

POSTAL PACT:

Letter Carriers' Convention Says "No!"



See page 3

WORKERS' Power

WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS AUGUST 10-23, 1978 #262 25c

THE POISONED CITY

Today's disaster - and tomorrow's

WITHOUT CHEMICALS, life itself would be impossible, goes one of those slick, attractive industry ads.

But no chemical executive would dare to go to Ninety-Seventh Street along the Love Canal in Niagara Falls, New York and make that statement out loud.

One hundred families are leaving their neighborhood, abandoning their homes where all their life savings are invested. They are fleeing an underground sea of buried chemicals which have come bubbling up into their basements, their backyards and their own bodies.

It is a neighborhood of ordinary working class families, many of whom work for the area's numerous chemical companies, more than a dozen factories in all.

NO EXECUTIVES HERE

Chemical executives' homes are never built on the site of chemical landfills.

But the homes along the Love Canal were put up where the Hooker Chemical Co. dumped tons of 82 poisonous chemicals in a bed of clay 25 to 30 years ago.

Now those homes are death traps not only for the working people who bought them, but for a whole generation of their children.

Statistics and newspaper reports tell the story of deformed babies. Or miscarriages. Of children with extra rows of teeth. Of kids who played by the canal coming home with feet and arms chemically burned. Of babies born with their eyes covered over with blisters.

Those who are lucky will lose only their homes. Others will never be able to take another breath without pain. Cancers which have begun to show up in the past few years, caused by 11 or so of the dumped chemical compounds, will become epidemic.

Hooker Chemical Co. stands to suffer nothing but bad publicity. It can't be sued. A clause written into the lease of every home, when the land was sold, says so.

When the local newspaper, the Gazette, called the dumped chemicals "carcinogenic," Hooker executives barged into the paper's offices demanding it retract the story.

The same company has created similar poisonous landfills in at least one other state, Michigan,

where it was fined \$300,000 last year.

And the Love Canal story has just begun. It is probably too late to keep tons of the stuff from seeping into the Niagara River, possibly causing incalculable catastrophes for dozens of communities.

Political officials say this tragedy resulted from negligent dumping during a period when the industry was unregulated, or its dangers not understood. Such things can't happen again now.

What nonsense. The meaning of Love Canal is not that industries which make huge profits from dumping deadly poison into the ground must be "regulated."

It proves the opposite—that in the last analysis, Hooker Chemical and its parent corporation, the giant Occidental Petroleum, are part of an unregulated and unregulatable system.

The only thing that "regulates" capitalism is the drive for profit. Profit was the only reason why land where deadly poison was stored was sold for homes.

When those homes were built, the top layer of clay was stripped off—leaving them completely exposed to the toxic waste after a few years of heavy rain.

AND TOMORROW?

And the Love Canal disaster of today will be repeated on a vast, unimaginable scale in the future—for example, by the waste products which the nuclear industry is creating right now.

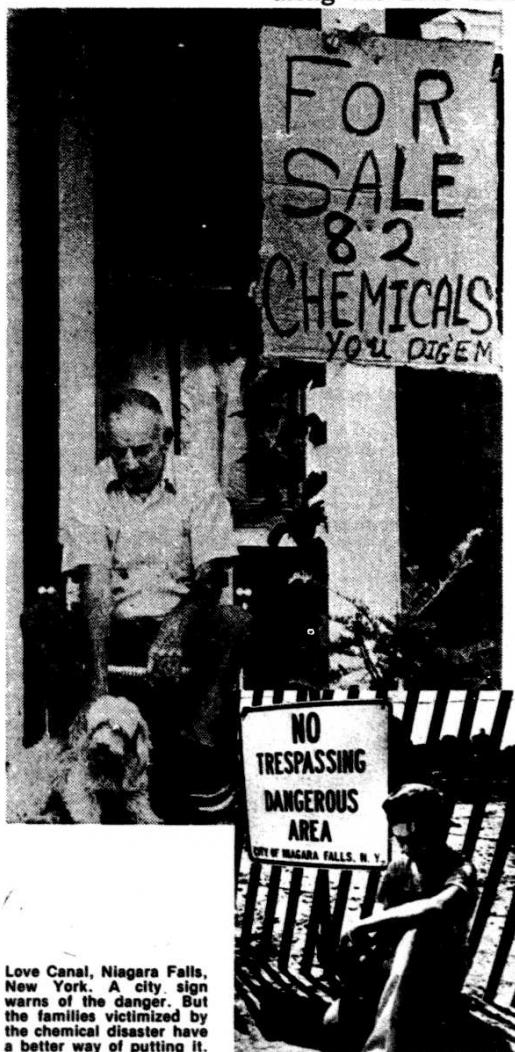
The dumps of radioactive waste proposed by nuclear planners are a hundred times bigger, ten thousand times more poisonous and will last a million times longer than anything Hooker Chemical ever dreamed of.

When we talk about capitalism today, we are talking about a system where millions in profits go hand in hand with the physical destruction of human beings.

Such a system must not be allowed to survive. The stakes are too high.

With capitalism, life itself is becoming impossible. □

Dan Posen



Love Canal, Niagara Falls, New York. A city sign warns of the danger. But the families victimized by the chemical disaster have a better way of putting it.

The New Women's Movement

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UMW Exec. Board Rejects Miller Recall

THE UNITED MINE WORKERS International Executive Board, meeting in Denver in late July, voted to throw out petitions de-



UMW President Miller: No more "idiots running around here."

manding the recall of UMW President Arnold Miller.

By a vote of 14-5, the board decided to thwart the recall petitions and, in effect, the union's constitution as well.

According to the UMW constitution, the executive board has no say in the matter, as long as the recall petitions have the required number of valid signatures. The petitions had been signed by 31,000 members, more than double the 5% of the union's membership required to initiate the first step of a recall procedure.

MILLER VS. RECALL

Recall supporters charged Miller with withholding news of planned cuts in health coverage until after last summer's union elections, and

with bungling contract negotiations during this year's 110-day coal strike.

Several days after the executive board's decision, Miller told a wire service reporter that for the first time since he was elected in 1972, he has the kind of board he wants.

"If it was any better I couldn't stand it," he said. "There's not this handful of idiots running around here."

In West Virginia, Bill Bryant, leader of the recall movement, said he was not surprised at the board's decision.

"We expected that," he said. "The only thing that surprised us was that there was three executive board members voted against us that we thought would be for us."

Bryant told Workers' Power that a lawsuit was filed in Wetzel County, W. Va. August 2, chal-

lenging the executive board's action.

RECALL PROCEDURE

According to the UMW constitution, the union's Secretary-Treasurer is directed to send out official recall petitions to all locals if the required number of signatures is on an initial set of petitions.

These official petitions must then be signed by 30% of the union's membership—or 84,000 miners—within 30 days.

That was regarded as an almost impossible task. Yet Miller was unwilling to run the risk that it might succeed.

The executive board's action in effect leaves the United Mine Workers without a recall procedure available to opponents of the union leadership.

That increases the likelihood that the recall issue will be a major topic at the next UMW convention.

Jim Woodward



Recall leader Bryant: "We expected that."

MUNICIPAL STRIKES SIGNAL PUBLIC EMPLOYEE REVOLT

by Candy Martin

Last week, 3500 Detroit city workers wildcatted. Fed up with unreasonable amounts of mandatory overtime, sanitation workers and bus mechanics began the three-day strike which quickly spread to include many other members of AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees), the city's largest union.

City buses stopped, garbage began piling in the streets. After two days and a useless court injunction, Mayor Coleman Young began procedures to fire the strikers.

By the fourth day (August 4), the workers agreed to return to their jobs in exchange for no reprisals. The overtime issue is to be handled through the grievance machinery.

Only a week before, a parallel strike occurred in Washington, D.C.

For five days, 4500 city workers halted public transportation in the capital. They were protesting the non-payment of cost-of-living increases due them.

They returned to work without full amnesty, which had become a key demand. The status of several fired workers was uncertain. Apparently no immediate concessions on the cost-of-living payments were made by the transit authority.

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE REVOLT

Washington and Detroit are not alone. In the last year or so, a public employees' revolt has been brewing in cities throughout the country: Philadelphia... New York... San Antonio... Atlanta.

That revolt has become particularly heated in recent weeks. In the month of July, thousands of municipal workers went on strike in not only Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., but in Louisville, in Memphis, New Orleans and Boston as well as several other cities.

The reason is not hard to find. Public employees find themselves squeezed between chronic inflation, the financial crisis of the cities, and, more recently, property tax-cut campaigns.

The result: in a short five-year period, with few exceptions, a drastic decline in city workers' real wages. In cities like Philadelphia, where the number of municipal employees on strike last month was nearly 20,000, city workers have faced a drop of 14% in buying power in the period between 1971 and 1976.

For New York City workers, the figure is 22% and in Atlanta, city employees were able to afford 26% less for their families two years ago than they could in 1971. (See graph.)

That decline, of course, does not take into account two years of additional inflation since 1976—

inflation that is running at an annual rate of 11.4% for the first six months of 1978.

SHARP ATTACK

While inflation swallows up huge chunks of their paychecks, city workers face a sharp attack on their workloads, wage rates and very

jobs from another quarter.

Local governments and banking interests are attempting to force public employees to bear the brunt of capitalism's economic crisis as it affects the cities—just as corporate managements are intensifying their offensive against labor in private industry.

Court Ratifies Transit Pact

by Mike Urquhart

NEW YORK—The rank and file court challenge to the contract accepted by the executive board of the Transport Workers Union (TWU) in early July has failed.

The judge ruled that since the union had been ignoring its constitution by-laws for years, it could continue to do so.

The judge's decision meant that in effect the union had re-written

its by-laws by systematically violating them.

The TWU Constitution clearly states that any contract must be "ratified by the members covered by such proposed agreement."

The contract for workers in the Transit Authority was clearly defeated by a vote of 10,825-8,506. Only by combining that vote count with other contracts, in violation of the Constitution, could the TWU

claim acceptance of the contract.

Transit workers are now debating how best to continue the struggle.

Two groups, the 207th Street Transit Workers Coalition and the Committee of Concerned Transit Workers, want to file an appeal of the court decision.

Winning such an appeal is highly unlikely and could take years. They argue, however, that it is necessary to challenge the court decision because of the precedent it sets.

RECALL URGED

A third group, the Coalition of Concerned Transit Workers, will probably join in the appeal in order to maintain rank and file unity.

However, the Coalition feels the main activity must be a campaign to recall the Executive Board members who accepted the contract.

The Coalition is putting its efforts into getting signatures on petitions to force a recall election.

This tactic is necessary because the by-laws make no provision either to change a decision of the Executive Board or for the rank and file to amend the by-laws. To make those changes, it is necessary to change the membership of the Executive Board itself.

The Coalition also realizes that the main task now is to build a powerful rank and file organization that can force its will on the union and the Transit Authority.

There is no guarantee that the current leadership will respect the

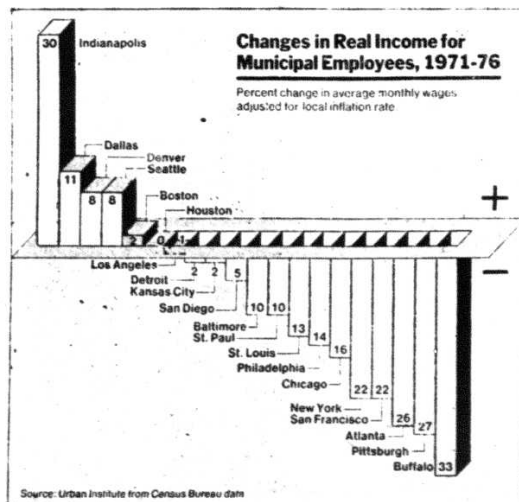
recall provisions in the by-laws and honor the petitions.

If they don't, the Coalition wants to be prepared to take direct action to force the removal of the officers.

The Coalition now puts out a weekly newsletter and holds meetings every week. These help to keep the members informed, and train them as organizers for the Coalition.

The Coalition has also organized a support group called "Friends of the Coalition of Concerned Transit Workers."

Its job is to provide material help to the campaigns of the Coalition and to build support for the transit workers' struggle among other trade unionists and users of the transit system.



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Letter Carrier Delegates Back Contract Rejection

by Paul Broz

CHICAGO, ILL.—Ballots for the ratification vote of a tentative postal contract were in the mail as 4673 delegates to the National Association of Letter Carriers convention met here the week of July 31-August 4.

Delegates overwhelmingly recommended rejection of the con-

tract. Their strong opposition could be important in defeating what many see as the worst contract ever presented to postal workers.

Miniscule wage increases of 2%, 3%, and 5% a year combined with a cap on the cost-of-living virtually guarantee a loss in real wages over the next three years.

An already poor, ineffective grievance procedure was made worse by provisions allowing managers to call workers in for disciplinary discussions which cannot be grieved, but which can be held against a worker in future disciplinary actions.

Almost no other significant changes were made, although union leaders hailed the retention of a no-layoff clause as a big victory.

VACCA MANEUVERS

NALC President J. Joseph Vacca knew that he would be one of a small minority at the convention who favored ratification. So he used his power to restructure the voting process to make ratification more likely.

Ballots were sent out to the membership while their local officers and delegates were at the convention. Vacca hoped that members would vote before those at the convention could get back home and influence them.



Letter carriers at national convention. Vote against proposed settlement was overwhelming.

Along with the ballots was sent a contract and some misleading literature on improvements in the contract.

Delegates were not given the contract until a few minutes before union leaders began a presentation of its changes, so they would have

little chance to evaluate what was being said, or to argue in opposition.

Many expected Vince Sombrotto, President of the New York Branch 36, who has a militant reputation, to lead some sort of opposition to Vacca. Sombrotto, however, said

barely five words during the whole proceedings.

He is opposing Vacca for NALC President in elections to be held in another month. According to some members of his delegation, Sombrotto's strategy for winning the election is to sit tight, not make waves, and ride into office on the coat tails of a contract rejection.

His bid for office was given a boost early this week when George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO, called the settlement inadequate and predicted that it would be rejected.

Despite almost universal dissatisfaction with the contract and disgust with the deceptive maneuverings of a union leadership hell-bent on ratification, delegates were curiously silent throughout most of the convention.

A rank and file postal workers' group, the Postal Contract Coalition (PCC) proposed a successful resolution calling for the union to back amnesty for all workers fired during recent wildcat strikes.

But they failed to floor a motion to allow Pat Moore, a fired mailhandler from Richmond, California to address the convention. She was sent by Bay Area postal workers as a representative of the fired strikers.

The overall influence of the Coalition at the convention was weak. Formed this spring, the PCC is still a new and inexperienced organization. About 15 of its members were delegates at this convention. They used the opportunity to meet other delegates interested in joining and expanding their rank and file network.

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In other convention business:

- Delegates voted to kick out any Chicago Tribune reporters or photographers, in response to an anti-letter carrier cartoon. None were present.

- A dues increase was passed which was lower than that requested by union leaders.

- Nominations were made for national officers. Elections are to take place in about a month. □



NALC President Vacca. His last term?

INTERVIEW: Fired Steward Discusses Strike

PAT MOORE is one of the postal workers at the San Francisco Bulk Mail Center in Richmond, California who wildcatted to protest what many workers consider to be a very poor tentative contract.

Moore, a steward, and member of the Mailhandlers Union, was fired and charged with contempt of court. Court proceedings have yet to be completed.

Moore is also editor of the

national newspaper, *The Rank and File Postal Worker*.

This interview was conducted at the National Association of Letter Carriers convention held in Chicago earlier this month. She was sent as a representative of the fired strikers, hoping to speak to the convention.

Union leaders managed to maneuver to prevent her from speaking. Here is some of what she would have said.

Why did we walk out when other places didn't? I think that our local is much more in communication with its members, much more open. People knew that they wouldn't get smashed immediately if they came into a meeting and said, "This is what we want to do."

The New York Bulk Mail Center (BMC) actually kicked our strike off. We had heard about it Friday. They had decided that they were not going to put up with any extensions. The American Postal Workers Union (APWU) national slogan was "no contract—no work." They [the contract negotiators] pulled the old trick of pulling the cord on the clock right at midnight. They finally reached this crummy agreement at six in the morning. But New York [BMC] had already decided to go.

We got word of that, and of how crummy the contract was. We had scheduled our meeting for that night, Friday. People were really upset. We told them the truth about the contract—which a lot of other local officers did not do—and they didn't like it.

About 80-85% of the people stayed out the first day. That was with a

picket line of anywhere between 50 and 150 people.

The following week they hauled us into court. The judge was taking things real personal. It was a personal insult to him that we were continuing to do what we were doing.

The judge was adamant. He said, "Either you comply or you don't. I don't care what your arguments are. I don't want to hear what your arguments are."

A lot of us were ready to go to jail if we were ordered to tell people to go back to work.

To me, the high point in the whole strike was to know that they could gag all the stewards—we were not allowed to picket or otherwise lead the strike, although we could go to union meetings—and we still had people prepared to step right into those positions.

But we knew how isolated we were. There was some momentum gathering over the weekend, which focused on a vote which looked like it would be taken Monday in New York. That vote, however, was prolonged. Then an injunction was granted to keep them from voting.



Pat Moore.

We got some support from other areas. In Oakland, which is one of the largest first class facilities [a General Post Office] some people wore yellow paper badges that said, "Support the BMC strikers," "Vote no on the contract," and "Amnesty."

A couple of stewards and other people were suspended for wearing them. They didn't even give them the usual two days notice. Management paid them to leave, just to get them off the floor. They were that scared.

The next day, a lot of people brought in blank, yellow paper

tags, and a movement started of people wearing yellow shirts, yellow blouses, which was their way of saying that they supported us.

The fact that we went out on strike has forced people to look at this contract and see how bad it really is.

If we vote down the contract, we should demand that it be sent back to the negotiating table, not to arbitration. I think that people are clear that you don't negotiate a contract without amnesty. This is the issue that we wanted to raise at this convention.

PORTUGAL: Presidential Coup?

by Dan Posen

For the second time in less than half a year, Portugal is going through a major political crisis. **Mario Soares, the leader of the Socialist Party, has been dumped as Prime Minister. Portugal's big business party forced Soares out by pulling its ministers out of his coalition government.**

So far, Soares appears to be unable to form a new government. A more right-wing figure could be appointed Prime Minister to form a new coalition among the major political parties. Or new elections may be called.

But there is another possibility. If the Portuguese capitalists and international bankers feel that no political coalition can run the country, they may turn to a form of strong-man Presidential rule.

If such a government dominated by President Ramalho Eanes is appointed, it would mean another major step in the right-wing offensive and repression of Portuguese workers that has been escalating since November 1975.

The collapse of the government coalition, an unstable alliance between the Socialist Party and the right-wing big business party "Center Democrats" (CDS), was almost inevitable.

The coalition had been created to obtain loans from the International Monetary Fund to patch up Portugal's deteriorating economy. IMF loans to Portugal, mostly supplied by the United States and West Germany, have reached \$800 million.

The SP believed that with this bailout, its alliance with the CDS could survive until the 1980 elections.

But while both the SP and CDS are committed to the recovery of Portuguese capitalism, deep conflicts between the class forces who support these two parties wrecked their coalition.

Two key issues in particular led to the resignation of CDS government ministers and the collapse of the government.

The Socialist Party proposed the creation of a national health service, desperately needed in a poverty-stricken country like Portugal. But the established, wealthy doctors, a major part of the professional and upper middle class CDS base, demanded that medicine remain in private hands, but paid for by the state.

LAND REFORM

A second critical issue is the long-standing, unresolved struggle over land reform.

The Socialist Party has regularly been handing parts of landed estates, which were taken over by

farm worker co-ops, back to the landlords.

But this has proceeded much too slowly to suit the landlords, who want all the land returned immediately and the peasants crushed.

The co-ops are largely organized and led by the Portuguese Communist Party, which also controls the most powerful industrial unions. According to a behind-the-scenes deal between the Socialist and Communist Parties, the SP has avoided head-on confrontations with the farmworkers in exchange for unofficial CP co-operation with the government.

In the main agricultural belt—the Alentejo, the CP has imposed a policy of non-resistance to government troops re-taking parts of the land. And in the industrial unions, the Communist Party has not resisted the SP's wage control program of limiting increases to 20%.

This is in a country with 30% inflation, 18% unemployment, and where substantial numbers of workers now have a lower standard of living than under pre-1974 fascism.

The Communist Party's willingness to prevent strong working class resistance has given the right time to strengthen, consolidate and develop its strategies. Moreover, the economic crisis has hit the unorganized lower middle class even harder than organized workers, creating a mass base for fascism.

But Parliamentary deals and maneuvers are only one aspect of the larger pattern of instability in Portugal.

Unable to create stable condi-

tions for capitalism through Parliamentary elections and government combinations, many of the country's biggest capitalist interests have been looking toward a new kind of solution which goes by the name of "Presidentialism."

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

The goal of Portugal's biggest businessmen is economic integration into the European Economic Community, or "Common Market." This was not possible while Portugal was a fascist dictatorship. It would also be impossible for Portugal to join the EEC if full-fledged fascism returned.

At the same time there continues to be a strong trend of left-wing resistance against the threat of fascism, both inside the working class and the military.

The 25th of April, the anniversary of the anti-fascist revolution of 1974, was celebrated by bargains (since political meetings of the military are illegal) of 1200 middle and lower rank officers.

This demonstration of support in the military for the principles of April 25 helps to check right-wing preparations for a coup.

"PRESIDENTIALISM"

Both in response to the continued left-wing strength and to promote its own economic goals, Portuguese big business has encouraged the formation of a "Presidentialist" movement grouped around the President, Ramalho Eanes.

Eanes himself, while known as a "moderate" rightist rather than a



President Ramalho Eanes, favored by the "Presidentialists."

fascist, has close connections with the fascist right. He was implicated in the attempted pro-fascist March 11, 1975 coup and was the organizer of the successful November 25 coup of that year.

The goal of the "Presidentialist" movement is to create a strong state where the President could run the country without the support of a Parliamentary majority.

This would require a kind of "Constitutional coup"—to do away with Portugal's constitution, written in 1975 under the impact of the working class revolutionary struggle, which calls for the creation of a "classless society" and legitimizes nationalization and workers' control.

It remains to be seen if the "Presidentialists" will try to carry out their legal coup immediately, or whether new efforts at Parliamentary compromise (or possibly new elections) will come first.

REPRESSION

Two things, however, are already clear. One is that the preparation for this kind of big business right-wing regime requires intensified repression of working class organizations.

Already, in the last few months the SP-CDS government has stepped up that repression. Many leaders of the most important revolutionary left party, the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP), were arrested on frame-up criminal charges.

It appears an effort will be made to crush the PRP as a political party, through arrests of its leading members and tying up its resources.

But the second thing that is already clear about the "Presidentialist solution," even before it is implemented, is that it is no solution at all.

The economic program of Portugal's largest capitalists, for integration into Europe, carries with it the continued ruin of small businesses and backward industries—a huge sector of the country's economic structure—and misery for the working class.

As the middle class, whose lives are destroyed by that crisis, turns toward the extreme right and fascism, while workers continue fighting back, the polarization of classes in Portugal will continue. □

Puerto Rican Union Leader Jailed

PUERTO RICO — Radamés Acosta, the Director of Organización de the Union Independiente de Trabajadores del Aeropuerto (UITA—or the Independent Union of Airport Workers) has been sentenced by a U.S. District Court to begin a three month jail sentence.

The sentence arises out of a strike of construction workers in 1973 against the Vveri Construction Company. The strike was led by the Union Nacional de Trabajadores (UNT) or the National Workers Union. Acosta was the secretary-general of the UNT and a leader of the strike.

The National Labor Relations Board requested and obtained an injunction against the strike from a federal court. Acosta was convicted for violating that injunction and subsequent court orders to end the strike.

The sentence and its timing are a clear attack on the workers' movement of Puerto Rico. The Airport Workers Union is in the middle of negotiations with the Marriott Corporation for a new contract.

In addition the UITA has petitioned for a decertification election to represent the ground workers of Puerto Rican International Airways (PRINAIR) and the NLRB has ordered the election to be held later this month.

Radamés Acosta is one of the main negotiators for the UITA and a key leader of the PRINAIR organizing drive and election. If Acosta goes to jail now, the Airport Workers Union will suffer a serious blow and their two main struggles of the moment will be jeopardized.

The jail sentence for Acosta is the most recent example of a stepped up campaign of intimidation and harassment of the Puerto Rican trade union movement by the government, the corporations, and right wing terrorists.

In the past several years, the trade unions have led the fight to defeat the attempts of the government and the multinational corporations to make the workers of Puerto Rico bear the brunt of the economic and social crisis on the island.

Acosta has been a central leader of the increasingly successful efforts to develop trade union unity in these struggles. He is also an outspoken advocate for independence for Puerto Rico.

In light of these facts it is not hard to see why he has been one of a number of trade union leaders to be singled out for repression by the pro-statehood government of Governor Romero Barcelo and the U.S. government.

Send a telegram or get your union or organization to send a telegram to the judge who has sentenced Acosta. Sign a petition in support of Radamés Acosta or circulate a petition yourself.

Below is a suggested wording for your telegrams:

TO: Honorable Jose V. Toledo United States District Court San Juan, Puerto Rico, 00904
"Solicitamos reducción sentencia Radamés Acosta."

Or, if you prefer to send the message in English:
"Respectfully urge reduction sentence Radamés Acosta."

For more information contact: Trade Union Committee Against Repression, 853 Broadway, Rm. 2109, NYC, 10003.



1974: Farm workers seized the large estates and set up co-ops. Now, pressure to return the land to the landlords has helped topple the Portuguese government.

Women's Liberation

Where's The Women's Movement Going - And How Can We Win?

by Elissa Clarke

ON JULY 9, 100,000 women marched in Washington to demand ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. It was the largest feminist demonstration in history.

Today, women are trying to assess the significance of that demonstration. Is it the beginning of a new women's movement? And if it is, what will the movement be like? What issues will it take up? Who will be a part of it? How will a new movement avoid the mistakes of the women's liberation movement of the 60's?

Shirley Wood is a member of UAW Local 412. She is one of a thousand auto workers who marched in Washington on July 9. Women like Shirley point to a new direction and a new hope for the ideas of women's liberation.

Ten years ago, when women began getting together to discuss their oppression in consciousness-raising (or CR) groups, Shirley didn't get involved. "I'm no woman's libber," she says. "I don't want to burn my bra. I still like for a man to open the door for me. I'm still a lady."

BREAD & BUTTER ISSUE

"But I've been alone for nine years and I've raised three kids by myself. I struggled at Chrysler and pushed to try to get ahead."

"Equal rights is a bread and butter issue to me."

The CR groups began with discussions of male chauvinism, sexism, dividing up the housework. Women discussed their relationships, their fears, their oppression.

The women who participated in these discussions were students, professionals, young housewives. They were almost all white, almost all middle class.

To the vast majority of working class women, these discussions were irrelevant.

BEYOND RAP GROUPS

Eventually, the women's movement went beyond rap groups. Women began to demand changes: the right to abortion, equal opportunities in the job market, day care centers, equal pay for equal work. Women objected to being treated like sex objects, and demanded an end to sexism in advertising. Women's health clinics sprang up across the country.

But women like Shirley Wood were still critical of women's "lib." They realized that the movement didn't speak to their problems as working women. "Sometimes I felt they were making a mockery of it, like burning their bras and all kinds of other stupid things," Shirley commented.

Even though Shirley was not active in the movement, she reaped the rewards of those struggles.

For 22 years, Shirley did clerical work in the soft trim department of Chrysler's World Headquarters in Highland Park, Michigan. "For a long time, at Chrysler they wouldn't allow us to get ahead," she remembers. "They purposely kept women down. They wouldn't allow us to get promoted."

But a year ago, Shirley decided that she wanted a promotion. She put in for a job as a specifications analyst. "It was right within my own department. They should

have just automatically promoted me.

"WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!"

"But word got back to me that my management said, 'There's no way in hell that I'm going to put a woman on as a specifications analyst. Just no way.' I said, 'Well, we'll see about that!'"

Shirley eventually did get her job as a spec analyst. After a year of fighting Chrysler and the union, she filed a complaint with the Civil Rights Commission, and threatened to take her grievance to the National Labor Relations Board. The company gave in.

For thousands of women like Shirley, it was the same story. Although, by and large, working class women were not active in the 60's movement, that movement changed their lives.

They no longer believed women couldn't do the job. They believed things were different for women. They felt they had the right to a job. They wanted their husbands to help around the house. They demanded equal pay and union representation. In many ways, the ideas of women's

liberation had become part of the fabric of our society.

CHANGES SINCE 1960'S

A look at women's participation in the labor force gives an indication of the gains that were won through the social movements of the 60's.

In 1960, women made up one-third of the work force. Today, 40% of the work force is women and more than half of all women work.

In addition to women's increased participation in the workforce, women have also made small, but significant, inroads into non-traditional, or men's jobs.

The statistics that follow compare women's employment in 1960 and 1970, the years bridged by the women's movement. The figures here reflect a tiny percentage of the workforce, but they show that the women's movement had an effect on job opportunities.

For example:

- Women carpenters increased

from 3,300 in 1960 to 11,000 in 1970.

- Women mail carriers increased from 4,200 in 1960 to 19,600 in 1970.

- Women bus drivers more than tripled during the 60's, increasing from 18,300 to 66,100.

- Women employed as security guards also tripled from 4,900 to 16,300.

- Women in skilled jobs increased from 277,000 to almost half a million in 1970. In 1960, women represented only 2.4% of all workers employed in the skilled trades. By 1970, their proportionate share of the field was 4.1%—still a tiny percentage, but a significant increase.

Among women working in skilled jobs:

- Women electricians increased from 2,500 to 8,700.

- Plumbers from 1,000 to 4,000.
- Auto mechanics from 2,300 to 11,000.
- Die makers from 1,100 to 4,200.
- Machinists from 6,700 to 11,800.

CAUSES OF CHANGE

Many of the changes in women's employment came through government pressure or court decisions.

AT&T placed 3,500 women in outdoor jobs as part of its compliance with a 1974 federal consent decree. A government regulation issued in May 1978 calls for registered apprenticeship and training programs to try to enroll women in numbers equal to half the proportion of women in the work force of each labor market. Women now constitute roughly 40.5% of the national work force, so one-fifth of those entering such programs next year should be women.

Jobs in auto plants and steel mills similarly opened up for women after court rulings. Today, Appalachian women are organizing to demand 25% of the new jobs in the mines.

It is easy for us to forget that these changes did not come automatically. It was through the struggles of the women's movement and the civil rights movement that these victories were won.

The court decisions did not come out of the goodness of some judge's heart. Women fought hard for every gain.

AND UP TO TODAY

The movement of the 60's began to slow down around 1970 and 1971. The general political climate in the country changed with the end of the Vietnam war. The anti-war movement, the student movement, the Black movement, the women's movement, all subsided.

But today, women are again being drawn into activity. The march in Washington on

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July 9 is a signal that women are ready to fight again. It is the beginning of a new women's movement.

The overwhelming success of the July 9 march shows that it is not only young women, students, professionals, feminists, and socialists who are willing to fight now. Shirley Wood was also there, along with women from the Communications Workers of America, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, the Amalgamated Meatcutters, the United Auto Workers, the Retail Clerks, the Teamsters, the United Steel Workers, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the United Mine Workers, District 1199, the Ship Yard Workers, the Screen Guild, and others.

GAINS ARE THREATENED

Why are women becoming active today, after half a dozen years of silence?

Everywhere that women look, the gains that were won in the '60's are under attack. Poor women have lost the right to abortion. The Equal Rights Amendment seems hopelessly stalled. Affirmative action programs are under attack, with conservative forces scoring a big victory in the Bakke decision. A year and a half ago, the Supreme Court ruled that employers could opt not to pay maternity benefits to women employees. The wage gap between men's and women's earnings is higher today than it was in 1970. In 1970, women earned 59¢ for every dollar that a man brought home; today it is 57¢.

Every time unemployment goes up, it is those women steel workers, auto workers, construction workers and miners who have low seniority and get laid off first.

JIMMY CARTER

Many of the women who marched in Washington on July 9 were at their first demonstration. It was the first time they had made demands on the government.

When Carter ran for president, he promised "to see that the [Equal Rights] Amendment becomes law, and to set a style of leadership that clearly and unmistakably makes equal rights and equal opportunity national goals."

That pledge convinced many women's groups, including the National Organization for Women, to abandon the work they were doing and join Carter's campaign.

But in office, Carter has done nothing for the ERA, nor has he delivered on his other promises. For example, Carter stated during the election that he was personally opposed to abortion, but that he would not act on his belief. Once elected, however, Carter came out for the Hyde Amendment which cut off Medicaid funding for abortions.

Recently, Carter forced the resignation of his most important female staffer, Midge Costanza.

No matter what Carter's intentions were on the campaign trail, he has carried out the employers' attacks on the working class, Blacks and women.

There were more illusions in Carter's administration than there have been for the past dozen years. When the women's movement began, Johnson was in office. Though a "liberal" Democrat, Johnson was the target of the anti-war movement. There were no illusions about what Johnson would do for women's liberation—nothing! The same was true of Nixon and Ford.

But Jimmy Carter made many promises. He has infuriated women not only by going back on his promises, but by giving support to the right wing by his passive agreement with their objectives.

THE RIGHT WING MOVEMENT

The right wing has grown tremendously over the past two years. It is the right wing that has led the attack on the ERA, on abortion, on gay rights.

The spokespersons for this movement are Anita Bryant and Phyllis Schlafly. The fact that this movement is led by women has given the politicians a legitimacy for their attack on women's rights.

Congress can vote against Medicaid funding for abortion, and it's not men taking away women's rights. Instead, it looks like men supporting one group of women against another.

However, scratch the surface and you will find that Bryant's and Schlafly's support comes not only from an "army" of housewives, but also from the John Birch Society, the Ku Klux Klan, the Mormon Church and the hierarchy of the Catholic and Baptist churches.

The right wing is on the offensive. Women have two choices today: sit back

and watch them wipe out the gains that were won through the years of struggle—or fight back.

RESISTING THE ATTACK

Yes, there is an attack, but that attack has forged a new women's consciousness. Unlike the movement of the 60's where women were fighting for new ideas, today women are fighting to defend the gains that they have enjoyed for five or ten years. The attack today threatens to set women back.

Women, Blacks and gays are beginning to resist the attacks. That is why a hundred thousand women went to Washington on July 9. That is why the International Women's Year convention held in Houston last fall attracted three or four times the number of women expected. That is why 15,000 people marched in Washington demanding that the Supreme Court overturn the Bakke decision. That is why hundreds of thousands of lesbians and gay men have marched in San Francisco, New York, Pittsburgh, and other cities to defend their rights.

But what is the indication that the ERA march is the beginning of a new movement? Maybe it was a one shot deal.

WEAKNESS OF THE 60'S MOVEMENT

The women's movement of the 60's failed for a variety of reasons. In some ways, it was a casualty of the anti-war, student and Black movements which also subsided. But the women's movement had one overwhelming shortcoming that guaranteed it would eventually fail.

The women's movement was never able to reach out to Black and white working class women. It remained a predominantly white, predominantly middle-class movement.

Black women sat it out, and working women sat it out. These women not only represented the majority of women in America, but they are also the women who potentially have the power to force changes in society. While a strike by students or housewives can go unheeded, a strike by steelworkers has the power to shut down the economy.

The women's movement never got the support of the women who could have

really made it a dynamic and vital movement, a force to be reckoned with.

TODAY'S WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Today, the leadership of the women's movement is still the same middle-class groups: the National Organization for Women, ERAmerica, the National Women's Political Caucus, MS magazine, etc. Even though the movement has been inactive in recent years, these groups continued to grow steadily.

The National Organization for Women (NOW) is the most significant of these groups. It is the largest women's group in the country today, and the only one strong enough to call for and lead activities nationwide.

NOW was organized in 1966. It began as an organization of 4,000 members. NOW has grown from 55,000 members in April, 1977 to 88,000 members in April, 1978. Today, its membership probably approaches 100,000.

Despite its numbers, NOW has failed to lead the women's movement. NOW is an organization that believes it can embrace corporation presidents as well as women working on the line. Republicans and Democrats.

In fact, the chairman of the board and the assembly line worker are not fighting for the same thing. Getting more women on the top does not improve the lives of the vast majority of working women. Women's liberation does not mean equal oppression with men. It is these basic political misconceptions that have kept NOW from becoming a force that could really fight for liberation.

The July 9 ERA march was called by NOW, but it was a radical departure from NOW's usual strategy of "political organizing" (which means working on the election campaigns of candidates who promise to support women's rights, then working to unseat them when they go back on their word.)

Despite the success of the Washington demonstration, NOW has no plans to change its basic strategy.

When Workers' Power asked NOW's national headquarters what the future plans of the organization are, staffer Carol Blum listed lobbying, election campaigns, and the boycott of convention centers in states that have not ratified the ERA.

NOW's strategy has been an abysmal failure. It has not won ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, nor has it halted the attack against women, nor has it built a dynamic women's movement.

The overwhelming turnout to the July 9 march proves that women are ready for direct action. NOW will have to give some leadership, or it will be left by the wayside.

UNION WOMEN ORGANIZE

Today, the most exciting development in the women's movement comes from working women. There is a new women's consciousness growing among working women.

Shirley Wood, for example, is active in the UAW Region 1 Women's Council, where she is chairperson of the Political-Legislative Committee.

Especially among organized women, this consciousness is growing. Every major union in the country is looking seriously at their women members (with the exception of the Teamsters). They are forming women's committees and women's caucuses. Most of these unions sent contingents to the ERA march.

The trade union leadership is waking up to the fact that they cannot ignore women any longer.

Women are in the workforce to stay, in every-increasing numbers. Women workers constitute a growing percentage of the base of every major industrial union. This trend will continue.

The trade union bureaucracy figures it's better to win the women over than to alienate them by refusing to take their





PHOTOS: Scenes from the July 9 ERA demonstration in Washington, D.C. (Above) Women shipyard workers from New York City. (Below, left) Steelworkers from USW District 31 in Chicago-Gary. (Below, right) One thousand members of the United Auto Workers came from around the nation to march for equal rights for women. The labor contingents made up about 20% of the demonstration.

problems seriously. So the union leadership is fighting on a few select women's issues, be it the Equal Rights Amendment, maternity pay, or opening up the trades to women.

In some unions, rank and file women themselves are demanding that their union take them seriously. In other cases, it is the union leadership that is setting up women's committees, departments, conferences, and caucuses.

A quick look at two major unions, the United Steel Workers and the United Auto Workers, will show how this process is developing in unions that are not traditionally "women's unions."

USW WOMEN

When women were hired into the steel mills three and four years ago, they quickly realized that they were not welcome. They found that they sometimes had to walk a mile to get to the women's toilets. In some departments, there were no wash houses for women at all. Women were harassed by male co-workers and foremen alike. Many were fired while still on probation. Women were forced out on sick leave the moment the company found out they were pregnant.

One member of USW Local 1014 (Gary Works) commented: "As fast as we were coming in, we were going out the back door again."

Women in District 31 (Chicago-Gary) began organizing first. It was the conditions on the job that forced them to band together, initially fighting for wash houses and against probationary firings.

Later, women from various locals met while working on the Sadlowski campaign, and they discovered that they all faced similar problems on the job. They organized local Women's Committees and a district-wide Women's Caucus.

These organizations have given the women the strength and unity they need to fight for their place in the mills. One steelworker, Patricia Smith, put it this way: "I felt like I wanted to quit once because of all the harassment. But by the women's committee listening to women's problems, now I know where to go and how to get out of this harassment."

The District 31 Women's Caucus puts out its own newspaper and organizes around in-plant problems like maternity leave and sexual harassment, as well as broader political issues. District 31 sent a bus to the ERA demonstration. Now women in District 15 (Pittsburgh) are beginning to organize women's committees on the local and district-wide levels.

Although the women's organizations in District 31 are the most advanced among

rank and file trade union women anywhere in the country, similar developments are occurring in other unions.

UAW WOMEN

In the United Auto Workers (UAW), the union's leadership has long supported women's issues. The International established a Women's Department in 1944. But today rank and file women are starting to breathe a new life into the old structures.

In the early seventies, the Big Three began to hire women in large numbers due to affirmative action decisions. Today, these women are beginning to get active in the union, determined to make the union fight for their needs as workers.

The UAW supports issues like the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA fits in with the UAW's political strategy: they fight in Congress for gains that they feel they cannot win at the bargaining table.

For example, the UAW lobbied for national health insurance. They realized that this legislation would have saved the Big Three money which could then have been diverted into other "gains."

When the UAW decided to support the ERA march, Odessa Komer (UAW Vice-President, head of the Women's Department) sent a memo to each of the union's eighteen regions, instructing them to support the march. Every region except California (Region 6) sent people. The UAW had a contingent of about 1,000 members.

UAW WOMEN'S COUNCILS

At the same time, rank and file auto workers are becoming active, too. In Region 1, about 200 rank and file women are active in their Women's Council.

Although the Council was established on the initiative of Regional Director Steve Yogich, the women of the region are very active and proud of the work they are doing for women's rights.

In May of this year, they organized a rally in support of the labor law reform bill. The Council sent a bus to the ERA march. One of their projects seeks to establish a union day care center for members' children.

Undoubtedly, Yogich saw the Women's Council as a way of building a base for himself among the women in the region and a way of advancing his own career. But regardless of Yogich's motivation, rank and file women have become active in the women's movement.

The Region 1 Women's Council has inspired women in Regions 1A, 1B, and 1E to set up councils, too.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Particularly among women who have gone into non-traditional jobs in heavy industry, the new women's consciousness is developing out of both a very real need to band together, and the self-confidence that comes from going out and doing a "man's" job. These women are excited about their jobs and their accomplishments. They see themselves as pioneers. They are proud of themselves as women.

It is this new women's consciousness developing among trade union women that gives the women's movement the potential to be a real force this time around.

The Equal Rights Amendment is the first issue around which broad masses of

women are moving today. Women see the ERA as symbolic of the attack that they face today. Rank and file women as well as the trade union leadership see the ERA as the first place to make a stand against the right wing offensive.

The unions are interested in joining with the women's movement on this issue because the right wing is not only attacking women and minorities. It is also on the offensive against the union movement. Union membership is declining. Southern states are fighting hard to maintain right-to-work laws, and corporations are deserting the northern states for the open-shop south.

Carol Blum, from NOW's national headquarters, put it this way: "The women's movement and the union movement are beginning to realize that we have common enemies and common friends."

WHAT DIRECTION?

This broad support for women's rights can do nothing but carry the movement forward. But today there is a question about where the movement will go, what direction will it take and what issues will it mobilize around.

Both the National Organization for Women and the trade union leadership share a common political strategy: they wish to appeal to the politicians to legislate equality. NOW would like to lead the tens of thousands of women who marched in Washington back to the corridors of Congress to beg the politicians for the ERA.

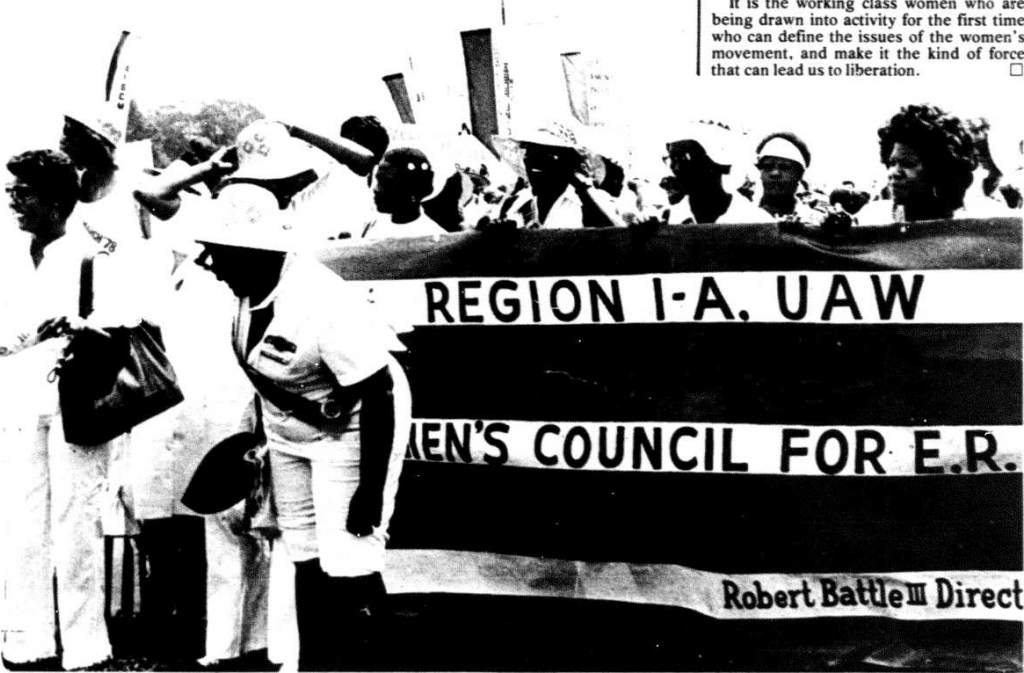
But the 100,000 women who marched in the hot sun that day got a taste of the strength that comes when people join together to make their demands heard. They are ready for action.

Women today have a choice: follow NOW back into the corridors of Congress—or build a women's movement that takes its demands into the streets. That is the way we can win on the ERA.

But although the ERA is the first issue that women are fighting for in massive numbers, it cannot be the end of the struggle. The ERA itself will not bring equality for women. In fact, even if we win on the ERA, the amendment will only be as strong as the movement that demands its implementation.

There are many other issues that face women today: abortion cutbacks, maternity benefits for working women, affirmative action, jobs, equal opportunities, equal pay, day care, health care. Today it is not possible to predict which of these issues the women's movement will take up.

It is the working class women who are being drawn into activity for the first time who can define the issues of the women's movement, and make it the kind of force that can lead us to liberation. □



Speaking Out

What We Think

Middle East: No Peace From Carter Summit

Behind the announcement of an American-Egyptian-Israeli summit conference, and other recent efforts to reopen the so-called peace talks between Egypt and Israel, lies one basic issue. One piece at a time, the Carter Administration is putting together a Middle East package which will leave four million Palestinians without a homeland, without citizenship or political rights.

On the same day that the Israeli cabinet began discussing the latest Egyptian proposals, an incident occurred which does more to clarify the negotiations and maneuvers than all the Western press accounts combined.

The Palestinian villagers of Al-Bireh, near Ramallah in the occupied West Bank of the Jordan, got a notice that they were not allowed to build or grow crops on their 900 acres of land. The land is soon to be confiscated and handed over to Israelis to turn into a new settlement.

OCCUPYING MORE PALESTINIAN LAND

This is not the kind of event that the American media is reporting. Instead, it concentrates only on analyzing which government leader, Sadat of Egypt or Begin of Israel, is most responsible for the breakdown of negotiations.

But what happens to this Arab village, and others like it,

is far more significant than the latest State Department communique about "frank and useful discussions." The case of Al-Bireh shows that the government of Israel only wants peace talks if those talks give more time to consolidate more occupation of more Palestinian land.

Meanwhile, we are led to believe that Egyptian President Sadat has taken a hard line against all such Israeli occupation and broken off negotiations until Israel accepts withdrawal from occupied Arab lands. But while this is the impression created by public rhetoric, the reality is quite different.

In fact, as a general rule, whenever American newspaper headlines advertise Sadat's latest "hard line," "tough stance" or "stiffening attitude," it means he has just made another major concession to Israeli government intransigence.

SADAT: MANEUVERING FOR U.S. BACKING

A few weeks ago, for example, an Egyptian peace plan submitted to the Israeli cabinet was described as a hard-line document and even a retreat from supposedly earlier "flexible" positions.

But it was in this proposal that Sadat formally accepted

the idea of five years, at minimum, of continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. The American government has hailed this concession on Sadat's part as a "point of agreement" with the Begin proposal for Palestinian autonomy—designed to turn the West Bank into an Israeli-ruled South African-style Bantustan for the Arabs.

Sadat used this same "hard-line" proposal to drop all reference to the Palestine resistance movement, the PLO. He thus gave political ammunition to Begin, who boasted on CBS television that Israel's refusal to recognize the PLO had frozen the movement out of negotiations.

Overall, of course, Sadat's maneuvers have been designed to politically isolate Begin. But more important, Sadat is maneuvering for American government backing. He has now been rewarded by getting the promise of a summit meeting with Begin and Jimmy Carter. Contrary to his latest pledges, Sadat will be resuming talks without any Israeli promises of withdrawal. And the American press has protected Sadat by dressing up his step-by-step sellout of the Palestinians as a militant Arab stance.

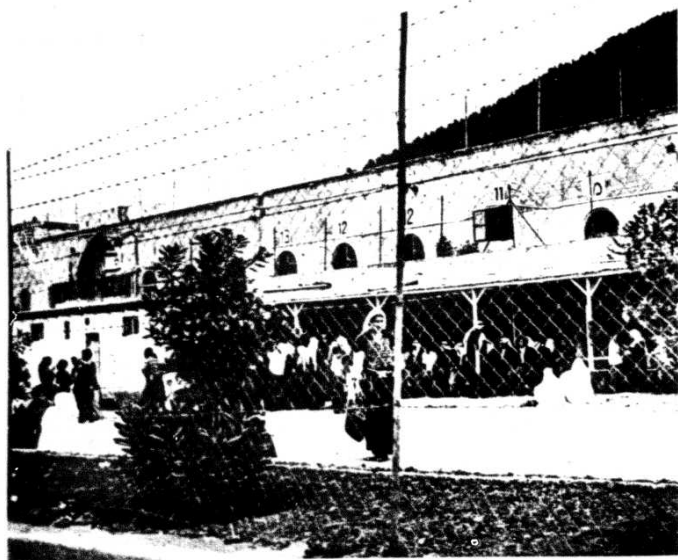
AMERICAN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

For the American strategy to succeed, the Arab states must be able to claim that they have stopped Israeli expansionism. That is why the position of the Begin government, which wants to maintain its claim to permanent sovereignty over the West Bank, Gaza and parts of the Sinai occupied by Israeli settlements and military installations, is an embarrassment to Washington.

For the moment, Sadat is on a tighter leash than Begin. However, once the American government has completed its deal with Sadat it has many ways of arranging the fall of one Israeli Prime Minister and replacing him with a new one. Already, many Israeli politicians are being suggested as "peace leaders" to replace Menahem Begin as head of Israel.

But no one can expect the Palestinians of Al-Bireh to care whether their lands are stolen by an Israeli government run by Ezer Weizman instead of Begin. No one can expect the Palestinians in Lebanon to care whether the right-wing militia trying to exterminate them receive artillery and air cover from a so-called "hawkish" or "dovish" Israeli government.

The American government may succeed in settling the differences between its Israeli and Egyptian client states. What it will not attempt to settle are the causes of the entire Middle East conflict—first and foremost, the robbery of the Palestinian people. □



Palestinians visit family members held in the Nablus prison. The Israeli government maintains large prisons in each Palestinian district.

Postal Contract: So Bad That Meany Can't Stomach It!

JUST HOW BAD the recently negotiated postal contract really is for postal workers was dramatically demonstrated when it was denounced by AFL-CIO President George Meany.

According to Meany the contract is likely to be voted down. And in his own opinion, "I didn't think it was a good settlement." Meany added that labor could not hold wages down at a time of steadily rising inflation rates.

What makes this statement remarkable is that it's practically unthinkable for the Federation leader to directly criticize a contract negotiated by a member union. It is considered a First Commandment of the AFL-CIO for union leaders not to intervene in each other's affairs.

What has Meany so upset is that the employers and the

Carter Administration will treat the postal contract as the pace-setter in wages and union give-backs in the upcoming contract bargaining round.

But the terms of this contract are so disgraceful, so outrageous, that no leadership of a major industrial union could hope to impose anything like it on their own members.

Even from the point of view of the pro-business conservative AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the postal contract is not a pace-setter for smooth, stable relations—but a formula for turmoil and bitter conflict in this bargaining round.

From the point of view of the post office rank and file, a contract so bad that George Meany can't stomach it, surely must be voted down. □

JOIN US!

If you agree with the views expressed 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.

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King Murder: How The FBI's Cover-up Is Unravelling

by Marilyn Danton

IT WAS a story of paid assassination, of conspiracy, drugs, prison breaks and death. The murdered man was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—and the FBI covered up the information for at least five years.

Last week the New York Times interviewed Russell G. Byers, who confirmed what he'd reported to an FBI informant in 1973.

Byers refused to tell his story with more than one reporter present. Then he could deny it, he

said.

Byers told the New York Times reporter that he'd testified before the House Assassination Committee that he'd turned down an offer in late 1966 or early 1967 of \$50,000 to arrange the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.

King was assassinated April 4, 1968 in Memphis. Byers' brother-in-law, John Spica, was serving a murder term at that time in the Missouri State Penitentiary, where James Earl Ray was also a prisoner.

Ray escaped from prison on April 23, 1967 and was subsequently convicted of King's assassination two years later.

The FBI issued a statement the following day that such a report indeed existed in their files—but the report had been "misfiled" and the agent, name withheld, had violated "established rules and procedures."

But there was no malice intended, the agency went on to say. The Bureau is reportedly convinced that the misfiling was due to "administrative error."

PAYOFF

Now, one week later, it turns out that the FBI received a report in 1973 or 1974 that a Missouri businessman was "the individual who made the payoff (of \$20,000) to James Earl Ray after the killing."

New York Times reporters got this information from FBI documents released under the Freedom of Information Act.

The document turns out to be the same one supposedly "misfiled"—the report of the informant's conversation with Russell G. Byers.

Both John Kauffman, the businessman who allegedly paid Ray, and John Sutherland, the lawyer who with Kauffman offered the \$50,000 to Byers, are dead. They can't be questioned.

Kauffman was involved in smuggling drugs into the Missouri State Penitentiary. According to some accounts of Ray's activities, Ray was receiving money from the sale of drugs in the penitentiary prior to his escape in 1967.

The full facts and complete story will not be known, in all probability. No doubt it could be, though.

If the government and the FBI really wanted to get to the bottom of this all they would have to do is trace the money. As we all learned from Watergate—it's the money that leaves a trail that's almost impossible to cover.

But that would be risky. It just might point the finger of suspicion in the wrong direction (that is, the right direction).

Look at the FBI's real role in the civil rights movement and in relation to Martin Luther King.

The FBI attempted to sow dissension and discredit King in the Black community and in the movement. Blacks were hired by the FBI to physically attack and jeer King in a demonstration in Memphis.

Hoover reportedly told top agents that he wanted to "Get that nigger." King's wife, Coretta Scott, was sent a doctored tape allegedly showing King with other women.

The FBI hired informers who committed illegal acts in the process of infiltrating racist organizations in the sixties. The case of Gary Rowe, who infiltrated the KKK in 1963-64 in Birmingham, has been in the news recently.

Rowe has admitted to the murder of at least one Black man, which he reported to an FBI agent. The murder was covered up. The possibility that Rowe pulled the trigger in the killing of civil rights worker Viola Liuzzo has not been ruled out.

These are the more dramatic acts that are public information. How deep the FBI involvement is in attempting to stop the movement we can only guess.

But clearly, it would be only a logical next step to get rid of the key leader and symbol of the movement, Martin Luther King. While there's no proof—and there probably won't be any—the finger of suspicion points more and more toward the FBI with each new revelation.



Martin Luther King Jr. lies on the balcony of the motel in Memphis moments after he was killed. Aide points in the direction the shot came from.

IN COPS' "BAKKE" SUIT Coleman Young Collects On Carter Debt

by Larry Smith

DETROIT—The Carter Administration's Justice Department—which just a month ago hailed the Bakke decision as a victory for its policies—has now filed a legal brief in support of this city's affirmative action program in the Police Department.

Since the Carter Administration, like all the major political and economic leaders of the country, supported the Bakke decision's outlawing affirmative action quotas as "reverse discrimination," its action in the Detroit case may not seem logical.

Actually, however, this is part of the political payback that the Carter Administration is making to one of its strongest supporters, Detroit Mayor Coleman Young.

Like most American cities, Detroit has had a police department that does not reflect the community it "serves and protects." To say that minorities and women have been historically underrepresented on this armed body of the state, would be a gross understatement.

This has not occurred by accident. Cops are part of the instruments of control that help maintain a sexist and racist society.

REFORMS

In 1973, Coleman Young became the first Black mayor of the city of Detroit on the crest of the civil rights and Black Power movement of the preceding 20 years.

The movement that was responsible for putting Young in office was also responsible for the death

of Jim Crow and the creation of a less racist society.

The Detroit Police Department has been noted for its racism and brutality focussed on the Black community.

During the early 70's an undercover hit squad, STRESS, roamed the Black community maiming and murdering Black people. Integration of the police force and the elimination of STRESS were major issues of the 1973 election.

STRESS was disbanded and as of 1978 an affirmative action program of hiring and promotions has increased the percentage of Black officers to 30 per cent and the percentage of sergeants to 15 per cent.

THUGS

In changing the racial makeup of the Police Department, Young came up against the Detroit Police Officers Association (DPOA).

DPOA is a group of right-wing white thugs pretending to be a union. It filed a suit against the city of Detroit charging the city with discrimination against white officers in promotion practice.

Under the affirmative action program, for every white officer promoted a Black officer would also be promoted. That would hardly seem unreasonable in a city that is over half Black.

A federal judge agreed with the DPOA and its charges against the city. He claimed the city had not proved that discrimination existed in the police department prior to the affirmative action program.

(In 1967, the year of the Detroit rebellion, the department was five per cent Black.)

The city is now in the process of appealing the judge's ruling, and the case will undoubtedly reach the U.S. Supreme Court.

POLITICAL DEBT

The Detroit Police Department case is part of the general attack being mounted by the growing right wing in this country. The struggle over affirmative action has become an important battleground for both the progressive and reactionary forces in the society.

The reactionaries won an important opening victory in the recent decision of the U.S. Supreme Court on Bakke. The Bakke ruling would seem to throw up for grabs all affirmative action programs.

Carter's decision to support the Detroit program does not change this fact. The Bakke decision gave the DPOA suit a major political, legal and psychological boost.

In this particular case, however, Carter has a major political debt to repay.

Mayor Young supported Carter early in his bid to become President and throughout Carter's tenure has not wavered in his loyalty. In the process Young has been able to get federal funds to revitalize Detroit.

The ruling class understands that to control Detroit they need a friendly Black middle class, the Coleman Youngs of the world.

The Black middle class is upset over the Bakke ruling as was shown by the NAACP conference in Detroit. The Justice Department brief is a sop to the Black middle class, without blunting the general attack upon the gains that Black people have made over the last period.



Carter and Coleman Young during the Presidential campaign. Carter's Justice Department is now repaying a political debt.

CWA STEWARD WINS VICTORY FOR UNION DEMOCRACY

by Ilene Winkler

NEW YORK—A federal judge has ordered Local 1101 of the Communications Workers of America to recertify former job steward Dave Newman. Newman was removed from office in 1976 by the 1101 executive board for criticizing union policies.

Because the CWA is appealing the case, Newman will not actually be recertified at this time. But Judge Whitman Knapp's ruling makes a victorious outcome much more likely in the case, which was initiated by 22 members and stewards of Local 1101 after the local executive board refused Newman's appeal within the union structure.

"BROAD STREET NEWS"

Newman was originally decertified after writing an article in a shop newsletter, "The Broad Street News," which criticized the officers of 1101 for not preparing the membership for a possible strike when the CWA contract expired in 1977, and for not involving members in developing union policies.

Although the officers of 1101 later claimed that Newman was decertified for disrupting a meeting and "creating a hostile atmosphere," the judge found that he was actually removed from office for publishing criticisms of the local.

Judge Knapp also ruled that the union's motive for removing Newman was to stifle further dissent in the local and stop publication of the Broad Street News, which was in fact what happened. He ruled that the union's action was a violation of the Landrum-Griffin Act. Newman had earlier won a preliminary injunction from Judge Knapp, but this was overturned last year when Local 1101 appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals.

The appeals court ruled that because Newman disagreed with union policy, he could not properly carry out or explain those policies to the members.

TOP DOWN ORGANIZATION

According to the appeals court, and to the officials of Local 1101, a union is a "top down organization" similar to the company, in which the people at the bottom are

supposed to take orders from the top.

As 1101 President Ed Dempsey testified in court, "If we had a thousand stewards with a thousand different opinions, we'd have chaos."

The appeals court ruling is a serious threat to the growing rank and file movement in the unions because it can give the bureaucrats

a much clearer legal basis for stifling dissent than they have had up till now.

DEFENSE COMMITTEE

Because of this, Local 1101 members have organized a defense committee to build support both inside Local 1101 and around the country. In the past few months

they have received support and endorsements from members of many different unions.

Endorsers so far include: Teamsters for a Democratic Union; the Independent Skilled Trades Council of the UAW; the Carpenters Rank and File Forum of San Jose; the Rank and File Postal Worker of California; the United Rank and

File committee of CWA Local 30306 in Atlanta; and Union WAGE.

More support is needed. The committee is now asking for friend of the court briefs for the next appeals court hearing in early 1979, and for continued publicity and support. To help, contact the Telephone Workers' Legal Defense Committee, 410 Seventh Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215. □

INTERVIEW

WORKERS' POWER: Why did you take this case to court?

DAVE NEWMAN: I think it's really important to point out that we went to court as a last resort after long discussion and a lot of thought about the situation after the local denied us access to any union appeals.

We were concerned that the law under which we went to court, the Landrum Griffin Act, is basically an anti-labor law, although it does have some provisions that supposedly offer protection to rank and file members.

We were also concerned about the whole role of the courts, who owns the courts and who they represent and the function of the law. There's also the whole question of becoming dependent on the courts as an alternative or a substitute for organizing.

WP: What kind of effect can this court case have on the rest of the labor movement?

NEWMAN: The situation we face in CWA and the problems we have are basically no different from the problems you face in the UAW or in the Steelworkers union or as teachers or as any other group of rank and file workers in the organized labor movement.

There's always the question of union democracy, the question of input and control over union policy, the question of how the union is structured. I don't think you can point out any union that's a model of rank and file democracy, and everyone is faced with the kind of problem we're faced

with.

What the appeals court ruling could do if it stands, is legalize to a greater extent than ever before, a structure of top down unionism where-by the courts formally legitimize a hierarchy in the unions where there's no rank and file input, where elections don't mean shit, where you can elect your own candidate but after he's elected he can't represent you, and that kind of thing.

In a way we sort of bit off more than we could chew. We went to court on a local basis to resolve an issue within our own local and we unfortunately came out with a decision that has potentially disastrous implications for everyone else in organized labor.

We feel obligated to continue the case for that reason. And also for that reason we've been soliciting support outside our union from other trade unionists and rank and file activists and caucuses from around the country.

The other groups and people supporting us see it not just as an issue in New York City, not just as an issue for telephone workers or CWA members. It's an issue that strikes very clearly at every active person in organized labor.

The unions see it that way too. CWA has been publicizing it around the country and unions such as the Teamsters and Butchers have been publicizing it among their officials as to the right the officials have to enforce their policy over their stewards.

We've heard of people in an IBEW local in Chicago who were threatened with decertification if they spoke out on certain issues, and were recently heard of postal workers in Washington, D.C. who were decertified for being part of a rank and file organization.

So clearly this is not restricted to CWA or to our own local. □

'No Smoking,' Killers Say

by Candy Martin

In what may become a trend among many corporations, some managements are devising a new response to the insidious problem of industrial cancer: they are barring current employees from smoking on the job while taking on only non-smokers as new hires.

The Quinn-T Corporation, which makes asbestos-based insulation, says it will even pay for hypnosis if necessary to enable workers who smoke to give the habit up.

The Johns Manville Corp., the first major corporation among cigarette-banners, is prohibiting the weed at its 14 asbestos facilities in this country.

Interestingly enough, the Johns Manville Corp. also has holdings in Canada. And it was at its Baie Verte, Newfoundland asbestos mine that workers were forced to strike for several months earlier this year for shockingly minimal protection against asbestos poisoning.

"We don't have any adequate facilities," explained Gerald Dwyer, vice-president of Steel Workers local 7713, in a telephone interview with Workers' Power at the time of the strike.

"All the men eat lunch where there's fibers present.

"We want lunchrooms, toilet facilities, wash-up areas. We don't want to bring the fibers home to our families.

Asbestos is a particularly insidious cancer-causing agent. There have been well-documented cases of wives who were fatally affected merely by coming into contact with the dust on their husbands' work clothes which they laundered. It is also possible to breathe or ingest asbestos dust with little or no effect for ten or fifteen years... until a fatal cancer is contracted due to the initial contact.

LIE

Even more shocking than John Mansville and its partners' refusal to provide showers or eating facilities at the Baie Verte mine was their 15-year-long lie telling employees that the substances they were working with presented no health hazard.

It was not as if they didn't know the truth, Gerald Dwyer pointed out, since "they had problems in

the '40's down in the States."

It is not only mine employees who suffer from the company's "no hazard" position. The entire population of the valley surrounding Baie Verte has lain threatened by an enormous mountain of asbestos pills which may be carried through the air for many miles on a windy day.

Unfortunately, no amount of anti-smoker campaigns by the company will remove that mountain's sinister presence from the valley surrounding Baie Verte, or eliminate the hazards from asbestos poisoning that just as surely exist at the Johns Manville Corp.'s many other plant locations.

Not that cigarette smoking is healthy or good, of course; programs that support personal decisions to kick the habit should be encouraged. But that is rather different from corporate demands that employees quit... or lose their jobs.

The real point is that those corporate demands are now being made by an outfit that has been (and will continue to be) callously responsible for the killing and crippling of its workers. Now, that business is also claiming the right to regulate its employees' personal lives—for public relations purposes, and also to evade its obligation to stop killing them in the first place. □

Labor Note

by Jim Woodward

The Teamsters Union plans to begin organizing coal miners, according to a recent article in the International Teamster magazine. "Both the Western Conference of Teamsters and the Central Conference of Teamsters are mapping organizing programs to fulfill their obligation to workers in the coal industry," it says. The article does not mention the United Mine Workers of America or even hint that there is already a coal miners union in this country. Perhaps Teamster officials feel that many coal operators will be glad to sign Teamster sweetheart contracts to avoid having to deal with the UMWA.



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A LEGACY OF REVOLUTION

by Dan Posen

"OUR BELIEF is that white society will not listen to preaching. They will not listen to their liberals. Liberalism has not grown within white society, and we Blacks cannot stand idly by watching the situation.

"We can only generate a response from white society when we, as Blacks, speak with a Black voice and say what we want. The age of the liberal was such that the Black voice was not very much heard except in echoing what was said by liberals.

"Now has come the time when we, as Blacks, must articulate what we want, and put it across to the white man, and from a position of strength."

In the United States of the 1960's, ideas very similar to these sparked a powerful but relatively short-lived Black Power movement.

In the South African context, the same ideas of Black political organization have led to the Black Consciousness movement, the Soweto rebellion and the beginning of a revolution.

SPOKE IN COURT

The lines quoted above were spoken by Steve Biko, the founder of the Black Consciousness movement, in a South African courtroom in 1976.

He was called to testify in the trial of nine Black Consciousness activists accused of subversion. Biko explained the movement's origins and defended its principles brilliantly before a hostile judge and prosecutor.

A year later, Biko himself was dead in a prison cell, his skull smashed in, his features distorted almost beyond recognition. That was how the white rulers of South Africa answered his arguments.

Exactly what Steve Biko stood for is a matter of debate and interpretation among many of those, especially outside South Africa, who claim to admire him.

Many American liberal newspaper editorials, in mourning his death (they never mentioned him while he was alive), condemned South Africa for removing the last Black leader who stood for moderation and peaceful change.

In contrasting Biko's alleged "moderation" with other unnamed "hostile and violent" elements, their eulogies to Steve Biko tried to turn him into a liberal like themselves.

Yet it is clear that Biko's supporters inside South Africa, the Black students and the activists of Black Consciousness organizations and programs, viewed Biko as their revolutionary leader.

BIKO'S PHILOSOPHY

In order to give real support to the South African revolution, we have to go beyond horror and outrage about apartheid—and begin to understand what Steve Biko was getting at.



BIKO
by Donald Woods
Paddington Press
New York and London
1978

The greatest virtue of Donald Woods' book "Biko" is that it presents large chunks of Biko's philosophy and political ideas as Biko himself spoke or wrote them.

Chapter 3, "The Trial," consisting of over 40 pages of transcript of Biko's testimony in the 1976 Black Consciousness trial, is enough all by itself to make the book a valuable document.

In addition, several interviews or articles by Biko are extensively quoted.

Like any other creative political leader or organizer, Biko's ideas were still developing. He was

grappling with some of the most complicated questions that have ever faced any liberation struggle.

South Africa is not an economically backward or rural society where guerilla warfare could bring down the oppressor. It is an industrialized society where the real power lies in the urban areas and the factories.

RIGHTS RESTRICTED

Yet in this society, the rights not only of Black workers but of the entire Black majority to organize, to speak out, to protest in any way, are restricted to the point where any direct organized confrontation with any part of the state machine seems impossible.

Fifty years of African nationalism, of protests, of civil rights marches and peaceful civil disobedience a hundred times bigger than anything in the American South—all this produced not reforms, but ever more rigid apartheid, the jailing of Black leaders and the Sharpeville massacre.

Under these conditions, how would it be possible to begin to organize Blacks to ultimately take control of their own society?

For Steve Biko and the new generation of Black student activists of the late 1960's, the Black Consciousness movement was the first part of an answer.

Black Consciousness had many of the aspects of a self-help and cultural movement, as opposed to an openly political one.

It concentrated on Black pride, on building up resistance against psychological oppression and on training Black men and women to stand up against all forms of personal insults and everyday mistreatment.



Steve Biko was murdered by South African police last year. His crime was spreading ideas like this: "... the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed."

This approach was useful on two levels.

First, as it was within the narrow limits of Black organization tolerated in South Africa, it was not immediately crushed.

In fact, the white state initially welcomed Black Consciousness, believing it to be a cultural and psychological alternative to the militant political African nationalism of the past.

Second, and more important, in Biko's own words:

"At the heart of the (Black Consciousness philosophy) is the

realization by Blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.

"Once the latter has been so effectively manipulated and controlled by the oppressor as to make the oppressed believe that he is a liability to the white man, then there will be nothing the oppressed can do that will really scare his powerful masters.

"Hence thinking along lines of Black Consciousness makes the Black man see himself as a being, entire in himself, and not as an extension of a broom or additional leverage to some machine... once this happens, we know that the real man in the Black person is beginning to shine through."

POLITICAL & REVOLUTIONARY

Actually, being a human being rather than "an extension of a broom or additional leverage to some machine" is something any worker anywhere, Black or not, could identify with.

But in the South African context, the implications of this simple idea are directly political, and revolutionary.

This is why the South African government has murdered Steve Biko and turned with unprecedented savagery on the Black Consciousness organizations, even though they broke no actual law on the books.

And this is why, on the evidence this book presents, we can say that Steve Biko stood for revolutionary ideas and might have become the greatest revolutionary leader of the entire African continent.

It was certainly one of the most important political leaders in the world—yet most of us never heard of him until he was dead.

Author had to flee South Africa

What about the man who has written this biography?

Donald Woods, a white liberal, was a newspaper editor in South Africa who was ultimately banned for his outspoken defense of Steve Biko's ideas.

He began writing this book in secret, under house arrest. He finished it after fleeing the country.

He is, on the whole, scrupulously careful to keep Biko's ideas from being confused with his own.

CONFRONTING IDEAS

Woods himself is a man of impressive talents, well-educated, a brilliant writer, a musical composer and one-time political activist. Yet the course of events in South Africa finally forced him to recognize his own powerlessness and irrelevance to shaping his country's future.

A major theme of the book is Woods' personal confrontation with Steve Biko and his ideas.



Donald Woods

He went to visit Biko with every intention of intellectually demolishing Biko's rejection of white liberals as the true champions of the Black cause. Instead—politically, intellect-

ually, and philosophically—Biko took Woods' arguments and tore them to shreds.

It was the beginning of a close friendship of Biko and his closest associates with Donald Woods' family. The record of this relationship gives the whole book an intensely personal and moving quality.

LEGACY

His friendship with Steve Biko was the beginning of a trail that ultimately uprooted Donald Woods' comfortable life style and moral self-satisfaction.

But it also saved him from a life-time of irrelevance, which he would have spent in a niche of liberal political opposition without ever changing anything.

Donald Woods could have performed no greater service than writing this partial legacy of Steve Biko's life and ideas.

It is a legacy to be completed by the movement Biko left behind.

WORKERS' POWER

Teamsters Plan Fight On Freight Contract

by Jim Woodward

CLEVELAND—The possibility of a Royal Union Sullout was on the minds of some 100 dissident Teamsters as they met here July 29-30 to form an organization called the Majority Contract Coalition. Coming from some 40 freight locals and several rank and file organizations, these truck drivers and dock workers decided to do their best to prevent such a sellout in their next contract.

That contract, the national Master Freight Agreement (MFA), expires next April 1. It sets the stage for what will almost surely be the most important labor negotiations since the miners' strike.

The MFA is very significant. Nearly half a million freight workers are directly included in the MFA. Other Teamsters contracts such as grocery, car haulers, and parcel are patterned after the MFA.

Moreover, the outcome of these negotiations may well influence labor negotiations later in the year, such as the United Auto Workers' agreements with Ford, GM and Chrysler.

STRAUSS AND FITZSIMMONS

The Carter Administration, spouting anti-inflation rhetoric, has made no secret of its desire to influence the MFA talks. What makes this such a dangerous situation for the union's membership is Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons' willingness to make deals and his susceptibility to government pressure.

"It's seemingly endless government investigations and legal actions against the Teamsters, their officers, and their pension funds,

Jimmy Carter's chief inflation counselor Robert Strauss recently seemed to suggest a deal.

Fitzsimmons, Strauss said, "is desperate for respectability, and I'm not too proud to give him some if he helps me."

The founding meeting of the Majority Contract Coalition resolved to block any such deal.

"President Carter should make no mistake," they said. "We aren't going to allow any deal to keep Fitzsimmons or others out of jail in exchange for our jobs and working conditions."

EMPLOYERS' PLANS

The meeting also heard a report on what the employers are planning. Ted Meckler, a Coalition attorney, reported on a meeting he attended of the Industrial Relations Committee of the American Trucking Associations.

Meckler reported that top industry bargainer J. Curtis Counts stated he was on very favorable terms with the Teamster hierarchy, but cautioned trucking executives that "many of the things that are said privately in meeting rooms may not come to fruition" in the contract because of the resistance expected from Teamster members.

Meckler said among the companies' major concerns in the upcoming contract are productivity and maintaining maximum flexibility in using their over-the-road drivers. "They seem to have an understanding with the union [leaders] on productivity," Meckler noted.

Mel Packer, a Pittsburgh Teamster, spoke about some of the effects of this understanding. In the Pittsburgh area, Helms Express and other companies have



Teamsters from 40 freight locals met in Cleveland to lay plans for winning a good contract next year.

begun productivity quotas that have led to the firing or suspension of older, slower workers. Denied permission by the local union to change the contract and institute these schemes, the companies simply went to top union officials who approved their plans.

DEMANDS

An end to all such productivity schemes was one of the main demands adopted by the Majority Contract Coalition. Other demands included the right to strike over grievances, and giving over-the-road drivers more control over their working schedules.

Popularizing and winning these demands, according to Coalition spokesman Pete Camarata, will require many different activities: among them petition campaigns, rallies, demonstrations, meetings and fighting to pass resolutions in local unions.

Several speakers noted that the Coalition's activity was being watched closely. "We won't catch either the companies or the international union by surprise," warned Packer.

He added: "In the next eight months we have to begin reaching Teamsters in the United States and Canada like we never have before. There's almost a gospel we have to spread."

Organizers hope that members of several different groups will be involved in spreading that gospel.

BROAD COALITION

The Coalition was initiated and has drawn most of its members from Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), a national group which grew out of the last contract fight. But others were present at the founding meeting and will hopefully become fully involved.

Another important Teamster reform group is PROD, which had several representatives present, including organizing director Paul Poulos and PROD's chairman, Frank Greco.

Poulos said that top Teamster

officials "have lost all respect for the rank and file." He added later, "Unless we have the local right to strike and keep our problems within the local and deal with them there, we might as well not bother to negotiate the contract."

PROD will decide later whether to participate in the contract coalition.

Two official representatives were also present from Local 208, the largest freight local in Los Angeles. Miguel Lopez, chairman of the local's Contract Proposals Committee, told the meeting they had come as observers. "We want to see what's here, what can be offered, and exchange ideas. Then we'll report to our membership and the membership will determine which way to go."

Bill Hill, a representative of the Fraternal Association of Steel Haulers (FASH), disappointed many delegates by announcing that FASH would attempt to pull its membership out of the Teamsters Union. FASH, which is made up of owner-operators, has unsuccessfully attempted to decertify the Teamsters in previous years.

Another speaker was Jim Jones of Detroit, who was representing the Car haulers Contract Committee. C.C.C. is organizing around the separate car haulers contract which expires later next year. One of the car haulers' main themes in "Majority Rule in '79," since they are working under a contract which a majority of car haulers rejected twice in 1976.

John Torbet, a member of the TDU national steering committee and also a PROD member, summed up the way a lot of Teamsters feel about the upcoming contract fight: "We and the employers are saying the same thing—we're going to tighten up the contract!—though we mean different things by that..."

"The employers are going to make a major attempt to move our working conditions backwards," Torbet concluded. "We've got a hell of a fight on our hands—let's have at it!"



Mel Packer, TDU: productivity quotas cost older workers' jobs.



Ted Meckler, attorney: cited industry-union "understanding."



Paul Poulos, PROD organizing director: top Teamster officials "have lost all respect for the rank and file."

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