

# Workers' Power

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## WE NEED A SHORTER WORK WEEK

### ALL UNIONS COMMITTEE LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT



The conference hall was overflowing with enthusiasm, determination, and more than 700 delegates, as the First National All Unions Conference to Shorten the Work Week took place in Dearborn, Michigan last week.

Representatives came from over 200 local unions, from 25 states and Canada.

They demanded that it was high time that everyone who wished to work in this society be able to find a job and live in dignity.

The only real way to provide the millions of necessary jobs, the Conference speakers explained, is to shorten the 40 hour work week, with no cut in pay.

Real unemployment is approaching ten million in the United States today. A five hour cut in working hours would create eight million new jobs. An eight hour reduction would produce 14 million.

The shrinking proportion of those who hold jobs has been forced to produce more and more over the last twenty years. From 1955 to 1976, productivity more than doubled, while the workforce grew by less than three percent.

In the period from 1970 to 1975, each 1% increase in unemployment resulted in:

- 4.1% more suicides
- 3.4% more mental hospital admissions
- 5.7% more state prison admissions
- 5.7% more homicides
- 2% more deaths from cirrhosis

of the liver, mainly due to alcoholism

[According to a study by the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress.]

Women and Blacks are forced to suffer the most. Government statistics show that the Black unemployment rate is more than double that for whites. For Black teenagers, unemployment is so high—50%—that many youths

know they can never expect to find a job.

#### THE LOSSES

To answer employers' arguments that a shorter work week will be too expensive, the All Unions Committee points out an interesting fact. In 1977, each unemployed worker cost taxpayers \$18,279. Meanwhile, the economy lost

\$21,000 in production for each worker unemployed for the whole year—far more than the wages and benefits such a worker would have received while working.

The figures, of course, don't include the human cost, the suffering, the poverty, the loss of dignity.

A movement—modest but significant—has begun to change these ugly facts. □

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# Anti-Busing Drive Kills Cleveland School Millage

by Eric Harper

CLEVELAND—The Cleveland school levy went down to defeat last week by a two to one margin.

School officials are now frantically searching for a way to pay the salaries of the 11,000 school employees who have been working without pay since mid-March.

Union officials are going to court to demand that either payrolls be met or the schools be closed down so their members can collect unemployment benefits. If no

action is taken, school employees will not report to work on Monday.

## CLEAR PATTERN

Many white voters saw defeating the levy as a way of demonstrating their opposition to court-ordered busing. Supporters of the levy were not successful in separating the financial crisis of the schools from the desegregation plan scheduled to go into effect in the fall.

A look at the voting returns shows a clear pattern. Opposition to the levy ran five to one in the

white working class wards of the city's west side where voter turnout was heavier than expected.

The levy was approved in the Black wards on the east side, but not by the margins that its supporters had hoped for.

Other factors contributed to the levy's defeat. Some people squeezed by inflation, voted their pocketbook—if the levy had passed the owner of a home valued at \$25,000 would have had to pay \$87 more per year in taxes.

A small minority voted no as a way of demonstrating their opposi-

tion to the mis-management and questionable financial policies of the school board.

Between now and June, when the levy will be re-submitted to the voters, supporters of desegregation and quality education will have to wage a vigorous campaign to place the blame for the financial crisis where it belongs—on the school board.

## TAX BREAKS

When Federal Judge Frank Battisti ruled that the Cleveland

school board acted to create and maintain a segregated school system, he showed that the site selection and construction of \$221 million worth of schools built during the past 20 years was done with the intention of keeping students separated by race.

To pay the cost of construction and maintenance of intentionally segregated schools, the school board borrowed money year in and year out at premium interest rates from Cleveland banks.

Community activists and the NAACP have charged the school board with conflict of interest in its handling of school finances.

The head of the three person financial committee, George Dobra, is the chief lobbyist for the Growth Association, the voice of big business in the city. Many of the major creditors of the school board now enjoy substantial tax breaks as a direct result of Dobra's lobbying efforts.

Another member of the school financial committee is vice president of a bank which has made substantial loans to the school district in the past. And, it was the desegregation hearings that exposed this cozy relationship between the school board and big business.

## POINTING THE FINGER

To cover its ass, the school board has pointed the finger at Judge Battisti and the desegregation plan. They have fought the desegregation order tooth and nail.

Three years ago it was clear that the schools didn't have enough money to continue operating without additional revenues but the school board did nothing.

They choose not to put the levy on the ballot last year because they were all running for reelection. Better to associate the levy with desegregation than with their own performance.

The Cleveland Education Coalition has been in the forefront of efforts to expose the rotten role of the school board. It has called for the resignation of the school superintendent Paul Briggs and of George Dobra as the main architects of the board's policies.

It has also demanded that the schools remain open during the present crisis and that the school employees be paid from state funds.

The coalition has called on the school board to begin implementation of the desegregation order before school lets out in June. To date, practically nothing has been done to prepare people for the fall when the desegregation order goes into effect.

The defeat of the levy has given a boost to anti-busing forces and

The defeat of the levy has given a boost to anti-busing forces. Local politicians who until recently have avoided the issue, are now showing signs of being prepared to place themselves at the head of an anti-busing movement.

This growing racist reaction will have to be met with grass roots organization—that unites the east and the west sides and places responsibility for the current crisis where it belongs—on the banks, the politicians and the school board.

# Racism Alive And Well In Detroit Suburb

by Marilyn Danton

Birmingham, Michigan. Population 25,000. Located six and one-half miles north of Detroit.

Two weeks ago Birmingham voters overwhelmingly rejected a proposal for a government-subsidized housing project for senior citizens. The government requires communities that apply for federal grants to provide low income housing as well.

The specific proposal for low income housing was the reconditioning of fifty houses throughout the city for low income rental purposes.

It takes a lot of money to live in Birmingham. People in that suburb want to keep it that way.

Houses currently on the market range from \$25,000 to \$400,000. But there's very few homes available at the low end—less than 5%. Most housing falls into the \$65,000 to \$70,000 range.

Birmingham is nestled right next to Bloomfield Hills, one of the ritziest suburbs in the area and home to the people who own General Motors and Chrysler.

## 150 STEPS BACKWARD

"The overall action of the entire plan is to create or generate a total social and economic mix within the same housing structure, within the same living space.

"Such a mix is biologically wrong." That's how William York, candidate for Birmingham City Commission, put it a few days before the vote.

Mayor Dorothy Conrad, a strong supporter of the housing plan, commented on York's statement: "If you read what he said, that man supports the caste system. It's not one step back, it's 150 steps back."

Conrad lost her job as Mayor as a result of her pro-housing stand.

Tom Hahn, an architect who has worked in Birmingham for the past six years, told Workers' Power that while the community needs low cost housing for its elderly citizens, "People in Birmingham voted [the proposals] down because we felt that we'd be importing undesirable people from outside the communi-

ty. We'd lower the value of properties and the standard of living in the community."

## RACISM

When asked if race had anything to do with voting down the proposals, Kahn responded: "There would be an element of that in there."

In fact, there was more than "an element" of racism involved.

The racist campaign included the successful recall of three of the six pro-housing commissioners. And on May 8, the other three pro-housing commissioners face a recall election as well.

Like most suburbs, there is no low cost housing in Birmingham.

In order to deal with this problem, Congress passed the Housing and Community Development Act in 1974 which requires communities that apply for federal

construction grants to provide low income housing.

But wealthy Birmingham residents aren't having any. They'd rather let their senior citizens go wanting than open the door to Black people from Detroit only a few miles away.



Homes like these sell for \$100,000 to \$200,000. Residents of this wealthy suburb don't want low cost housing because ordinary people from Detroit, six miles away might move in.

# MINERS PUSH MILLER RECALL

by Jim Woodward

A group of local and district-level officials of the United Mine Workers union may be close to forcing a special union convention in their drive to oust UMW President Arnold Miller.

Don Nunley, an executive member of the Ohio-based UMW District 6, is leading the drive. Although he voted for Miller in last year's elections, he's trying to remove the union leader because of his performance in this year's strike.

On April 1, UMW officials from Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Missouri met in Gallipolis, Ohio to plan their strategy. To force a special union convention, they need resolutions passed by a majority of the local unions in at least five UMW districts.

Nunley told Workers' Power in a phone interview that he fully expects to have the necessary approvals from five districts by Monday, April 17.

The aim of a special convention, he says, "is to change the recall procedures—either to set time limits or to speed them up."

Because of constitutional difficulties, they will not actually try to remove Miller at the convention.

## PROCEDURES

As the union's constitution reads now, the mechanics of a recall drive are almost impossible.

The first step is to gather signatures from five per cent of the union's membership on recall petitions. This has already been achieved.

On March 8, a group called Miners for Recall turned in 18,000

signatures—4000 more than needed.

Miners for Recall, led by members of Local 1766 in West Virginia, began the petition drive last fall after the coal operators forced through heavy cuts in miners' health benefits.

A massive wildcat strike, lasting two months, fought the cuts. Miller opposed the strike and at one point sent a goon squad to West Virginia to try to stop it.

The recall group suspended its operations when the contract strike began December 6, according to spokesman Bill Bryant, because of the need for unity against the coal operators. But after Miller demonstrated his eagerness to settle the strike on very unfavorable terms, the recall petitions were turned in.

The UMW constitution, however, puts no limit on how soon the union must respond to these petitions.

Miller has announced that the signatures will be checked very carefully—a process that could drag out indefinitely.

## WHY A CONVENTION

If the signatures are ruled valid, at some point the union is obligated to send out official recall petitions. Then, one-third of the union's 277,000 members must sign these petitions within 30 days in order to get a recall election.

Since this process is so difficult, it is quite likely that Miller could remain in office, even though he is clearly disliked by the vast majority of the union's membership.

That's why some members favor a special convention, although this route will not be an easy one either.

Another possibility for getting rid of Miller would be his voluntary resignation. This is not entirely out of the question, particularly since Miller has suffered a mild stroke and then a mild heart attack since the contract was signed.

A resignation—or perhaps a determination that Miller is medically incapable of serving—would be the ideal solution for the porkchoppers who inhabit the UMW's Washington headquarters.

That would hand union power over to Vice President Sam Church, an old supporter of former UMW President Tony Boyle. Church is more decisive than Miller, but he is viewed as a potential dictator by much of the membership.

This would be viewed favorably by the coal operators and the government, which want stronger leadership in the union, but it would not help the rank and file members much.

## MEMBERS ROBBED

On another front, four Ohio miners have filed suit against Miller for withholding contributions that other unions made during the strike.

These included \$2 million from the Auto Workers, \$1 million from the Steelworkers, \$1 million from the Communications Workers, and smaller amounts from other

unions.

Almost none of this money has been distributed to the membership, according to district-level officials. Many charge that this was done to force the membership to ratify the last contract.

"The 4½ million that was supposed to be turned over to the membership, we never received

it," said Gene Oiler, a Middleport, Ohio miner who is a plaintiff in the suit. "Every district knows it was kept back. We don't know at this time what happened to it until we go into court."

Oiler emphasized that the relief money is urgently needed. "The membership is in a hard way right now, even though they draw their

first payday on Friday. They're still way behind on their bills, and this money was meant to pay the bills."

Many local unions throughout the country contributed food and money directly to the various UMW district relief funds. These contributions were immediately put to work by the rank and file miners who administered these funds. □

# Detroit Union Rally Aims For Solidarity

SOUTHGATE, Michigan—Last weekend about 200 people attended a Labor Solidarity Rally here at the United Steelworkers local 2659 union hall.

The inspiration and much of the organizing drive for the rally came from Local 2659 and its Recording Secretary Dave Roup.

Roup's idea is to continue the cross-union communication and solidarity that was created here by the miners' strike support campaign.

Similar efforts have been taking place in other cities, such as the

Committee of Concerned Unionists in Pittsburgh.

A focus for strike support in this area is the Oakland Press, a local newspaper owned by the Capital Cities Communications conglomerate, which has been running a scab operation for close to four months.

## "WE WILL PREVAIL"

Willard Hatch, from the Newspaper Guild International, came to represent the much-publicized

strikers' fight against the Oakland Press.

"We are as strong," Hatch asserted, "we are as together, and we are committed now as we were on the first day—and we are going to prevail."

The film, "Harlan County" was shown after a program of many other speakers, including representatives from the USW, UAW, and UMW International unions, rank and filers and local officials.

But the rally also showed that sustaining cross-union solidarity and activity is no easy task. There were no calls to action in the many speeches.

The featured speaker, for example, was Charles G. Younglove, District Director of United Steelworkers District 29.

He condemned Jimmy Carter for his anti-labor handling of the coal strike, and denounced Democratic State Congressmen for their absence from the Rally.

Yet Younglove's emotional plea for national health insurance, tax and labor law reform and similar issues all boiled down to a single feeble piece of advice: "You gotta vote."

## HOT AIR

The District Director also spent a lot of time praising the virtues of the strike weapon. All the while he managed to studiously avoid any mention of the notorious no-strike deal by his own International union.

It took some nerve, in the same speech, for Younglove to blast politicians who only put out hot air and "won't commit themselves to a damn thing."

Building ongoing cross-union strike support groups is an important, worthwhile and very difficult goal for rank and filers and local officials. It will not be aided by this kind of International "hot air." □



Jim White, Chairman of the Safety Committee of Local 1638, UMW District 6 addresses the labor solidarity rally. It was the inspiration of the miners' struggle that originally brought these different unions together.

# HUMAN RIGHTS - JIMMY CARTER'S THROWAWAY LINE

The Disappearing Act of the Year Award goes to Jimmy Carter's once-heralded campaign for human rights.

The campaign magically vanished from sight in the course of the Belgrade Conference on European Security.

At Belgrade, the United States had promised to demand a full discussion of violations of human rights agreements signed at Helsinki in 1975.

Instead, the conference ended with a declaration in which the subject of human rights is not even mentioned.

Human rights, which the Carter Administration chose for its political mileage, is now more of a liability.

For the American ruling class is not about to risk disrupting relations, either with Russia or friendly pro-U.S. dictatorships, over the human rights issue.

## REPRESSION

Meanwhile, the crackdowns predicted by Eastern European dissidents have begun. The many signs of the repression include:

- The upcoming trials of three Soviet dissidents, Anatoli Shcharansky, Yuri Orlov and Alexander Ginsburg.

The Russian government now claims it has dredged up "proof" that Shcharansky was a CIA agent. Apparently, the government had Shcharansky's roommate hire himself out to the CIA in order to concoct this charge.

- The disappearance of Victor Klebanov, the leading member of the "Free Trade Union of Soviet Workers," after the Union called a press conference in Moscow. He has not been heard from since.

- Firings and stepped-up police harassment of members of the "Charter 77" movement in Czechoslovakia.

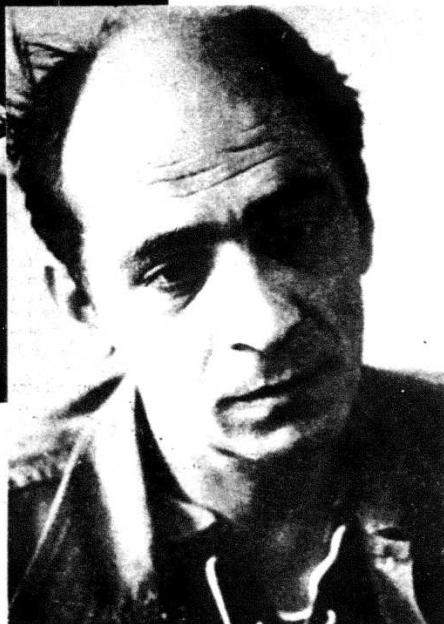
In some places, dissident movements are still growing. According to one report, as many as 25 unofficial magazines and discussion bulletins are being produced and passed from hand to hand inside Poland.

## A LIABILITY NOW

But the Carter Administration has clearly decided that human rights is a politically inconvenient topic at this time. It might interfere with the superpower deals the United States is trying to work with Russia, for example, over the future of Ethiopia.



Jimmy Carter discovered that human rights were too hot to handle—so promises to Eastern European dissidents like Leonid Plyushch (right) were scrapped.



## Eastern Europe Dissidents Are The Victims

Last year, Leonid Plyushch, a socialist Ukrainian dissident, toured the United States on behalf of the Helsinki Monitoring Groups.

These groups, set up by dissident activists in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, have publicized specific cases and general patterns of political sup-

pression and rights violations.

Plyushch made it clear that Eastern European human rights activists, including many with left-wing socialist views, considered the Belgrade conference crucial to their future.

When, for instance, during his speech in Detroit Plyushch was asked how he viewed the importance of this conference, he replied:

"Most countries are trying to reduce the Helsinki accords to a bartering tool. We are waging a struggle to prevent this from happening."

Yet this is exactly what has happened. Soviet and Eastern European dissidents, who were relying on pressure from the west to ease repressive conditions, are the victims.

Many of these human rights fighters, including socialists like Plyushch, believe that the western capitalist system is less vicious and repressive than the bureaucratic collectivist states of the East.

They are, unfortunately, mistaken. They are simply wrong to believe an American President, who has just praised the "deep concern for human rights" of the Shah of Iran, one of the most vicious rulers in the world, would take any political risks to keep his promises to Eastern European dissidents.

But the betrayal of those promises makes it all the more important for socialists in the West to support the struggles of the human rights fighters in the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the rest of Eastern Europe. □

## Down with Bakke

In the Detroit area, 250 people demonstrated against the Bakke decision. A hundred people rallied at the Ann Arbor campus of the University of Michigan and 150 came to a rally in downtown Detroit.

The rally was organized by the Michigan Coalition to Overturn the Bakke Decision and was part of a national day of protest.

Leaders of the Coalition plus representatives of community and labor organizations spoke about the effects of the Bakke decision and the need to build a mass movement.

### NATIONAL MARCH

The rallies were part of the build-up to the April 15 march on Washington called by the National Coalition to Overturn the Bakke Decision of which the Michigan coalition is part.

Thousands are expected in Washington on that date. Three bus-loads from the Detroit area will be part of that response to the racist and sexist attack upon minorities and women that the Bakke decision represents. □

L.S.



PITTSBURGH, April 8 — Members of the International Socialists participated with members of other Black, women's and political groups in a rally to defend affirmative action.

About 100 people attended the afternoon program at Market Square.

Signs and banners calling for the reversal of the Bakke decision, music and speakers, and a beautiful sunny day combined to get the message across to hundreds of downtown shoppers: The Bakke Decision is just one front of an attack against the civil rights gains of minorities and women, and all the attacks must be met by an organized movement.

Earlier in the day, local Black politicians (Western Pennsylvania Black Political Assembly) held two workshops; the first, on the "scientific application of disruption theory" (which is easily translated into "making the tactics of confrontation win"); the second was a panel discussion of Bakke and its implications.

A lawyer, speaking on Bakke, summed up the direction of the day: "We won't win in the courtroom — we'll win in the streets." □

D.S.

## Revolutionaries Gaining In France

Despite the defeat of the French left-wing alliance in last month's Parliamentary elections, at least one section of the far left made a good showing.

The revolutionary socialist organization Lutte Ouvriere (Workers' Struggle) had candidates in almost all 491 electoral districts. In the first round, Lutte Ouvriere candidates got a total of half a million votes, for an average of 1.7%.

This was about half of all votes picked up by slates to the left of the Communist Party.

Other slates included the "Self-Management Front" and a coalition

called "Regroupment for Socialism, Power to the Workers."

All groups running candidates on the far left supported the Communist-Socialist alliance in the second-round runoffs.

### FULL SLATE

The importance of Lutte Ouvriere's vote is that it indicates considerable strength in industrial working class Communist Party strongholds.

This was the first election in which Lutte Ouvriere was able to field a full slate of candidates running in its own name. □

# IT'S TIME FOR A SHORTER WORK WEEK!

by Candy Martin

DEARBORN, Michigan, April 11—"As we meet here today, there are almost ten million people in this country who are underemployed or unemployed. Can anyone deny that the hours of labor [the 40 hour work week] are too long?"

Frank Runnels, president of UAW Cadillac Local 22 and newly-elected president of the All Unions Committee to Shorten the Work Week, continued:

**"Just as sure as you and I are here today, the forty hour system has built a wall around our jobs. That wall has locked out ten million people. It is time to tear that old wall down!"**

That is the goal that brought together over 700 enthusiastic delegates representing 800,000 union members from across this country and Canada to the first national convention of the All Unions Committee to Shorten the Work Week.

Attendance out-distanced all expectations.

Speakers at the conference included Doug Fraser, International President of the United Auto Workers, John Conyers, the Michigan congressman who has introduced a shorter work week bill, James Balanoff, District 31 Direc-

tor of the United Steelworkers, and others.

The Committee was formed last October, when 50 delegates from 38 local unions met in Detroit for a one-day convention.

**According to the Committee, a reduction of one hour per week in working hours would create a million and a half new jobs.**

At the same time as unemployment continues to grow, the Committee emphasizes, productivity continues to climb:

In the automobile and transportation industry, for instance, production increased by 93% between 1953 and 1977; the number of production workers declined by 16% in the same span. The story is the same in industry after industry.

These factors—high productivity and high unemployment—are what make the shorter work week especially important today, Runnels and others point out. The struggle to win one has a long history and is rooted in the traditions of the labor movement.

**Runnels also points out that the struggle is an international one. "We do not stand alone in the struggle against unemployment. Just last week there were strikes and demonstrations by twenty-five million of our brothers and sisters**

**in every country of Western Europe.**

**"So the fight for shorter hours has become a world-wide campaign."**

## STRATEGY

The founding of the Shorter Work Week Committee represents an important step.

**It is a reflection of the small but growing labor response, especially by secondary-level union officials and union activists, to the economic crisis and crackdown by employers. The delegates who came to last week's conference came to begin some serious and committed work, not just to listen to speeches and good intentions.**

Yet, the official strategy chosen by the Committee is a loser. In addition to unspecified goals in collective bargaining, its main emphasis will be passage of Conyers' House H.R. 11784 bill.

The legislative focus was put forward in spite of the obvious disgust by nearly everyone at the Conference with Carter, the Democrats, and labor's so-called "friends."

Conyer's bill calls for a reduction in the work week from 40 hours to 37½ hours in two years and to 35

hours after four years, and for double-time pay for overtime.

There are two reasons that the Conyers' legislation strategy will prove to be a loser.

First of all, the bill leaves the question of no cut in pay as hours get cut (for which there was unanimous support at the conference) up in the air. The question will be decided in collective bargaining, according to the bill.

**That means that the legislation will not guarantee 35 for 40 (35 hours work for 40 hours pay), but 35 for 35—unless unions win contract language to the contrary.**

With some opposition to shorter hours by workers who want (and many who need) more overtime, any bill which means a pay cut will not gain support.

## MOBILIZE AND ACTIFY

But an even bigger problem working against shorter work week activists will be the tactics which are planned to get the bill passed.

Those tactics include no direct action whatsoever, no mobilization of labor's great power, no demonstrations. There will, instead, be a petition drive.

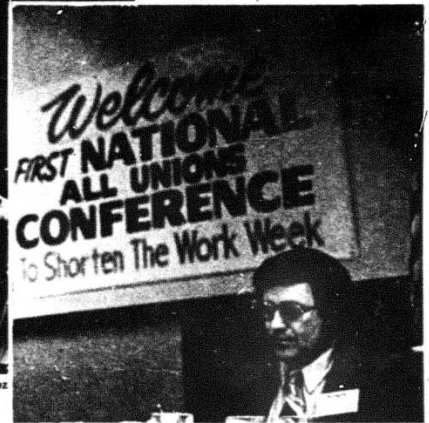
In a press conference, Runnels was asked whether this tactic will

[Left] Doug Fraser. "As sure as I stand here, the American worker is going to have a four-day week. . . . The only question is when."

[Below] Frank Runnels. "Our economy cannot sustain a 40-hour work week."



Photos: Paul Broz



be sufficient to win the Committee's goal in the current climate of business aggression. He answered:

**"When you talk about labor, and you talk about muscle power, you also have to remember that labor has brain power. That's how we intend to deal with it. We're an accepted organization. We're using our brains now instead of our muscle."**

But there was clear sentiment to the contrary among delegates. One workshop in the afternoon expressed near-unanimous support for the organization of a national march on Washington. Reports from the workshops, however, were not brought back to the main session.

During plenary floor discussion, Lee Kane, a delegate from Kentucky, proposed that shorter work week committees be formed in every local union represented; that "we mobilize and actify people the same as we did in the civil rights movement—that's the only way we're going to get this bill passed"; and that demonstrations be held in every major city in the country "to actify Congress." But there was no action taken on the proposal.

Overall attitudes among delegates were that now it would be up to them to go back to their home locals and districts, spread the word, and organize support on a local and regional level.

It will be up to them as well to pressure the official structure of the Committee to adopt more militant and effective tactics. The future of the Committee, and of the shorter work week for American workers, will depend on their success. □

[Left] Delegates. They came to begin some serious work, not just listen to good intentions.



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MEMORIAL FOR  
SLAIN ATTICA BROTHER

# DALOU ASAHI, AS I REMEMBER HIM

Dalou Asahi (Maliano Gonzalez), one of the Attica Brothers indicted after the 1971 prison rebellion, was killed in what New York police called a shoot-out last week.

The circumstances of the shooting, in which two policemen were killed and another Attica Brother, Jomo Eric Thompson, was seriously wounded, are still very unclear.

Jack Bloom came to know Dalou Asahi during a speaking tour the two of them went on three years ago, to raise money and build support for the Attica Brothers.

They covered several Midwest cities on one leg of the tour, and several western cities on another.

During that tour, Jack recalls, they "ate together, rode together, shared the same makeshift sleeping conditions, and constantly talked and shared ideas with each other. We became good friends."

by Jack Bloom

I first read of Dalou's death in Workers' Power. It came as a shock that this man, whom I knew so well, had been murdered.

I am sure it was murder—because the story the police gave out cannot be true.

They claim that when Dalou was ordered to submit to a search, he grabbed the cop and ended up getting shot.

Dalou was not a fool. He understood how vicious the police were.

During the Attica rebellion, when the police stormed the prison killing 43 people, Dalou and most of the rest of the inmates saved their lives by stripping stark naked to show they had no weapons and

were not trying to fight back.

Dalou knew the police would happily kill him, and he was not eager to give them a chance to do so.

He was murdered because he

was one of the Attica Brothers, because he had refused to give up the fight, and because he was a revolutionary.

Dalou was a Black Puerto Rican. He was deeply committed to the cause of Puerto Rican independence, and to the struggle for working people in this country.

## PRISONS

He was thrown in jail on a phony holdup charge, and was left to rot there for nine years.

Before Attica, he had been around to a lot of the New York jails, including the infamous Tombs where prison revolts preceded Attica's.

He had had time to come to understand the prisons, and the system that created them, and he could speak eloquently about them.

In an interview for Workers' Power he told me: "Working conditions were intolerable. Inmates slaved at slave wages, 25 cents a day, working for five hours in the metal shop, a sweatshop where the temperature reached 105 to 120 degrees.

"The Emancipation Act of 1868 says that all persons shall be

exempt from servitude or slavery—except persons convicted of a felony and serving terms in prison.

"Prisoners work under slavery conditions. We are part of the working class movement, and of great significance to the whole struggle.

"There is only one answer to prevent further victimization of prisoners: revolution.

"We first have to organize the working class movement, it's the backbone of this society. That's where the power lies.

"Revolution is the only solution which can abolish the slavery conditions in prison."

## ATTICA LEADER

When the prisoners at Attica rebelled against those intolerable conditions, Dalou quite naturally was chosen to be one of their spokesmen.

That made him a member of the negotiating team, and therefore he was considered one of the leaders of the uprising.

Rockefeller, who was then Governor of New York, chose to brutally suppress the rebellion instead of meeting with the negotiating team to discuss terms for humanizing the conditions at the prison.

Forty-three people, including a number of guards, were killed in the process. Someone had to take the blame for those deaths.

Naturally the finger couldn't be pointed at Rockefeller, whose hands were dripping with blood. They needed a scapegoat.

The negotiating team was the obvious choice. All of its members were charged with murder.

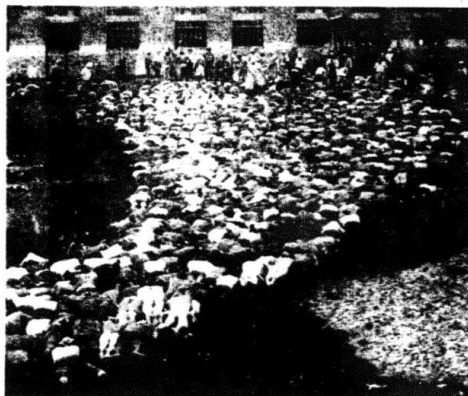
As Rockefeller was being confirmed as the nation's first unelected Vice President, the cover-up murder trials were taking place.

After a protracted legal struggle, Dalou immediately went to work for the Attica defense, and that's where I met him.

Dalou liked to play volley ball in the sun. He liked to eat good food and to listen to music.

He liked the pleasures of life, just like the rest of us do. But he couldn't pursue these and forget all he had learned in life, and

■■■■  
"Dalou couldn't forget all he had learned in prison. Many of the Attica Brothers dropped the struggle once they got out. Dalou didn't."



Attica, 1971.

# CRISIS IN STEEL

## Executives Crying Poverty; or, Hard Times On \$372,972 A Year

by Candy Martin

1977 was a year of hardship for the steel industry, so we were told.

In big campaigns, steel barons cried poverty, unfair competition and government neglect. We were treated to a barrage of propaganda about imports, to pressure for competition protection, and for the reference pricing plan.

U.S. Steel, seeking to slash costs, led the attack on the right of coal miners to work without losing their lives.

Meanwhile, thousands upon thousands of steelworkers were laid off or lost life-long jobs when mills shut down.

The survival of at least three mill towns in Ohio and Pennsylvania was threatened altogether, when the industry decided to move plants out.

But the hardship did not extend to the men in charge of these supposedly crisis-ridden companies.

While screaming that a 1½% contract increase in new money for steelworkers would be inflationary, top executives and chairmen of six major corporations got average



Speer

salary increases of 13%.

### SIX-FIGURE BOYS

Take Bethlehem. The livelihoods of over 7,000 workers were destroyed, and the economies of two communities wrecked, when the company announced the closures of its Bethlehem and Johnstown,



Foy

Pennsylvania plants.

But Lewis W. Foy, the company's chairman, got away with a total of \$406,982. His six-figure base salary of \$296,000, not counting bonuses, jumped 17% from the previous year.

U.S. Steel, of course, claimed it was in big trouble too. Not so much, however, that it couldn't



Stinson

afford a fat \$372,972 base salary for chairman Edgar J. Speer (an increase of 15%).

At National Steel, George A. Stinson, the chairman of the nation's third-largest producer, could not quite keep up. He only got upped to \$320,000—a measly \$4,000 raise.

The story was the same at



Verity

Armco, where chairman William Verity's base jumped to \$300,000, or 18%; at Inland, where chairman Frederick G. Jaicks got total compensation of \$258,404; and at Wheeling-Pittsburgh, where chairman Robert E. Lauterback, who retired at the end of the year, made away with \$256,900—an 18% raise. Pity, pity, these hard times. □

## Charges I Detroit

HAMTRAMCK, Mich.—In the late 1960's Chrysler Corp. faced a problem—the militancy of the predominantly Black workforce in its Detroit plants. One way Chrysler tried to counter this was to hire thousands of Arab workers.

Chrysler thought that by introducing a group of people new to the country, unfamiliar with the English language and new to trade union organization, they could solve some of their labor problems.

This strategy was successful up to a point. But over the years Arab workers have begun to assert themselves and to reach out to their

# AS

exempt from servitude or slavery—except persons convicted of a felony and serving terms in prison.

"Prisoners work under slavery conditions. We are part of the working class movement, and of great significance to the whole struggle.

"There is only one answer to prevent further victimization of prisoners: revolution.

"We first have to organize the working class movement, it's the backbone of this society. That's where the power lies.

"Revolution is the only solution which can abolish the slavery conditions in prison."

### ATTICA LEADER

When the prisoners at Attica rebelled against those intolerable conditions, Dalou quite naturally was chosen to be one of their spokesmen.

That made him a member of the negotiating team, and therefore he was considered one of the leaders of the uprising.

Rockefeller, who was then Governor of New York, chose to brutally suppress the rebellion instead of meeting with the negotiating team to discuss terms for humanizing the conditions at the prison.

Forty-three people, including a number of guards, were killed in the process. Someone had to take the blame for those deaths.

Naturally the finger couldn't be pointed at Rockefeller, whose hands were dripping with blood. They needed a scapegoat.

The negotiating team was the obvious choice. All of its members were charged with murder.

As Rockefeller was being confirmed as the nation's first unelected Vice President, the cover-up murder trials were taking place.

After a protracted legal struggle, Dalou immediately went to work for the Attica defense, and that's where I met him.

Dalou liked to play volley ball in the sun. He liked to eat good food and to listen to music.

He liked the pleasures of life, just like the rest of us do. But he couldn't pursue these and forget all he had learned in life, and



Dalou Asahi (right) and Jack Bloom in 1974.

particularly in prison.

Many of the Attica Brothers dropped the struggle once they got out. Dalou didn't.

He continued to struggle for

all the Attica Brothers, and to expose the system that had oppressed them all. And did so effectively.

So, he was murdered. He will be missed. □

## Charges Dropped Against Detroit Arab Worker

HAMTRAMCK, Mich.—In the late 1960's Chrysler Corp. faced a problem—the militancy of the predominantly Black workforce in its Detroit plants. One way Chrysler tried to counter this was to hire thousands of Arab workers.

Chrysler thought that by introducing a group of people new to the country, unfamiliar with the English language and new to trade union organization, they could solve some of their labor problems.

This strategy was successful up to a point. But over the years Arab workers have begun to assert themselves and to reach out to their

fellow workers.

The Nagi Mohamed/Dodge Workers Defense Committee is a case in point. Last July, Nagi Mohamed was fired from Chrysler's Dodge Main plant for allegedly striking a foreman. Since that time the Committee has brought together a committed group of Black, white and Arab workers who have been campaigning for Nagi's reinstatement.

### IMPORTANT VICTORY

On March 29, the Committee won an important victory when

assault and battery charges filed against Nagi were dropped. The fact that the committee had packed the courtroom for three days of the hearing probably had something to do with the judge's decision.

The dropping of the charges will give the Union a stronger case in the grievance procedure which is now in the "appeal board" step.

UAW International Representative Willie Stoval has promised that this grievance is one of his highest priorities. The Committee intends to see that it stays that way. □

[Anyone interested in helping the committee can call 898-3154.]

# N.Y. Medicaid Abortions Saved — For Now

by Florence Dennis

NEW YORK—The New York State budget was held hostage for five days by an amendment that would forbid the state to pay for abortions, except in cases where the mother's life was in danger.

The Republican-controlled state Senate finally dropped the controversial amendment, after it was rejected by the Assembly and New York Governor Hugh Carey declared that he would veto it.

New York remains one of 11 states that still pays for abortions for Medicaid patients.

### TO ALBANY

On Tuesday, April 4, the Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse (CARASA), along with other groups supporting "a woman's right to choose" sent busloads of people to Albany, armed with voting records, position papers, and other assorted memos used in lobbying.

We went to tell our elected representatives that we are watching them, and that we will continue to do so. Women demand no restrictions on the right to abortion.

Anti-abortion politicians hoped to blackmail the legislators into a ban on payments. Every day of delay in passing the budget threatened to stop welfare checks, daycare funds, and—most important to the legislators—delay the expected borrowings that would provide hundreds of millions of dollars to their local constituencies which depend on the state for funds for schools and many other programs.

According to one legislator I spoke with, this kind of blackmail tactic is used when politicians fear they don't have enough support for their position to vote on the issue itself, so they connect it to another issue, like the New York State budget, bills that need immediate action. Then, they hope to pick up a few extra votes due to time pressure.

Last year, anti-abortion politicians succeeded in getting a federal ban on abortion payments by tying the anti-abortion Hyde Amendment to the national budget for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Fortunately, blackmail didn't work this time around.

### ON THE AGENDA

The budget wasn't the only bill up for a vote this week in Albany. On Tuesday's agenda of the Assembly's Health Committee were two other bills about abortion.

The first would have cut off all Medicaid funds for all abortions (including rape and incest-caused pregnancies), except those to save the life of the mother.

This outrageous bill was only narrowly defeated, 9-11, against

sending it out of the Committee and to the floor of the House.

The second bill passed, 14-6, out of the Committee and will soon come up for a vote of the House.

This is a counseling bill that requires the New York State Health Department to provide literature for abortion counselors who now must tell women seeking abortions of all other alternatives to abortion (childbirth, giving the baby up for adoption, etc.)

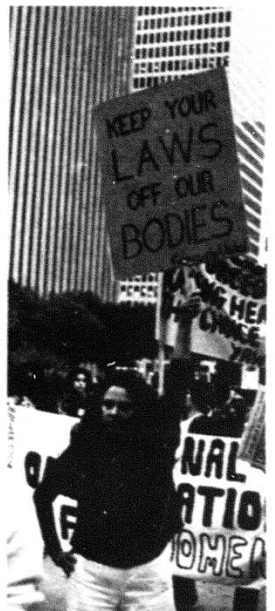
The significance of this bill is great—it is based on the Akron, Ohio laws that aim to restrict abortion by requiring counseling, parental consent by minors, and other measures.

### FIGHT

Although women scored a victory when the anti-abortion amendment was dropped from the NY state budget, the issue has not been laid to rest.

Conservatives have put abortion on the agenda again, and women will have to fight to maintain this right.

Those of us who went to Albany with CARASA know that our most important work is when we get off the buses back home. We must involve more women—especially those who can't afford to go to the state capital and can't afford abortions—in the struggle for reproductive freedom, our freedom to choose whether we want children, and when, and our fight to a decent wage so we can bring up our children as healthy as possible. □



# Speaking Out

What We Think

## Why Panama Won't Buy Carter's Canal Game

What was called President Carter's "first big victory"—the Senate's vote for the first Panama Canal treaty—is now becoming a symbol for the near-collapse of his political authority at home and abroad.

In Panama, students showed what they think of Jimmy Carter and what he can do with his treaties. They hanged the U.S. President in effigy.

The massive popular opposition to the provisions of the treaty, inside Panama, has become so overwhelming that the Roman Catholic Church, the National Council of the Private Sector, and almost every political organization has jumped on the anti-treaty bandwagon.

### TREATY SUPPORT IS CRUMBLING

The public furor focusses on the "DeConcini reservation" attached to the first treaty, giving the U.S. the right to intervene militarily in Panama to protect the Canal's so-called "neutrality."

But the fact is that support for the entire treaty package in Panama was unenthusiastic and shallow to begin with. That

support is now crumbling. Even Panama's most right-wing politicians must express outrage against treaty "reservations" to avoid being discredited.

Any further provisions, such as the second DeConcini reservation which will spell out the right of the United States to send troops anywhere in Panama, would only seal the fate of the treaties.

**We have no sympathy for the Carter Administration's dilemma over the Panama Canal. It has brought this political fiasco on itself.**

The treaties, as originally negotiated, were blatantly interventionist to begin with. Their whole purpose is to perpetuate U.S. military control of territory which was stolen from the Panamanian people.

But not content with this, the Carter Administration went out and outright bought the votes of a few far-right Senators, like DeConcini, by accepting provisions that openly wipe out Panama's right to sovereignty and national independence.

So Panamanian military ruler General Torrijos is taking his case against Jimmy "Human Rights" Carter's Adminis-

tration to the members of the United Nations.

**Torrijos, in fact, is trying to find some way to save the treaties—and his own job. But the most hopeful sign is that the Panamanian people are taking the situation into their own hands.**

Face-saving maneuvers may be attempted. The Panamanian ambassador has proposed a statement that nothing in the treaties violates the United Nations charter, which prohibits military intervention or political interference in the internal affairs of member countries.

But empty statements of principle, or the United Nations charter, will not stop the U.S. from occupying Panama any more than it stopped the war in Vietnam. What will get the U.S. out, and return the Panama Canal to its rightful owners, the people of Panama, are the Panamanian people themselves.

The U.S. will give up its gunboat diplomacy only when the anger and resistance of Panamanian workers make the costs too high.

**That's why, as far as we're concerned, the students of Panama have given Carter the right message.** □

### As I See It

## Back to the kitchen-barefoot and pregnant?

*"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."*

by Jenny Singer

I never cared very much about the ERA. I wanted it to pass, sure. But I knew that women needed a lot more than just formal, legal equality—we need the chances that will help us get out from under all these years. One sentence in the Constitution wasn't going to raise my pay or build a daycare center for my nephews and nieces. Besides, the Constitution is just a piece of paper that's violated all the time.

But recently, I've changed my attitude. Because the "other side" made the no-big-deal ERA into a great big deal.



ERA opponents—"the other side."

This is 1978. This is America, not Saudi Arabia. Why can't women in this country be equals with men?

What are the people who oppose ERA so afraid of?

The ERA doesn't grant women any special privileges. It doesn't say we deserve more rights than men.

All it does is say that under the Constitution of the United States women are equal citizens.

Is that so outrageous? Is that so hard to swallow? Supposedly, women were made equal citizens in 1920 when the Constitution was amended to give us the right to vote.

But today there are strong forces who are fighting against

even this simple statement: the state legislators in Georgia and Florida and Illinois who vote it down time after time; the women who spend so much energy campaigning and lobbying, and gratefully thanking their state senators for not liberating them; the John Birchers, the Mormons, the Ku Klux Klan.

The ERA itself is not so important—not to them, not to me. But it is important as a symbol.

Because if the right-wingers can keep a simple sentence out of the Constitution just affirming that women are equal... what chance have we got to win the real things we need? The things we can hold in our hands—like a bigger paycheck—or use every day—like low-cost childcare.

### DEEP TROUBLE

Believe it: if the ERA fails we're in deep trouble. Already the courts are trying to do away with affirmative action. Remember those judges last year who said women should expect to be raped? And General Electric has sued and won the right not to pay maternity benefits.

**All these jokers need is the green light, and they'll be going after more of the rights we thought we'd won. If the**

**ERA isn't ratified by the deadline—eleven months away—they'll have their green light. "Back to the kitchen, barefoot and pregnant," will be their theme song.**

Women could turn the tide. Coordinated demonstrations across the country, led by national organizations like the unions and NOW (National Organization for Women) would show the state legislators which way it's best to vote this time (this is an election year and half the voters are women).

**We need to defend ourselves from the people who say we can't be equal.** □

### Fighting Words

*I don't know of anything that can be applied that will bring as much satisfaction to you, as much anguish to the boss as a little sabotage in the right place at the proper time.*

— Bill Haywood, 1909

### Where We Stand

Workers' Power is the weekly newspaper of the International Socialists. The I.S. and its members work to build a movement for a socialist society: a society controlled democratically by mass organizations of all working people.

Because workers create all the wealth, a new society can be built only when they collectively take control of that wealth and plan how it is produced and distributed.

The present system cannot become socialist through reform.

The existing structures of government—the military, police, courts and legislatures—protect the interests of employers against workers.

The working class needs its own kind of state, based on councils of delegates elected at the rank and file level. The rank and file of the unions must be organized to defend unions from employer attacks, to organize the unorganized, to make the union effective. Today's union leaders

rarely even begin to do this. The rank and file must organize to return the unions to the members.

The struggle for socialism is worldwide. We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against workers of other countries, including racism and protectionism.

We are against the American government's imperialist foreign policies, including its support of racist minority regimes in southern Africa.

We demand complete independence for Puerto Rico. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The so-called "socialist" or "communist" states have nothing to do with socialism. They are controlled by a privileged ruling class of bureaucrats and must be overthrown by the workers of those countries.

Black and Latin people are oppressed national minorities in the U.S. They have the right to self-determination—to decide their

own future. We support the struggle for Black Liberation and the self-organization of Black people. We also fight for the unity of Black and white workers in a common struggle against this system.

We support women's liberation and full economic, political, and social equality for women. We demand outlawing all forms of discrimination against gay people.

Socialism and liberation can be achieved only by the action of a mass workers' movement. The most militant sections of workers today must be organized to lay the foundations for a revolutionary socialist workers' party.

This is why the International Socialists exists—to create that party. We are open to all those who accept our main principles, and who accept the responsibility of working as a member to achieve them.

Join with us to build a movement to end exploitation and oppression and to create a socialist world. □



Letters

# A True Story...With Embellishments...

Dear Workers' Power,

I have a rather sad story to relate to your readers concerning the problems that afflict American businessmen who set up shop for themselves overseas.

One day I was sitting in a restaurant in mid-town Manhattan. Now for those of you're unfamiliar with such restaurants, let me merely state that the seating is rather tight, which of course makes eavesdropping obligatory to all who have functioning ears.

This particular day two businessmen were sitting next to me swapping stories. To make it less confusing we'll call them Fred and Charley.

Anyhow Fred, you see, was telling Charley about how his aunt died and left him a lot of money. Now Fred was no stick in the mud; he was a fellow with

gumption who wanted to see the world. So he says to wife, "Let's go down to Argentina and see my sister" and off they went.

Things were going just dandy down in Buenos Aires. It was the 1950's and Eva and Juan Peron were in power and Fred's sister had a nice spread so he and his wife decided to settle there for a while and played lots of golf.

Now being a smart capitalist Fred knew that he could not sit around playing golf all day long, for if he did his money would soon fritter away. So he and his wife decided to open up a fancy dress shop as a way of investing his money to make more money so he could continue to play golf.

So they opened up shop and the future seemed all rosy. The materials were cheap and labor was cheap and they made everything they sold on the premises so



Once upon a time, there was a rich man named Fred...

they had little supplier costs.

Fred used his sister's connections to develop a high and classy clientele. Naturally enough, once you develop such a clientele, they of course spread word about you to all their friends which means you can raise your prices ever more and play 36 holes instead of 18.

Well, one day manna fell from Heaven and Mt. Vesuvius erupted—Eva Peron walked in to order a bunch of dresses and blouses and whatnots, including some for an upcoming state ball.

This of course meant that Fred was set for life. After all, Eva was the second most important person in Argentina; the fancy dress trade was at his feet. When he looked at the sky at night Fred didn't see stars but golf balls.

But in the end Fred bogied it. You see he was a capitalist, but a foreign capitalist. Poor Fred thought that capitalism in one country (America) would be the same in another (Argentina).

Besides, wasn't Juan Peron as loved by his people as Dwight Eisenhower was? And Argentines do eat as much steak as we do, don't they? What they call football isn't what we call football, but that doesn't mean anything, does it? No, Fred, it doesn't. But he still bogied it.

You see, after Eva got her

dresses and blouses and whatnots, Fred sent a bill.

No one had bothered to tell Fred that Eva Peron, being the President's wife, didn't have to pay for anything. On being told this by an emissary from the Presidential Palace Fred said, "But that's not capitalism." The emissary said "Humph," and left.

Shortly thereafter, following Fred's repeated efforts to have his bill paid, he received a visit from the secret police who informed Fred that his attitude was not conducive to a friendly state of relations between America and Argentina and would he please leave while everybody was still smiling.

So Fred (and his wife) had to leave Argentina and leave all their profits and goods behind as a gift to the Argentine people to show that there were no hard feelings. And so Fred (and his wife) came home and set himself up in business here.

But materials cost a lot more and labor costs a lot more and there's a lot more middlemen and the mob to pay off and Fred doesn't get to play too much golf.

David Dugan  
New York

P.S. This is a true story, with certain embellishments.

## Don't build the bomb!

Dear Workers' Power:

Well, well, well—so there seems to be a slight problem with the neutron bomb. You know, the bomb that kills people by radiation but leaves valuable property like tanks and bank vaults and golf courses unscathed.

It seems that neither the U.S. or NATO wants to take the credit for it.

The U.S. won't build it unless NATO first publicly agrees to use it (oh, I'm sorry, I should have said "deploy" it). But NATO won't agree to whatever until the U.S. goes ahead and builds it.

Now it would seem to me that this indeed is an odd paradox now. Here we have a weapon that will "revolutionize" warfare, but no one wants to take the praise or glory. So something must be "rotten in Denmark," as the story goes.

It would appear that NATO is a bit bright and realizes that its respective populace might conclude that it's intended use is against themselves, and so NATO is trying to get Washington to take the blame (whoops—credit, I mean). So why is the U.S. reluctant to go ahead and build it? Hm...

Ah—but the story goes on. The U.S. is hoping to convince Russia to cut back on their already existing weaponry, as a tradeoff to not building or restricting use of the neutron bomb (like maybe deploying it in Japan instead). This is true—I read it in the paper.

Yes, we really spend millions of dollars developing and building weapons whose only use is as giant poker chips.

And it would seem that the

poker they're playing is strip poker with NATO and the U.S. each hoping the other will take the em-bare-assing position of taking the credit for it.

But if all these problems are ironed out and the decision is given to go ahead and build the neutron bomb, the junior partners could finally have a say-so in the matter.

The junior partners of course being the workers who make the bomb. With a little convincing from their brothers and sisters they just might decide not to build it.

Uncle David  
New York

## Author says: Write on!

Dear Elissa Clarke,

Thank you so much for sending me your movingly written review of *Pink Collar Workers*. It really meant a lot to me.

The book is being published this month in paperback by Avon, so your review wasn't really late at all. The paperback will sell for \$2.25, and so I hope it will be more easily affordable for the women the book is about.

I was also impressed by that review of *Death of Her Innocence*. As they used to say, write on!

Louise Kapp Howe  
New York

Editor's Note: Louise Kapp Howe is the author of *Pink Collar Workers*, a book about women workers.

## What's with the church?

Comrade,

A "Letter to the Editor" in your last issue, by Jim Woods, prompts this letter.

I sure wish you'd run an extensive history of the Catholic Inquisition in Europe and Mexico.

Also, it would be nice to see someone with the uncommon courage to print facts about the connection between the Pope's mafia and the Roman Catholic political machine.

Thirdly, how about some up-to-date info on Church wealth/businesses/land holdings/stock holdings/etc. All tax free (!) to the tune of billions!!

Respectfully,  
Larry Schul  
Phoenix, Arizona

Editor's Note:

The next article in our series on economics will appear next week.



## In Defense Of Vanessa

Dear Workers' Power,

All the gossip columnists, all the stars have trashed Vanessa Redgrave for making a political speech at the Academy Awards.

I think she had a perfect right to reply to the "Zionist hoodlums" who were outside protesting against her. When you're the subject of a demonstration you shouldn't have the right to defend yourself?

No one bothered to quote the rest of her speech—which was about why it's important to fight against Nazism and anti-Semitism.

The critics say Redgrave shouldn't have "politicized" the Oscar show. If her remarks had been complimentary to Israel, it never would have occurred to anyone to be upset.

J.S.  
Detroit

## The hangover came later

Dear Workers' Power,

I'd like to point out an error in your review of "Cindy!"

Harlem in 1943 was in the middle of one of its most prosperous periods, not a "depression" as you stated. The defense plants were running full blast, racial hiring barriers were (temporarily) going down, limousines full of rich whites were packing the Sugar Hill night clubs.

For millions of Blacks across the country, Harlem was the promised land, the Big Apple, and everyone wanted a slice.

It was a shallow and temporary prosperity that would end with the war, but few Harlemites knew that at the time. They just knew that the misery of the depression was over and were determined to make the most of it.

Zoot-suited factory workers blew their paychecks on black market steaks and Scotch, while they rubbed shoulders with gangsters and slumming socialites. It was one of the longest and biggest parties in history.

The hangover came later.

Neil Chacker  
Detroit, Michigan

## JOIN US!

If you agree with the views express in this paper and  would like more information, or  would like to join the International Socialists, send this form to: INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Michigan 48203.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Union .....

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Pittsburgh: P.O. Box 466, Homestead, PA 15120  
Portland: P.O. Box 4662, Portland, OR 97208

# DEFECTIVE WIRING

## A fire hazard the aluminum industry doesn't want you to know about

by Jim Woodward

You might be living in a firetrap. If your home or apartment was built or re-wired between 1965 and 1972, the contractors may have used aluminum wire.

Virtually all aluminum wiring used during these years was improperly installed.

What's worse, the federal government has written a booklet to warn the public of this danger, but it's not being distributed.

At stake in this controversy are several things. The Consumer Product Safety Commission wants the companies that make aluminum wire and connecting devices to take steps to protect people living in inadequately-wired homes. That could be costly, and so the companies are resisting.

Hanging in the balance are people's lives. In Hampton Bays, New York, two persons were burned to death when their home caught fire in April 1974. Inspectors blamed faulty aluminum wiring.

### CHEAPER

Aluminum wire began to be widely used in 1965 because it is 30% cheaper than copper wire.

In its attempt to capitalize on the copper shortage of the 1960's and turn a quick profit, the aluminum industry never did adequate testing of the new wire.

In itself, the wire is safe. The problems arise at the point where it is connected to a switch or electrical outlet. When aluminum wire was first introduced, it was connected to standard switches and outlets. But these proved to be dangerous.

Aluminum tends to expand and contract more than copper. For this and other reasons, it was found that unless the switch or outlet was specifically designed for aluminum, the result was dangerous overheating which could cause fires.

Standards for switches and outlets were re-written five times in eight years until a safe product was created in 1972. That leaves 1.5 million aluminum-wired homes built between 1965-1972 with unsafe electrical systems. At its peak in 1971, 7.3% of all home wiring was done with aluminum.

After the Hampton Bays fire, and with complaints coming in of electrical outlets burning or smoking, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) acted.

A CPSC survey of 39 aluminum-wired homes in Maryland showed that 23 had at least one electrical outlet heating above 167° which is considered the danger-point. Of 57 copper-wired homes, only one had this problem.

Last October, the CPSC went to court, asking that the 26 companies which make aluminum wire and connecting devices publicize the potential fire hazards. The CPSC wrote a pamphlet for them outlining aluminum-wire hazards. The agency also suggested that these companies should be required to make repairs at some future time.

The companies fought back, winning a decision in federal court that the CPSC doesn't have jurisdiction over aluminum wiring. The court also prohibited the CPSC from distributing copies of the warning pamphlet on its own. An appeal is pending.

### DANGER SIGNALS

Workers' Power has obtained a copy of the pamphlet under the Freedom of Information Act. It lists the following signs of danger:

- cover plates on switches and outlets which are warm or hot to the touch
- smoke coming from outlets or switches
- sparks or arcing at switches and outlets
- strange odors, especially the smell of burning plastic, in the area of outlets or switches
- lights which flicker periodically (In some cases, faulty appliances or other unrelated causes may result in lights flickering.)
- outlets, lights, or entire circuits which fall to work.

The pamphlet adds that if your house has aluminum wiring, danger may still be present even if you see none of the danger signals. Sometimes the hazard can take years to develop.

The pamphlet urges anyone whose home or apartment has aluminum wiring to have it checked by a qualified electrician. If necessary, outlets and switches should be replaced with proper equipment.

It's too late for Eric Hersh. He lost two family members in the Hampton Bays fire in 1974. After that, he wrote to the CPSC: "There is nothing you can do for us with lip service or saying you're sorry about my dad and 16-year-old sister... Do something for the consumer."

[If you think your house might have aluminum wiring, you can request a copy of CPSC's pamphlet under the Freedom of Information Act. Write U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Attn: Robert C. Bledsoe, Jr., Washington, D.C. 20207.

## Labor Notes

by Jim Woodward

Officials of the federal Mining Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) suspect that violations of the approved ventilation plan led to the deaths of five men in a **Pittston Co.** coal mine in Virginia last week. This report, carried in the *Mountain Eagle*, a Kentucky newspaper, said inspectors think that brattices controlling the flow of air were placed too far away from the working face. Consequently, when the miners punched through the wall into an abandoned mine containing bad air, there was insufficient ventilation to keep them from suffocating.

An arbitration ruling may save the pensions of about 800 workers in the steel industry. The workers—mainly at **Bethlehem Steel** and **Youngstown Sheet & Tube**—were ruled eligible for an early retirement plan covering employees whose plants are closing. The plan was negotiated in last year's basic steel contract to take effect January 1.

When the two companies laid off thousands of workers shortly before that deadline, the union maintained that those eligible for the pension should get it. Past practice in the steel industry has been to implement such new contract provisions even before the effective date, and the arbitration panel ruled that the past practice should apply in this case.

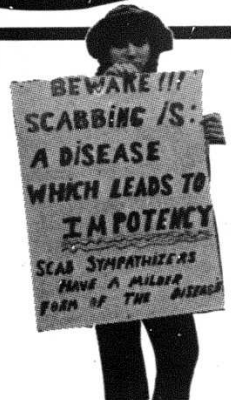
The **United Rubber Workers** union has rejected **B.F. Goodrich Co.**'s proposal for a no-strike deal similar to that in the steel industry. The Goodrich plan would have extended the contract 90 days, and settled on whatever contract terms were agreed to by the three larger tire companies.

The **U.S. Postal Service** may have cheated its employees out of as much as \$1 billion in overtime pay since 1974. That was the year Congress extended the Fair Labor Standards Act to federal employees. It was also the year that the Postal Service began ignoring many of the Act's provisions, particularly those relating to overtime. In an out-of-court settlement, the Postal Service agreed to pay \$60 million to 80,000 present and former employees. Up to 70,000 more postal workers may yet receive back pay.

**Richard H. Ligashesky**, a worker at the Pittsburgh plant of **Shenango, Inc.**, ran into trouble last year after he distributed literature urging his fellow workers to vote for **Ed Sadiowski** for president of the **United Steelworkers**. The company suspended him for one day, and his local union removed him as chairman of the plant safety committee. Ligashesky has finally won the case. The **NLRB** ruled recently that both the company and the union's actions were unfair labor practices, and that the company's rule against distributing literature without permission must be rescinded.

Another labor case involves former **United Mine Workers** president and convicted murderer **Tony Boyle**. In 1975, three years after Boyle was tossed out of office, a federal court ruled he had illegally used union funds for his 1969 re-election campaign. It said that he and two other former officers owed the union over \$300,000. To collect this money, the **UMW** decided to garnish 25% of the generous \$1,300-a-month pension Boyle had written for himself. But the Supreme Court has just let stand a district court ruling that the union cannot touch Boyle's pension because of the wording in the pension contract. Such is justice.

What's happening where you work? Send items for this column to: **Workers' Power, Labor Notes, 14131 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, Michigan 48203. Or phone 313-869-5964.**



## QUARREL AMONG THE OIL GIANTS

In a rare display of public quarreling, two of the seven international oil giants have filed suits against each other alleging anti-trust activity.

**Gulf and General Atomic**, partially owned by **Gulf**, have filed suit against **Exxon** charging anti-trust violations in a contract for uranium supplies for nuclear reactors.

Exxon filed a counter suit in the same San Diego court one week later.

It charges that **Gulf and General Atomic** are engaged in illegally attempting to gain control of a substantial portion of U.S. uranium and uranium reserves for monopoly purposes.

Simply put, these two multinational corporations are charging each other with monopolistic practices in the field of nuclear energy.

Now, **Gulf and Exxon** are just two of the "Seven Sisters" who control 80% of the world's oil outside of Russia and the U.S., 53% of U.S. coal production, and 45% of known U.S. uranium deposits.

Whoever wins, you can be sure that the wealth will remain in the family, despite the public squabble.

M.D.



# Television Re-creates The Holocaust In Europe: **WHAT THE NAZIS DID - AND WHY**

by Dan Posen

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE for a television drama—or any other production—to show the full story of what Nazism did to the peoples of Europe.

But NBC's docudrama "Holocaust"—a portrayal of what happened to the Jews in Germany, symbolized by the middle class Weiss family—probably comes as close as it's possible to get.

**Holocaust.** NBC-TV's "Big Event." Directed by Marvin Chomsky. Teleplay by Gerald Green. Published in book form by Bantam Books. \$2.25



A scene from "Holocaust," an NBC "Big Event" running this week.

"Holocaust" has an overwhelming impact simply because of the real events it portrays, the largest organized mass slaughter of human beings the world has ever seen.

After all, what words can describe a political system that had people rounded up, locked inside a synagogue which was then set on fire, and burned alive?

What is there to say about the total destruction, first of people's occupations, then their homes, their families, their culture, and finally their lives?

What can you say when, after all other methods failed, the Nazi machine turned to the "Final Solution," the mass gassing of tens of thousands of people per day, even when the German war machine itself began to buckle under the physical strain of transporting the victims for execution?

To watch all four three-hour episodes straight through will require a lot of emotional staying power, but it's worth it—and it may leave you speechless.

## DOOMED TO EXTINCTION

"Holocaust" portrays some of the causes of these events a lot better than I expected.

The drama begins in Germany in 1935, with the marriage of a Jew, Karl Weiss, and a Catholic, Inga Helms.

Tension between the two families at the wedding party foreshadow the disasters which unfold in the next few years.

The Weiss family, a representative of the Jewish middle class in Germany which was so thoroughly German that they had nearly forgotten they were Jewish — is doomed to extinction.

The Weiss's favorite poem is Heinrich Heine's sentimental "Lorelei," already banned by the Nazis. Their music is Beethoven and Mozart.

Their culture and life style is virtually identical to Inga Helms'

family — except that almost all of the Helms, except Inga herself, are to become Nazis.

## NAZI SS

We also meet a young unemployed German lawyer, Erik Dorf, and find out how he is recruited to the Nazi SS and becomes one of the architects of the "Final Solution."

Dorf represents the layer of German society which was so completely ruined by the economic crisis that it turned to fascist for answers.

Lawyers without a practice, people with university degrees and no hope of professional employment, like Dorf, were ready to accept an ideology which told them the Jews had stolen their jobs and polluted their nation.

Dorf puts it more simply—he joins the SS because he needs a job.

## SYSTEM GONE CRAZY

Although "Holocaust" shows us nothing of ordinary German working people, it does an outstanding job of showing that it was not the German workers, but ruined middle and lower-middle class people, who gave Hitler his base.

While the drama does not say so explicitly, Nazism was the ultimate political product of an economic and social system, capitalism, which had gone so crazy that the ruling class would accept Nazi murderers and doctrines to "keep order."

From here, the tragedy widens in both space and violence. Through the step-by-step destruction of the Weiss family, we see how the Jews without money, the Jews of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Ukraine,

are drawn into the slaughter. Deportations, insanity, death from forced labor are all preludes to the gas chambers.

## CONTEMPORARY STATEMENT

"Holocaust" is not intended to be simply a historical drama, but a contemporary statement.

It will become the basis for school curricula on the study of Nazism. It will help us to build a movement to smash the neo-Nazi groups and other fascist organizations today—before they become a powerful force.

Unfortunately, "Holocaust" also has another conscious political dimension—one which can't be ignored in the world we live in today.

In the prologue of the book version, probably to be seen at the conclusion of the television series, Rudi, the angry Jewish hero who refuses to die, winds up at a place called "Kibbutz Agam" near the Syrian border of Israel.

There, his diary tells us, "several times a week Syrian artillery from across the Jordan drops shells... More than once, my own (military) unit has been called up to assist in 'neutralizing' the enemy artillery."

The conclusion is completely unnecessary for historical accuracy in treating the horrors of Nazism. For the vast majority of European Jews, the Zionist program of settlement in Palestine was irrelevant.

The producers' obvious purpose, even down to locating Rudi's Kibbutz in northern Galilee, is purely to create sympathy for the military policy of the modern state of Israel.

The real story of Zionism would show 750,000 Palestinians forcibly removed from their homes, almost the same way small oppressed

nations were herded like cattle across Europe.

Why am I forced to conclude a review of the generally excellent "Holocaust" on this note?

It's because while "Holocaust" is shown on our television screens, American cluster bombs have just been dropped by American planes supplied to the Israeli Air Force on Palestinian "Warsaw ghettos" in Lebanon, places like Rashadiye and Bint Jabil and Damour.

It's because, tragically, some of the influential forces who so correctly insist that everyone must "never forget" the holocaust of the last generation, are working almost as hard to cover up the holocausts of this one.

## Pullman Standard Contract Rolls Back Union Rights

The 6500 steelworkers on strike against the Pullman Standard Company at five plants around the country went back to work April 5. They'd been out for six months. The settlement indicates that they could use a little coal miners-style democracy in their union.

In Pennsylvania, Donald Olekszak, a worker at Pullman's Butler plant, said:

"I think we all got sold out. We don't vote on the contract."

It's up to the International Union. And we went out for six months and we didn't get any more than we went out with."

The critical question in the Pullman strike was production standards. At three of the Pullman plants, long-standing work rules allowed negotiations between the union and management to set production quotas if the original time study set unrealistic goals. The union also had the right to strike over production increases on certain jobs.

## NEW RULES

Under the new settlement, these rules are sharply revised. Pullman is given the right to do new time studies and set new quotas.

Olekszak explained the rest of it: "We can't file grievances on a job unless we've worked on it 30 days. We can't go on strike for a year and a half [over production quotas]. And they're going to put in a new incentive system."

For Pullman, these changes will mean a reduction in labor costs. That translates into speed up and harassment on the job, along with the elimination of some jobs.

The company thought it was well worth taking a six month strike to roll back union rights on issues such as these.

Increasingly, many companies are getting the same idea. And those workers who do not have the right to vote on their contracts are entering the fight with one hand tied behind their backs.

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# WORKERS' POWER

## NYC Transit Workers: A Rebellion Is Brewing

by Michael Urquhart

NEW YORK—A massive rank and file rebellion against a tentative contract settlement is developing in the Transit Workers Union (TWU).

On April 4, a thousand workers picketed the union's headquarters in a massive show of opposition to the contract.

The opposition centers on two main issues. First, the wage settlement is only 6% over two years, plus a cost of living bonus of \$250. This won't enable the transit workers to catch up with inflation.

Second, the contract permits the use of 200 part-time workers. This opens the door to wide-scale use of part-timers and would thoroughly undermine the power of the union.

On April 6, over 400 transit workers met and launched a campaign for a "No" vote on the contract. At that meeting, they established the Committee of Concerned Transit Workers to organize the campaign.

This rebellion threatens to totally upset the city's plans to continue making the city workers scapegoats for New York's financial crisis.

It also threatens to undermine the city's negotiations with Congress for federal loan guarantees.

After reaching a tentative settlement with TWU, the city has been working hard to get other unions to accept less. Now, it may not even get the transit workers to agree to their contract.

Transit workers fear that if they don't get something in this contract

they will be so far behind by the next contract that they'll never catch up.

Getting the contract voted down will not be easy. The vote is by mail ballot, and the votes will be counted by the union leadership itself.

After threatening a strike throughout bargaining, the union has now sent out a letter to all members, arguing "to strike would be disastrous" and calling for a "yes" vote on the contract.

The Committee of Concerned Transit Workers is confident, however, that the majority of transit

workers oppose the contract.

Up to now, city workers have accepted—with reluctance—the argument that sacrifices must be made. After all, the city is bankrupt, and you can't fight City Hall, especially when it's backed up by the federal and state governments—so the feeling goes.

### GIVE-BACKS

This year the city, like other employers, has been demanding numerous give-backs. While the TWU did not give in on these, it did agree to open the door on part-

timing, a significant concession.

This was a coup for the city. Basil Patterson, deputy mayor in charge of bargaining, explained that concessions from TWU would make it easier for the city to take on the other city unions. He said: "The elementary difference is that the transit union has never given a giveback...the city unions have."

As a matter of fact, they have given back already \$48 million in benefits.

The rebellion in the Transit Workers Union indicates that this consciousness may now be changing, that workers are now ready to make a fight. Such a change would have a profound and positive effect on the labor movement in this city, and on the prospects of building a real rank and file movement. □

## DETROIT NAZIS GET THE BOOT

by Paula Winston

DETROIT—"They can come claim their belongings at the City Pound," commented Deputy Chief of Police Joseph Areeda as sandbags, literature racks, couches and chairs began to pile up around him on the sidewalk on April 11.

Police, wearing flack jackets to protect themselves against possible booby traps, used crowbars and sledge hammers to tear down the door at 7608 Vernor Highway, headquarters for the Nazis in this city.

A police dog specially trained to sniff out explosives was the first to enter the building. All that was inside however, was one Nazi, sitting glumly on a couch in front of an American flag.

The eviction of the Nazis from their storefront headquarters was the culmination of efforts by the Labor-Community-Interfaith Council Against the Nazis to rid the Detroit community of the Nazi presence.

The Council's main slogan, "Get the Nazis Out!" carried the day

amongst the crowd of 300 neighborhood observers and Council members who gathered across the street to witness the event.

### VICTORY

The Council's Chairperson, Paul Boatman, commented, "The members of this community and of our Council have reason to feel very proud today—for the first time in a long time in this country, the anti-Nazi forces have won a victory over the Nazis."

"In city after city—Skokie, St. Louis, San Francisco and many others—the Nazis have set up their poisonous operations and have been able to continue their filthy activities through legal loopholes and technicalities.

"It is our activities and efforts to build an anti-Nazi movement in Detroit that have brought us this success."

The landlord of the building rented by the Nazis, Eddy S. Bullock, pursued a course of legal action against the Nazis for violating a clause in the lease they had signed with him.



But it wasn't just a legal technicality that got the Nazis out. This is apparent in the way the Nazis handled themselves in court.

In the course of the eviction hearing against them, the Nazis didn't even get themselves a lawyer. Bill Russell, the head Nazi, acted as his own lawyer. It wasn't much of a defense: he called no witnesses, offered no evidence or testimony, made no arguments to the all-white jury hearing the case.

Instead Russell commented from the stand, "No lawyer will defend us. Every organization in Michigan is against us. We have no defense—we are offering none."

The words of a defeated man. A man defeated before he ever got to court—a man defeated and demoralized by a movement.

### CELEBRATION PLANNED

In response to the eviction, the Labor-Community-Interfaith Council Against the Nazis plans a victory celebration this Sunday, April 16th, at 3:00 at the old Nazi headquarters.

The Council has rented the

premises from the landlord effective immediately, and will soon re-open its doors as an Anti-Nazi headquarters. "We are going to reclaim the building for our community," commented one Council member.

The Council is also continuing plans for its mass rally on Sunday, April 30. "We have won a battle, but not the war," said Leonard Green, State Commander of the Jewish War Veterans and an activist in the Council.

"Even though the Nazis are now gone from this storefront, I believe it's only a matter of time before they open up another bookstore in another part of town—and we will be there wherever they go.

"Our job is not done till these Nazis have a one-way ticket to outer space."

Not a bad idea, Leonard. □

