so long as the situation is viable for them personally. When the system goes into crisis, they can go either way. If it appears to a section of this atomized and individualistic class that the ruling class will win the race, that section will align themselves with the rulers. If, on the other hand, it looks as though the workers will win, the petty bourgeoisie will line up behind them.

As Trotsky wrote, "Fascism is not merely a system of reprisals, of brutal force, and of police terror. Fascism is a particular governmental system based on the uprooting of all elements of proletarian democracy within bourgeois society. The task of fascism lies not only in destroying the Communist vanguard but in holding the entire class in a state of forced disunity."

The historical role of fascism is to grind down the workers' movement and thus to make possible the drastic centralization monopoly capitalism needs. But once it has performed that task, the fascist dictatorship then disintegrates its own mass organizations. The former fascist bands are integrated into the police force for any necessary thuggery.

## ANTIDOTE

While no threat of fascism on anything like the German or Italian scale poses itself at present, the spectre of fascism could appear again. If it does, there is only one effective antidote, and that is working class organization. History is not necessarily progressive. We can move forward or backward. In the face of capitalist crisis, the working class provides the only agency for moving forward, but only if it is organized. The tragic leap backward in Germany was no more inevitable than any similar catastrophe in the future, but neither is working class victory.

Building a socialist alternative today is key in the fight against the fascists, and ultimately against the system that breeds crisis—and that breeds them. □



# 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



## ISO NEWS

# What's ON

**BALTIMORE**  
Bob Bernotis on **Workers' power.** January 17 at 7:30 p.m. Call 366-8845 for details.

**BOSTON**  
Dan Caplin on **Why the third world is starving.** January 13 at 7:30 p.m.

**Day school on the politics of international socialism.** January 26. Call 427-7087 for details.

**CHICAGO**  
Alan Maass on **Trotsky's critique of stalinism.** January 6.

Glenn Perusek on **Lenin's marxism.** Wednesday, January 9.

Ahmed Shawki on **Is socialism possible?** Thursday, January 10.

Christina Baker on **Rosa Luxemburg and the German revolution.** Wednesday, January 16.

Ben Blake on **Cliff's theory of state capitalism.** Sunday, January 20.

Lance Selfa on **Gramsci and the Italian factory occupations.** Wednesday, January 23.

Sharon Smith on **Marxism and women's liberation.** Thursday, January 24.

Ahmed Shawki on **Leon Trotsky's theory of revolution.** Wednesday, January 30.

All meetings at 7:30 p.m. For more information call 684-2260 (southside), 878-3624 (northside) or

328-6830 (Evanston).

**CINCINNATI**  
Pete Camarata on **Revolutionaries and the trade unions.** January 19, 7:30 p.m., University of Cincinnati, TUC 414.

Weekly series on **American Labor History.** Starts January 24. Meetings at 7:30 p.m. Call 751-1871 for more information.

**CLEVELAND**  
Eleanor Trawick on **State capitalism.** January 13 at 12:00 noon. Call 651-5935 for details.

**DETROIT**  
The struggle against apartheid in South Africa. January 20 at 7:30 p.m. Call 527-2180 for details.

**KENT**  
Day school on the politics of international socialism. January 26, 12:00 noon. Call 673-1710 for details.

**MADISON**  
Perspectives for socialists in the 1980s. January 30 at 7:30 p.m. Call 251-5982 for details.

**NEW YORK**  
Pete Webster on **Trotsky's marxism.** January 13 at 4:00 p.m.

Carl Cowl on **The origins of American trotskyism.** January 20, 4:00 p.m.

Call 718-389-6170 or 212-280-7484 for details.

**ROCHESTER**  
Brian Erway on **What is fascism?** January 6, Sunday, at 7:30 p.m.

Dan Mahoney on **The channel 13 strike.** Sunday, January 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Day school on socialist politics. Brian Erway on **Trotsky and the socialist tradition;** Abbie Bakan on **Women's liberation and socialism;** Perspectives after the elections. Saturday, February 2. Call 235-3049 for details.

**SAN FRANCISCO**  
Frank Runninghorse on **The San Francisco General Strike.** January 20, 12:00 noon.

Christina Baker on **Malcolm X.** February 1, Laney College, 7:30 p.m. Call 285-4057 or 763-2998 for details.

**SEATTLE**  
The black working class in South Africa: a heritage of struggle. January 10 at 7:30 p.m. Ethnic Cultural Center, 40th Brooklyn NE. 324-2302 for information.

Educational conference on **The politics of international socialism.** February 2, 10:30 a.m. Call 324-2302.

**"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
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- Boston, MA
- Kent, OH
- Northampton, MA
- Chicago, IL
- Los Angeles, CA
- Philadelphia, PA
- Cincinnati, OH
- Madison, WI
- Rochester, NY
- Cleveland, OH
- Minneapolis, MN
- San Francisco, CA
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- Muncie, IN
- Seattle, WA

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

# THE COMINTERN & THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

REVIEW BY LEE SUSTAR

Nearly 50 years after its conclusion, the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939 remains a controversial topic. A year seldom passes without a major book or two about the fascist rebellion against and ultimate victory over Spain's "democratic" Popular Front government.

But the very term "civil war" embodies a liberal historian's refusal to acknowledge the fact that the right-wing uprising provoked a working class revolution—an uprising that convinced the French and British governments to stand pat and let the fascists advance—rather than risk seeing a workers' revolution that could have inspired the labor movement within their own borders.

### APOLOGISTS

On the other hand, apologists for Russian Community Party boss Joseph Stalin never mention the Spanish Communist Party's role in the Popular Front government, that violently suppressed the workers' revolt in the Catalonian region of Spain.

But a few excellent books detail the workers' struggles against both the fascists and the "democratic" wing of the ruling class, notably Felix Morrow's *Revolution and Civil War in Spain*, George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* and Leon Trotsky's *Spanish Civil War*.

These books now have an excellent companion volume in *The Comintern and the Spanish Civil War*. The late E.H. Carr's history of Russian involvement in the war. Written as part of Carr's 14-volume *History of the Russian Revolution*, the book details the brutal subjugation of the Spanish workers to the needs of Stalin.

Trotsky, the exiled leader of the Russian revolution was among the first revolutionary socialists to realize that the Stalinized Communist International (Comintern) was less interested in workers' power than in gathering allies for the Russian state.

### "POPULAR FRONT"

The Comintern's 1935 policy of a Popular Front against fascism turned it toward what it called the "Democratic Petty

**The Comintern and the Spanish Civil War**, by E.H. Carr, Pantheon, New York. \$7.95.

Bourgeoisie" and "Patriotic Bourgeoisie" to fight the rising right-wing forces, which in Spain were led by Army Colonel Francisco Franco.

As Carr points out, the new line meant the formal abandonment of what had been essential tenets of the Bolshevik revolution: independent revolutionary working class organization.

Lenin and Trotsky had realized more than 20 years earlier in Russia that capitalists will support even the bloodiest, most autocratic right-wing regime against the socialist revolution.

By the mid-1930s, Stalin's state capitalist Russia had nothing in common with workers' power. The Comintern's Popular Front was little more than a vehicle for Russian bosses to reach agreement with their European and American counterparts. Stalin, along with French Prime Minister Leon Blum and American President Franklin Roosevelt, was worried by the economic and military competition of Nazi Germany.

### INTRIGUE

Carr's account of the Communist intrigue and treachery in the Spanish Popular Front often reads like a spy novel. Russian economic aid, later, military aid enabled the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) to seduce the left-wing of the country's Socialist Party (PSOE) and pull it rightward in the anti-fascist unity government in 1936. The revolutionary anarchist trade union federation (CNT) also was drawn into the PCE-led alliance with the liberal capitalists.

The results were tragic. When Barcelona Workers' Committees took power in protest in the fascist rebellion, PCE-led troops moved in to smash them. Assassins eliminated leaders of the Barcelona Anarchist group and the left-wing of the Party of Marxist Unity (POUM), which supported the uprising. The Madrid Popular Front government argued that such workers' actions would push the liberal bourgeoisie into supporting the fascists.



Communist Party demonstration in support of the Popular Front.

Stalin had anticipated such "problems." Carr reprints the Russian ruler's letter to Largo Caballero, head of the Popular Front government: "The petty and middle urban petty bourgeoisie should be attracted to the government side . . . protecting it from attempts at confiscation and securing, as far as possible, the freedom of trade. Otherwise, these stata will follow the fascists.

### PREVENT

"The leaders of the (Bourgeois) Republican Party should not be repulsed, but, on the contrary, should be drawn in . . . This is necessary in order to prevent the enemies of Spain from regarding it as a Communist republic and to forestall their intervention which will constitute the greatest danger to the



General Franco decorating a fascist soldier.

Republic of Spain. "It would be advisable to find an opportunity to state in the press that the Spanish government will not condone any actions against the property rights and the legitimate interest of those foreigners in Spain who are citizens of states who do not support the (fascist) rebels."

In other words, Stalin, who purported to be the leader of the international working class revolution, was a stalwart defender of the most sacred principle of bourgeois capitalism: the defense of private property. Thus, Trotsky wrote, Spanish workers have little stake in the Popular Front Republic of the revolutionary energy of 1936, the republic began to crumble before the fascist



onslaught.

### INFLUENCE

Growing Communist influence in the government allowed the right-wing of the PSOE and the PCE to disarm workers' militias and to bring the military under the direct control of the government. The price of the new discipline was a series of fascist victories.

By 1938-1939, Carr writes that international attention had shifted from the Spanish Civil War to Hitler's successful intervention in Austria and Czechoslovakia. The Comintern continued to wither in the wake of Stalin's show trials and the executions of old Bolsheviks such as Kamenev and Bukharin.

The fascist victory in Spain was the first phase to the bloodiest war in world history—a conflict that nearly extinguished the hope of a working class revolutionary alternative.

### DEFINITIVE

Though only 85 pages long, the footnote-filled *The Comintern and the Spanish Civil War* reflects the kind of exhaustive research that has made Carr's *History of the Revolution* the definitive work on the subject. The book was to have been a chapter in a fifteenth volume of the *History*—but Carr died in 1982 before completing it. At \$7.95 it is must reading. □

In a clear and comprehensive study, Alex Callinicos restores the "self-emancipation" of the working class to its rightful place at the center of socialist analysis. "The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx," available from Hera Press for \$7.85.



on the picket line

# ARBITRATION SETTLEMENT CONTAINS LITTLE FOR POSTAL WORKERS

Talks between the two largest unions of postal workers, the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers, and the United States Postal Service broke down last summer without reaching an agreement.

The dispute over pay and working conditions went to binding arbitration.

On December 24, the first binding arbitration contract in postal bargaining history was decided. The postal workers are big losers.

## SOUGHT

The unions had sought average increases of 11 percent in the first year and 4 percent in each of the second

*Right: Vincent Sombrotto, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers. The Postal Service has won the battle against its workers, and the union leadership proved incapable of putting up any effective resistance.*



and third years of the new pact.

The high first-year figure was intended to recoup losses from the 1981 contract, which resulted in a mere 1.3 percent increase—not even keeping up with inflation.

Instead the arbitrators awarded a 2.7 percent pay increase to the unions. In addition, they imposed a two-tier wage system. The lowest pay for new hires will now be \$14,186 per year, while current employees earn at least \$20,090.

Provisions for overtime were also altered. Employees will no longer be required to work more than eight hours on non-scheduled days or work overtime more than 4 days per week. So-called "part-time flexible schedule workers" will be paid double time for working more than 10 hours per day or 56 days per week.

## BOARD

The arbitration board consisted of two union appointees, two management appointees and a "neutral" party—Clark Kerr, former president of the University of California at Berkeley.

USPS management made the case that postal workers

wages were well above those in comparable jobs in private industry.

Wages are being held at prior rates, even though the postal service had a surplus of \$802 million in 1982, \$616 million in 1983 and \$100 million in 1984.

The price for a first class stamp will nevertheless increase to 22 cents in February, 1985. □

## TWO TIER WAGES NO GUARANTEE AT PACKARD

**WARREN, OH**—A new contract ratified by workers at General Motors' Packard Electric plant here contains a drastic two-tier wage plan.

The contract was sold to the workers, members of the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE), as one which will guarantee them jobs for life.

Under the new agreement, workers presently employed by Packard are guaranteed against permanent loss of employment, barring a major strike or some other major occurrence. They can still be laid off temporarily during recessions.

## NEW HIRES

New hires at Packard, which employs 8,900 workers here, will get just 55 percent of the \$12.66 basic wage rate being paid to current employees. It will take ten years to climb to the pay rate of current workers.

This is a far more drastic two-tier system than the national UAW and IUE auto contracts contain. These have new hires at 85 percent of the basic rate, rising to full scale after 18 months.

The Packard contract was approved by a vote of 4,334 to 1,313. The vote signifies that there is a large minority of Packard workers who are suspicious of the deal. And rightly so: while it is supposed to guarantee their jobs, it in fact poses serious potential threats to them.

For example, the contract allows the company to hire "temporary" part-time employees who would stay at the 55 percent rate permanently.

And the terms of a previous contract, which was also supposed to "guarantee" the jobs of 80 percent of the workforce, simply expired with the end of the contract.

Given the competition between new hires and the older workers at the higher rates—which can be exploited by management—the contract makes no real guarantee to the Packard workers.

Two-tier contracts must be opposed as an attack on all workers. □

## TALKIN' UNION BY JOHN ANDERSON

# UAW schism highlights union's problems



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

Canadian UAW Director Bob White has announced plans for taking the Canadian section out of the UAW-CIO. The immediate background to the schism is the 1984 contract negotiated by the bureaucratic leadership of the UAW. The three-year contract is designed for the profits of the corporation rather than the interests of the UAW membership. The UAW, in its early days, fought to get rid of incentive pay plans. Profit sharing pits worker against worker. It produces high profits for the employers with crumbs for the workers. The union leadership now promotes such schemes.

To get the contract ratified, GM workers were told they would each receive \$1,000.00 as their share of profits in 1984. Now they are being told their share may be nearer \$600.00. The corporation blames the strikes for the reduced profits.

## PROFIT SHARING

The Canadian workers rejected profit sharing and won a flat wage increase with a 13-day strike. The Canadian workers exposed President Bieber and the rest of the American UAW leadership for their subservience to the employers. Nationalism is a factor in the Canadian break with the UAW-CIO, but there are also political differences. The Canadian workers are tied to the New Democratic Party of Canada. Why should they be influenced in their bargaining by the capitalist Democratic Party as the UAW has been for the last 50 years?

The Big Three executives are almost as distressed as the UAW leadership over the split in the UAW ranks. They fear the loss of standing of Bieber and his machine over the UAW membership. If it weren't for the machine con-

trol of informational meetings prior to the ratification votes, the contract would have been rejected. As always, the press, the corporation and the unlimited funds available to the UAW leadership pushed ratification through by a small margin. Where there were opposition spokespersons, it was defeated. The defection of the Canadian UAW members may bring a meaningful political discussion into the union for the first time in more than 30 years. It could also spark an organized opposition.

## HARD LINE

Now that the contract has been ratified, plant managements are taking a hard line on production standards and work rules. They have no fear of strike action. In spite of continued heavy unemployment, overtime is the order of the day.

But despite all the services it has provided to the corporations, the UAW leadership has not been able to win the corporations' neutrality in the UAW's organizing drive for the white collar workers in the Electric Data System. The company says it will fight any and all attempts by the UAW to organize its white collar workers in their acquisition. Many GM white collar workers object to being transferred to this unit, because the fringe benefits are not as generous as they were getting in units where the UAW was the bargaining agent. The UAW has filed several requests for National Labor Relations Board elections in the new units.

In spite of the record profits earned by Chrysler stockholders and the generous bonuses for corporation executives, Lee Iacocca has rejected the request by the UAW to reopen the contract so Chrysler employees can get at least as

much in wages as the Ford and GM workers. It doesn't look as if the UAW is going to force the issue. It is doubtful if the Chrysler workers of Canada will strike as they did in 1982.

## NEGATIVE EFFECTS

And the negative effects of the policies of the UAW's leadership can be seen beyond the contract negotiations of the Big Three. The Toledo Auto Parts workers have now been on strike for nine months. The plant has been operating with strikebreakers. At a meeting at which I was invited to speak we heard the usual story. The company had obtained an injunction limiting picketing and other activities around the plant. The press, the police and the courts are all serving the company.

In May, when I spoke at the 50th anniversary celebration of the 1934 Auto-Lite strike, I was cut off when I mentioned the fact that the leaders of that strike were socialists. Now the AP strikers seem prepared for new political ideas. The strikers are of the age that they can have little hope of ever finding another job in industry. Any future they may have will have to be in a different economic system.

But this is not a message the UAW is putting forward. And employers in other plants represented by UAW Local 14 are using the example of the AP strike to run roughshod over their employees. We can only save the lives of these workers and millions of others in similar circumstances by a government under the control of the workers. Only such a government can save us from a nuclear holocaust. □



**EASTERN DEMANDS MORE CONCESSIONS**

On January 1, 1984, Eastern Airlines and the three unions representing its employees agreed to \$300 million of wage concessions.

Frank Borman, chairman of the board at Eastern, claimed the company would go bankrupt and thousands of jobs would be lost without an "austerity" program.

Workers gave up 18 to 22 percent of their wages for one year in exchange for 25 percent of the company's stock. One year later this deal has proved to be a badly mistaken tactic.

In what one official called "a despicable way to act," Borman recently sent a letter to all employees stating that the concessions would not end December 31 as scheduled.

The reason he gave was that the company needs to get out of the red and become financially profitable, which it has not been since 1979.

**REFUSAL**

In spite of Eastern's illegal refusal to pay the wages agreed on, none of the three unions involved has threatened to strike.

Larry Schulte, union official for the Air Line Pilots Association, said that ALPA would "probably take some legal action if we can't resolve the problem."

Robert Callahan of the Transport Workers Union, which represents flight attendants, had proposed that concessions be continued for three months in exchange for having the company brief employees on its financial status. The airline turned down the offer.

The bulk of Eastern employees are represented by the Machinists' union, IAM, headed by social democrat William Winpisinger. During the 1981 strike by PATCO, the air traffic controllers' union, IAM refused much needed support and crossed PATCO picket lines.

Now, Charles Bryan, IAM official for Eastern workers, has already ruled out a strike or slowdown to fight 1985 concessions.

The lesson to draw from the Eastern situation is that workers must rely on their unified strength instead of corporate tactics such as stock ownership and board directorships.

The company may or may not improve financially, but lost wages are never regained. The trust employees place in Eastern Airlines to keep its word has proved to be worthless next to Eastern's desire for profit.

**Chicago teachers settle but board plans more attacks**

by ALAN MAASS

CHICAGO, IL—A two-week strike of teachers and school employees here ended last month in a settlement that union officials are calling a substantial victory.

The Chicago school board, in the throes of its annual fiscal crisis, had planned to get rid of a \$40 million deficit by asking teachers and school employees to forego a wage increase, pay a quarter of their health insurance premiums and shave six paid days off the school calendar.

**BEAT**

At first glance, the deal for the teachers looks good. They won a 4.5% wage increase, and, more importantly, they beat off the board's attempt to attack health benefits.

But the school board got five days taken off the school calendar, and the wage increase, averaged across the whole year, comes to a 3.2%, barely an increase at all over the 2.9% hike won in last year's bitter school strike.

And this union "victory" rings hollow, as it threatens to leave the teachers wide open to attack when the next contract rolls around.

This is as much because of the conduct of the strike as anything else. Schools with picket lines were few and far between. Where they could be found, strikers were smaller in numbers than in previous years, less militant and kept completely in the dark by the union leadership.



Teachers picketing during the recent Chicago strike.

In order to show what new teachers union president Jacqueline Vaughn calls "good faith," teachers worked the first six weeks of school without a contract.

The crisis-ridden board found its usual erstwhile allies, from Illinois Governor James Thompson to Chicago Mayor Harold Washington, blaming the board and not the teachers for provoking a strike and mismanaging school finances.

Jesse Jackson's Operation PUSH, which regularly launches attacks on teachers' strikes to "keep the kids in school" and which last year filed a lawsuit to break the

strike, directed its fire toward the school board this year.

**MISTAKES**

But it was the board's political mistakes, and not the union's strategy that got public support behind the teachers and school employees.

The union could have taken advantage of the situation to build the confidence of rank and file teachers and to win as much as they could from the school bosses. But they didn't.

This could prove disastrous in the years to come. The bulk of this contract will be paid for by a one-time \$22 million expenditure from Illinois' Tax Amnesty Program.

**CRISIS**

But the financial crisis in city schools is likely to show up again next year. And if the board is more organized, they will renew their attempts to settle that crisis on the backs of teachers.

**DANLY WORKERS REJECT INSULTING CONTRACT OFFER**

CHICAGO, IL—Striking workers from Danly Machine Corp. in Cicero rejected a contract deal arrived at by company officials and worried leaders of the international.

Officials from the United Steelworkers international office entered "private" negotiations two months ago in an attempt to get this long and bitter strike out of their hair.

**NO GUARANTEES**

The contract they finally arrived at froze wages for two years, all but eliminated seniority rights and had no guarantees that any of the 600 striking machine tool workers would get their jobs back. These are the very same take-backs that Danly demanded in the first place!

The local membership overwhelmingly rejected this insulting backroom deal worked out courtesy of

the "liberal" trade union bureaucrat Lynn Williams and his friends.

This was a courageous move by the Danly strikers, but it leaves them right back where they were when the international entered negotiations—what to do next?

Local president Joe Romano was sentenced to ten days in jail and the local fined \$1,000 for allegedly violating a court order barring more than five picketers per gate.

**NONSENSE**

The charges were nonsense, but this court decision represents another attack on Danly workers by the bosses.

Danly workers will have to rely on their own strength to shut down the plant and get a decent contract. And they will have to step up efforts to gain active support for their strike.



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# Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION

## "CORPORATE CAMPAIGNS" A DEAD END FOR UNIONS MASS PICKETS CAN WIN

The week ending December 15 saw picket lines and demonstrations in major cities in support of striking Phelps Dodge copper workers who have been on strike since July, 1983. The protests were outside financial institutions involved in Phelps Dodge's business operations.

The objective of these pickets—organized by the United Steelworkers Union (USW)—was to pressure these institutions to force Phelps Dodge to negotiate with the striking union. Lynn Williams, newly elected president of the USW (the largest of Phelps Dodge's striking unions), spoke at a rally outside Phelps Dodge's corporate headquarters in New York City.

This was the latest in a series of "corporate campaigns" used by union leaders to win strikes across the country. These are basically public pressure operations in which unions use the intricate economic and political links in the economy to try to force companies to bargain.

### TACTIC

The most popular tactic is to get other unions or the public to threaten to withdraw their savings from banks with major shares in the company refusing to negotiate.

The originator of the corporate campaign is Roy Rogers, head of Corporate Campaign, Inc., whose firm specializes in organizing these campaigns. The other major

JOE ALLEN looks at how the Phelps Dodge strike can be won



corporate campaign firm is the Washington-based Kamber group who handle the USW campaigns against Phelps Dodge and the Danly Machine Corporation.

Corporate campaigns have become increasingly popular over the last five years. Union leaders no longer believe that the strike is an effective weapon. As Joe Romano, president of USW Local 15271 at Danly, says, "This strike won't be won at the picket line."

But corporate campaigns don't really offer a solution to concessions and union busting—as two recent strikes show.

In October, 1981, 1,600

members of the IAM went on strike against Brown and Sharpe in North Kingston, Rhode Island. Clashes between picketers and police occurred almost immediately.

The conflict escalated to the point where in mid-March, 1982, at their second support rally in four weeks, 1,500 strikers and supporters battled state and local police who charged them with clubs and pepper gas. The mass picketing, the militance, and the growing support of other workers showed clearly the potential to escalate the strike and to defeat the company.

But at this point the leaders brought in Roy Rogers and his corporate campaign to take the struggle away from the picket lines.

Rogers devised a bank account withdrawal scheme with union members leaving the plant gates to set up informational pickets outside the offices of the bank holding 17½% of Brown and Sharpe's stock. And union activists spent much of the fall of 1982 canvassing for local politicians. Nothing, however, changed at the bargaining table after the thrust of the strike was shifted away from the picket line. Not one rally was held at the plant after June, 1982.

When the corporate campaign finally ended, the strike was left directionless and ultimately lost.

### PHELPS DODGE

At Phelps Dodge's copper mining and smelting operations in Clifton and Morenci, Arizona in July, 1983, 13 unions, led by the USW, went on strike after the company refused to sign a contract.

After a year on strike, the USW brought the Kamber

group in to organize a corporate campaign against Phelps Dodge.

Dr. Jorge O'Leary, a former Phelps Dodge company doctor who was fired for supporting the strikers and who now operates a clinic providing free medical care for the copper workers in the area, wrote a letter to USW President Williams last October. He sums up the bankruptcy of corporate campaigns and argues that the events of August 8, 1983 were the high point of the strike.

On that day, over 1,000 strikers in Morenci responded to the company's attempts to replace them with scabs by arming themselves with baseball bats and blocking the mine entrance.

O'Leary writes, "At the time I was still an employee of Phelps Dodge, and I know that management was utterly terrified—shaken by the mobilization of the miners and their

families . . .

"I can say without fear of contradiction that . . . they were within reach of a tremendous victory over the company." Unfortunately, the union leadership forcefully intervened to stop the demonstrations and persuade the copper miners to place their trust in Governor Bruce Babbitt, a liberal Democrat.

### RELUCTANT

"The striking miners reluctantly accepted the advice of their leaders," says O'Leary, "and did not get the settlement that had been promised. We got the National Guard, the Department of Public Safety and a massive scabbing operation backed by the government.

"The USW and the AFL-CIO have now initiated what you call a corporate campaign. The idea behind this is that the union will enlist the support of the biggest banks on Wall Street to win the strike. Why beat around the bush? Nothing will be achieved through this campaign. It seems that the strategy of the USW does not understand that the path to victory lies in the mobilization of the workers—not in futile attempts to appeal to Wall Street bankers."

The Phelps Dodge miners are still on strike.

### LESSON

The lesson from these strikes is that efforts should be directed back to the picket lines where the rank and file has potential power—and not in corporate campaigns.

Corporate campaigns are a maneuver to keep the struggle in the hands of the trade union leaders—and out of the hands of the rank and file. □

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The Brown and Sharpe strike was diverted from the picket lines