

# The ORGANIZER

The Newspaper of the Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee



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## Budd to Ship Out 900 Jobs

by Bruce Bodner

The Budd Co. delivered a belated Christmas gift to its 1500 Red Lion employees on January 3, when it announced its plans to move 900 jobs to its Canadian operation in Kitchener, Ontario. At the same time, the Company requested that the Union, UAW Local 92, re-open its contract and negotiate a list of take-aways that would roll back the wages and working conditions of the railcar workers remaining at the Red Lion facility.

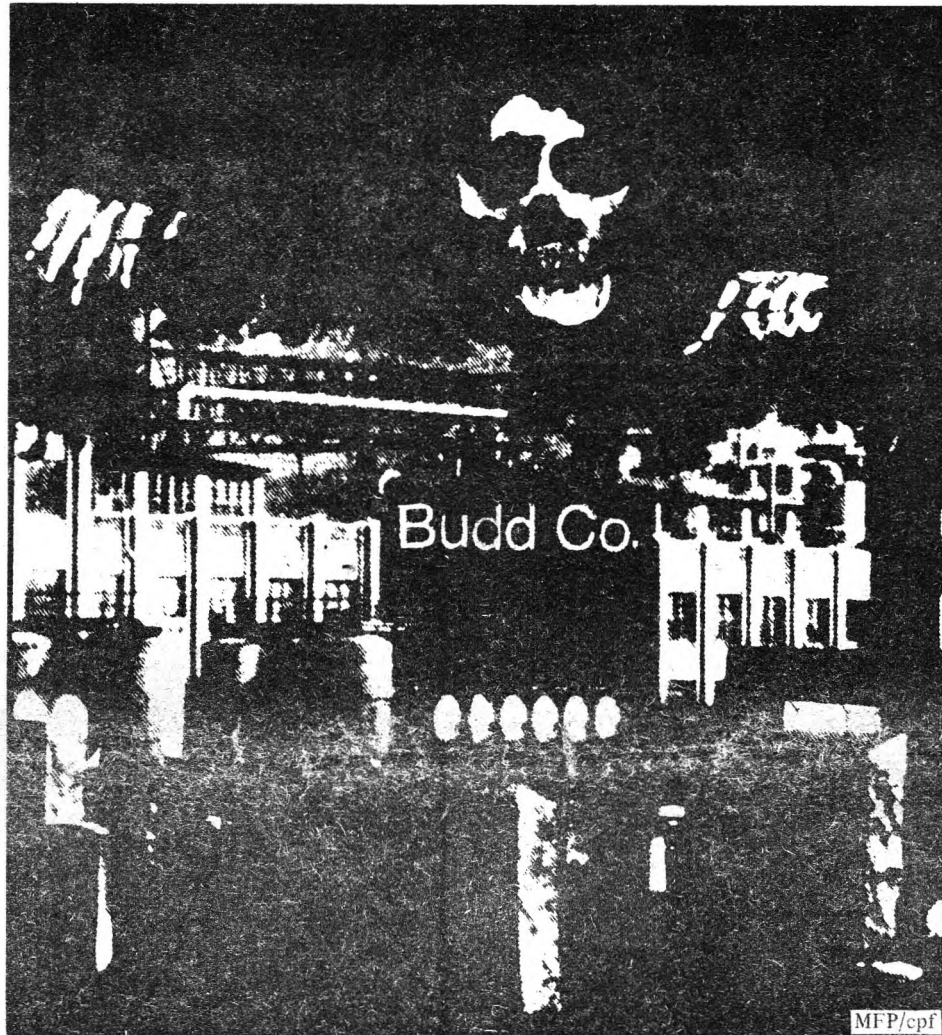
Last year the Budd Co. was purchased lock, stock, and barrel by the multi-billion dollar Thyssen Steel Corp. of West Germany. Like many other giant corporations, Thyssen is presently pushing hard to increase its profit margins at the expense of its workers. In Germany, an intensive campaign to automate and modernize its production facilities has created thousands of jobless steel workers. In early December this erosion of jobs led to the first steel strike in Germany in over 50 years. The primary demand of the Thyssen workers was a 35 hour week at full pay.

The threatened move of the Red Lion automotive division is part and parcel of this international drive to bolster Thyssen profits. Moving 900 jobs to its Canadian plant will mean a profit boon to Budd because of the substantial difference in labor costs between the two countries.

The average age of the workforce at the Kitchener plant is far below that at Red Lion, where most of those now working have over 20 years seniority. Here the Company stands to save millions on reduced pension benefits and lower sickness and accident costs. Also, in Canada there is a national health insurance program financed by the government. Wages of the Canadian Local are below those in the US, despite both being organized by the UAW, and the Kitchener plant is closer to Detroit, which means lower transportation costs.

### A TIDY SUM FOR THYSSEN

Overall, Thyssen will save approximately \$4 per hour per worker, a sum that will generate millions in extra profits for its Budd operations every year. The effect of moving the automotive division to Canada is the same as if the Company were moving to the unorganized South



The Budd Co. is threatening to close the automotive division of its Red Lion plant and move to Canada where labor costs are lower. This would mean 900 additional workers added to the ranks of Philadelphia's unemployed. The city has lost more than 140,000 jobs in the last eight years.

or overseas. The motive in each case is to take advantage of the differential in labor costs, undercut the bargaining strength of the union, and reap a substantially higher profit. That such a move will have disastrous consequences on the lives of 1500 workers means little to the giant corporation.

While Budd gears up to make its move, it is also pushing a take-away program on the railcar division. Thyssen is arguing that it cannot make a high enough rate of profit unless there are significant modifications of the present agreement. The Company would like to see reduction in the average wages of railcar workers, radical changes in seniority

rights within the division, the combination of certain job classifications, reduction in union representation and a break between the Red Lion Local and the national contract pattern set within the automotive industry.

At the same time, Budd continues to press the city of Philadelphia for free land, tax breaks, low interest loans and a new facility, lest they pack up and move the railcar division to Rome, Georgia. What we have here is a classic example of union-busting and political blackmail — a brazen plan to milk the Budd workers and the community at large. If Budd-Thyssen succeeds with this arrogant scheme, the consequences will spread far beyond Red Lion.

First and foremost, the ripple effects will be felt by thousands of Budd workers around the country, including 3500 at Philadelphia's Hunting Park plant. With the Red Lion Local severely weakened and possibly driven out of the Budd Council, which bargains jointly for all Budd automotive plants organized by the UAW in this country, the bargaining strength of the union will be greatly reduced. This is likely to lead to renewed pressure from Thyssen to resist accepting the pattern settlement negotiated with the Big Three.

### CORPORATE BLACKMAIL

Even more important, every Budd Local will become an easy target for similar corporate blackmail in the future. Hunting Park, an old and in many ways obsolete plant, is in fact next on Budd's list. The Canadian plant, which on the surface appears to be the beneficiary, can itself become the victim in the not too distant future.

After all, Canadian workers age just like US workers. What's to stop Budd from moving the work back to the US to save on pension and sickness benefits ten years from now?

Moving the Red Lion automotive division and busting a UAW Local in Philadelphia will also have a dramatic effect on all working people in the city, especially on its Black community. 900 jobs gone from Red Lion will be added to over 140,000 jobs that have left the city in the past eight years. Over half of these 900 jobs are held by Black workers in a city where Black unemployment is close to 20% and well over 50% among Black youth.

The breaking of a UAW local, which presently stands among the highest paying factory jobs in Philadelphia, will tend to create pressures that force a downward drift on the wages of all working people in the city.

The Budd Co. has thrown down its gauntlet to test the will of the UAW and the people of Philadelphia. At the time of this writing Local 92 and the UAW Budd Council are developing their response. Whatever the specifics of their strategy, one thing is now certain — an effective fightback will require the strength of a united Local and the support of all working people in the city.

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# PWOC Celebrates International Women's Day

In recent years, the women's movement has made women from all walks of life more aware of the oppression and discrimination they face as the so-called "weaker sex." Many men, too, have realized they have little to lose and much to gain by joining their wives and sisters in the struggle for equality.

But this growing movement is not really a new phenomenon. Throughout history, women have played a role in the struggles for a better way of life for all people. And it was way back in 1910 that March 8th was set aside as "International Women's Day." This day commemorates the contributions of women to the fight for equality, justice and a better way of life.

March 8th was chosen because on that date in 1908 thousands of women clothing workers in New York City went on strike demanding a shorter work day, better wages, and decent working conditions, an end to child labor and the right to vote. It was at the International Conference of Women Socialists in Copenhagen that Clara Zetkin, a leader of the revolutionary movement in Germany, proposed the idea of International Women's Day and chose the example of American working women for the commemoration.

From that time on, International Women's Day has been celebrated in socialist countries and in countries fighting for independence from imperialism.

But only in recent years has it been brought back to the US where the proud tradition of working women and their contributions is being revived.

We will probably not see in the *Bulletin* or *Inquirer* the massive celebrations of International Women's Day in the socialist countries and in the newly independent countries like Angola or Mozambique. We will not learn of the secret celebrations held out of the eyes of the police and counter-revolutionary agents which will take place in Chile and in South Africa. We will not even hear about the hundreds of local events held throughout the US which will honor the struggles of women. But such celebrations are growing in numbers and importance.

The PWOC will hold its third annual celebration of International Women's Day on March 10, Saturday evening. We will show, with speakers, music and drama, how women are contributing to the struggles against oppression and for a better way of life. The role of women in the rank and file movement will be highlighted. We will also examine the special oppression and the special contribution of minority women, who play a key role in the struggles against racism and sexism. We'll also hear from men, how and why they take up unity and solidarity with their sisters in the fight for equality. It will be a time for learning, for serious reflection, for song and for celebration. Join us!



## Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

# Who We Are



The PWOC is a communist organization, basing itself on Marxism-Leninism, the principles of scientific socialism. We are an activist organization of Black and white, men and women workers who see the capitalist system itself as the root cause of the day-to-day problems of working people. We are committed to building a revolutionary working class movement that will overthrow the profit system and replace it with socialism.

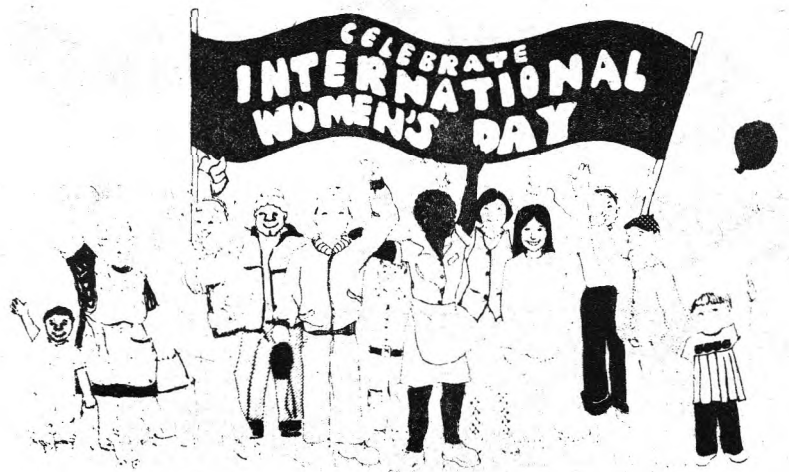
We seek to replace the anarchy of capitalist production with a planned economy based on the needs of working people. We want to end the oppression of national minorities and women, and make equality a reality instead of the hypocritical slogan it has become in the mouths of the capitalist politicians. We work toward the replacement of the rule

of the few — the handful of monopolists — by the rule of the many — the working people.

The masses of people in the US have always fought back against exploitation, and today the movements opposing the monopolists are growing rapidly in numbers and in intensity. What is lacking is the political leadership which can bring these movements together, deepen the consciousness of the people, and build today's struggles into a decisive and victorious revolutionary assault against Capital.

To answer this need we must have a vanguard party of the working class, based on its most conscious and committed partisans, rooted in the mass movements of all sectors of American people, and equipped with the political understanding capable of solving the strategic and tactical problems on the difficult road to revolution.

The PWOC seeks, along with like-minded organizations and individuals throughout the US, to build such a party, a genuine Communist Party. The formation of such a party will be an important step forward in the struggle of the working class and all oppressed people to build a new world on the ashes of the old.



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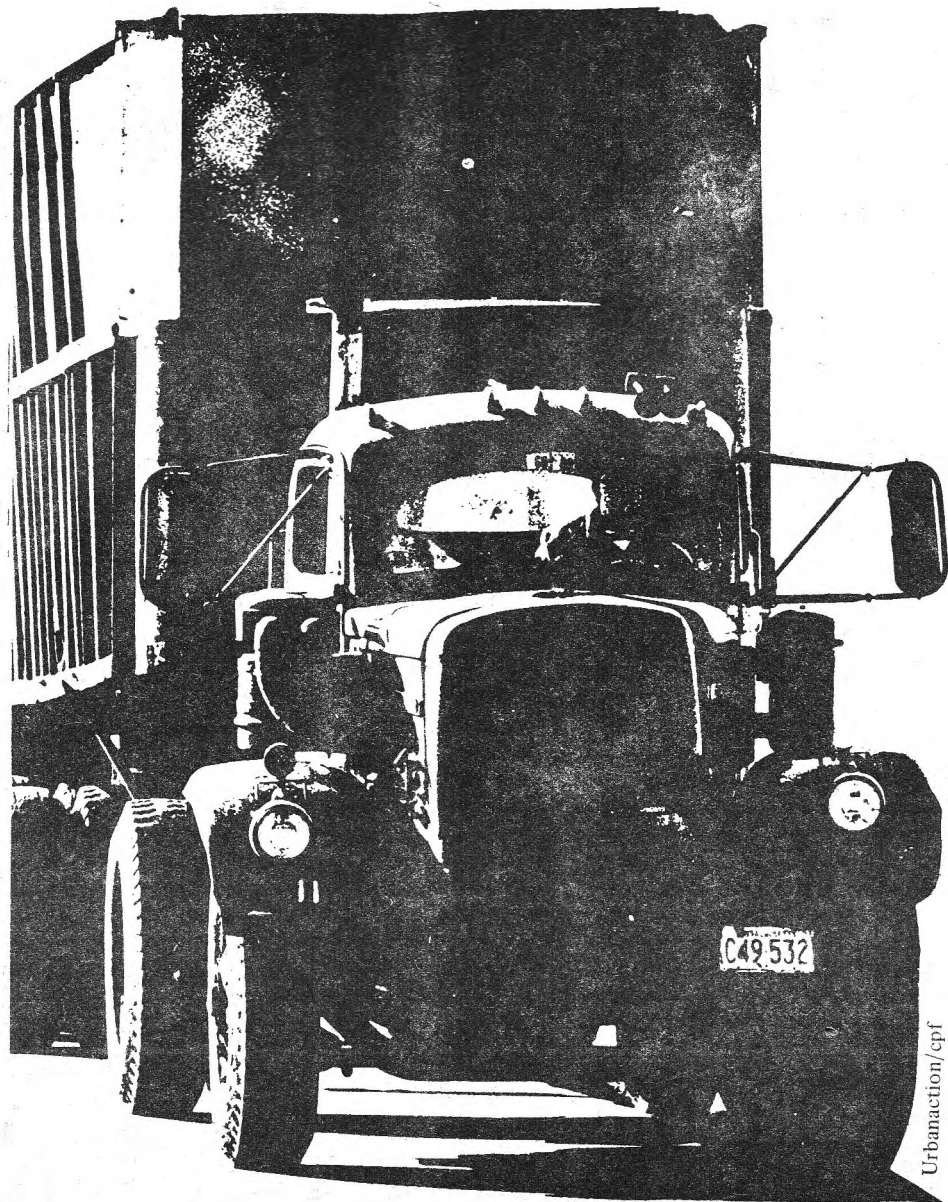
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# Labor Round-up

## Teamsters to Challenge Wage Guidelines



Urbanaction/cpf

The Teamsters' contract, which expires March 31, will be the second national contract to be negotiated since Carter came out with his 7% wage ceiling. Unfortunately, some of the leadership of the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW) have tentatively settled with some oil companies on the West Coast within Carter's guidelines. Now it's up to the 300,000 Teamsters to challenge the federal guidelines. And it's doubtful that the OCAW has the kind of organized rank and file movement that exists in the Teamsters.

At the recent annual convention of the three year old Teamsters for a Democratic Union, TDU leader Packer said, "We know Fitzsimmons is not going to get us what we need, much less what we want, come April 1." So TDU is preparing for a strike. According to rank and file leaders, Fitzsimmons may be planning on bargaining for a wage increase slightly higher than 7% a year while accepting work rule changes that would mean speed up.

To combat a sellout by Fitzsimmons, TDU and another rank and file group, Professional Drivers Council for Safety and Health (PROD) are planning a petition campaign plus rallies and pickets, and finally a strike on April 1. At the annual convention, eight contract demands were adopted that emphasize issues like more time off, work rule changes, and health and safety. These demands are in many instances more costly than straight wage increases. And Carter's guideline program specifically includes these items in the calculation of the 7% ceiling.

Leading demands of rank and file according to surveys conducted by TDU and PROD include:

1. Dispatching of drivers. (Under the current system drivers must "babysit the phone" waiting to be called in for a run.)
2. Improved pensions and inflation protection for retirees.
3. Reform of the grievance procedure to include a local right to strike over unresolved grievances.
4. Strengthening of safety and health protection.
5. Job and income security for laid-off Teamsters.
6. The right to ratify the many "supplemental agreements" to the master contract.

It would probably cost the industry 30-40% more in labor costs over the three year life of the contract to implement these demands. To merely extend the current contract would cost 24-27% over three years.

Organized opposition to Fitzsimmons is stronger than it has ever been. TDU's convention this year was twice as large as last year's. The organization has 3,100 members and its newspaper *Convoy* reaches another 50,000 Teamsters. PROD has a membership of 5,400.

Last winter a TDU slate won by a 2-1 margin at the 3,000 member Local 75 in Green Bay, Wisconsin. In October a TDU member, Jack Farrell, was elected president of one of the largest locals in the union's southern conference, the 8,000 member Local 866 in Oklahoma City. In November, a TDU slate won in Flint, Michigan's 4,000 member Local 332. And in December TDU and PROD candidates won office in local elections in St. Louis; Boston; Lynn, Mass.; Harrisburg; and Roanoke, Va.

This kind of organized rank and file is the key to a victory for the union in the upcoming contract fight.

## German Steelworkers Lose Fight for Shorter Work Week

Leadership of the West German steelworkers union, I.G. Metall, just settled a 44 day strike without winning a 35 hour workweek, the key demand of the strike. While in the past, the rank and file has usually backed their leadership, this time 46% voted against settlement.

The strike began this past November after four months of negotiations, when 3700 West German steelworkers went out for a 35 hour workweek to stop loss of jobs in the industry. Eighty-seven per cent of the workers voted in favor of the strike against big steel plants, mostly ones that supply the prosperous auto industry and including Thyssen AG (Budd Company's new owner).

Due to automation, about 120,000 steelworkers have lost their jobs since the 1960's, bringing down the number of steelworkers from 366,000 to only

250,000. The union said that if the workweek wasn't shortened, the workforce would likely be reduced to 100,000 by 1985.

The strike was to be part of an effort by the German Trade Union Federation to win a shorter workweek in all major industries. A member of Parliament who is a union ally stated, "Five years ago, if you had suggested a strike to chemical workers, they would not have listened. Now they would strike at a moment's notice." Earlier this year West German printers struck and raised the demand for the shorter workweek. And on November 24th, 120,000 West German workers demonstrated for the shorter workweek in the Ruhr Valley.

Many labor leaders saw the strike as the next step forward in the struggle for the shorter workweek. Negotiations for

the shorter workweek are now going on in the Dutch steel industry. And in the US, an All Unions Committee to Shorten the Workweek was formed this past spring. The Committee represents 25 national and international unions with United Steel Workers, United Auto Workers and United Electrical Workers in the forefront. The Committee's first conference last April decided: to push for legislation for a shorter workweek, to make the shorter workweek a priority contract demand, and to get rid of contract language that permits compulsory overtime.

In a debate at the conference over how much effort should be placed into getting legislation passed, Douglas Fraser of the UAW said "the fight for the shorter workweek will be battled out on the picketlines, not in the halls of Congress." However, in the last UAW

contract settled in January 1977, Fraser negotiated and urged the membership to accept only 9 new days off over the life of the 3 year contract, creating not one single new job! And it seems the Committee has been focusing on legislative reforms.

But in preparation for the next UAW contract, Autoworkers for a Better Contract, a national rank and file caucus, is putting forward the contract demand: 30 hours work for 40 hours pay. They are considering the possibility of an industry-wide strike similar to West German steelworkers. Like the leadership of I.G. Metall, it is likely that when push comes to shove, the UAW leadership will fail to fight for the shorter workweek. Victory will only be the result of a militant, organized rank and file with the support of an all union movement for a shorter workweek.

## Legal Service Workers Rally Against Repression

*Hey, Hey, Mr. Peanut Man,  
What are you going to do about the  
Ku Klux Klan?*

This spirited chant captures the solidarity felt by over 200 legal service workers from the east coast, the South and the Midwest. They gathered in Washington D.C. on Martin Luther King Day (Jan. 15, 1979) to demonstrate their support for Lew Myers, a Black attorney in rural Mississippi.

Like most of us who were demonstrating, Lew Myers works for a government funded legal service program that's supposed to provide legal services to the poor. The problem is, Myers takes his job seriously. He represents the United League, a progressive Black organization in Tupelo, Mississippi that is fighting employment and housing discrimination, police brutality and the Ku Klux Klan.

The Legal Services Corporation (LSC), which administers funds to legal service programs has launched an investigation of Myers to see if he has violated legal service "regulations." Regulations prohibit legal service workers from engaging in boycotts, demonstrations or any other effective tools that expose oppression.

The United League has organized boycotts of businesses to raise the living standard of Black residents in an area where the per capita income was \$2,853 a year, which was half the national average in 1975. Myers used the court system to correct employment discrimination and police brutality, in conjunction with the League's Direct Action Approach.

LSC's investigation of Myers is obviously being encouraged by Mississippi's racist senators, Stennis and Eastland.

Such an investigation plays into the hands of the right wing and the Ku Klux Klan.

Our Philadelphia delegation of over 30 legal service workers and community members were fresh from our experience of ridding our city of racist Rizzo. The 1199C Union, of which many of us are members, responded to our request for support by donating a check of \$100 from their Political Action Fund to help pay for the bus. We went to Washington because we understand that an attack against Lew Myers is part of an overall plan to curb any progressive legal service work with community groups.

After picketing LSC's headquarters, we held a rally at Lafayette Park. Speakers from Mississippi explained Myers' contribution to the people. Other speakers, such as Lennox Hinds, past President of the National Conference of Black Law-

yers, pointed out that attorneys who challenge the system must be prepared for the system's attempts to silence them. (Hinds is facing disbarment for his outspokenness.)

The high level of multinational unity kept us going for several hours in freezing weather. Some people felt that we should have taken stronger action, such as occupying the LSC offices, since LSC had refused to meet with our group. A coordinating committee was formed to carry on support work for Myers. In the meantime, letters demanding that the investigation against Myers be dropped should be sent to:

President Erlich, Legal Service Corporation, 733 15 St. N.W., Washington, D.C.

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# Transit Strike on the Horizon?

by a bus driver

Will there be a transit strike in March? Passengers ask drivers, drivers ask each other, and only SEPTA management knows. On December 28, SEPTA presented their proposals to the bargaining committee of Transit Workers Union Local 234.

SEPTA's package represents a big step backward for transit workers. First they attack job security, calling for part-time workers to be hired in every classification, and for elimination of the no layoff clause. Second, in an era when health costs are rapidly rising, we

are asked to pay for future increases in Blue Cross and Blue Shield. Third, we are requested to give up four hours vacation pay and work straight time for trippers and charters, instead of time and a half. On top of all this, they ask us to live with this mess for three years instead of two!

Obviously, if SEPTA insists on the above policy then, as Merrill Cooper, president of 234 put it, "This system will be shut down till hell freezes over."

The union has submitted a list of 50 contract demands which were read at the November 12 mass meeting of the membership. The priority demands are reten-

tion of the no-layoff clause, no part-time workers, a wage increase of two dollars an hour, and the elimination of discipline for pattern turn-in.

According to SEPTA, pattern is calling in sick on the day before or after your day off, or on weekends. Although the bargaining agreement states that an employee may have 12 sick turn-ins before disciplinary action may be initiated, discipline around pattern turn-in has effectively nullified that contractual protection. On the whole many transit workers see the demands as the best program submitted to SEPTA by the union in several years. The acid test will come when we see which of these are really fought for.

## UNITE THE UNION AND THE RIDING PUBLIC

But, as in the past, the TWU leadership has failed to understand the importance of advancing demands that can unite transit workers and the riding public. The union's contract program includes a demand for "clean and safe equipment". A step in the right direction, for sure, but no means of enforcement are called for in connection with this demand.

No fare increases, no cuts in services, safe and dependable service — these are the key demands of the riding public. They are of particular urgency to the predominantly Black and Puerto Rican inner city which gets the worst service in the system. SEPTA management, the City administration and Big Business will all be out to isolate the union by portraying it as a narrow, self-interested group demanding more for itself at the expense of the public. The most effective defense against this strategy is for the union to militantly champion the interests of riders as well as workers.

For example, in the past the union leadership has taken a stand of neutrality

on a fare increase, maintaining that it had no interest in how the SEPTA management pays for a contract package. This plays into the employer's hands. Instead, the union should oppose a fare increase and demand that additional revenue is raised for public transit through taxes on the corporations and the wealthy. Each fare increase cuts the number of riders, and provides SEPTA with an excuse to cut the workforce.

Negotiations started on December 5, and were headed up by International President Matthew Guinan. Guinan, infamous for ramming through contracts that sell out Philadelphia transit workers, has just negotiated a contract in New York City allowing part-time workers to be hired in all classifications.

The only real protection against such sellouts is a solidly united rank and file certain of which gains must be won. Driving Force, a transit rank and file group has endorsed the progressive platform put forward by the union leadership and has emphasized the demands it considers most important.

These key demands of the rank and file are no take-aways, parity with inflation, decent pension, elimination of pattern, end to harassment, and safe equipment.

Specifically, parity with inflation includes increases in uniform allowances, an improved cost-of-living formula, and increases in sick benefits. Demands to curb harassment are that the authority be required to inform an employee prior to an entry being made on his/her record and definition of the words "emergency" and "conduct unbecoming an employee".

The mood of transit workers is that we do not want a work stoppage, but we also deserve a fair and equitable contract.

Since experience has shown that we must strike to win the most minimal gains, we are preparing. The ball is now in SEPTA's court.

# Business Booming at Botany 500... Still Hard Times for the Workers

by Joan Kern

Workers at the men's clothing shop on the corner of Broad and Lehigh read with interest an article in the Philadelphia *Inquirer* about the growth of Botany "500". People cut the article out of the December 3rd paper and passed it around the shop.

Everyone has been aware of the changes. Two hundred fifty new people have been hired in the last six months, and the company is still hiring. Old machines have been resurrected and repaired. There is so much work that even with all the new employees, people are working overtime.

The article in the *Inquirer* pointed out that 2,000 workers are turning out 20,000 suits a week. That's three times as many as the firm made three years ago with less than 1,750 workers.

It's easy to see that business is good. The question is, just how good and for whom?

## PROFITS LINE THE OWNERS' POCKETS

Botany "500" is owned by Rapid American (Del.), a conglomerate which also owns Schenley Industries (which produces, imports and sells alcoholic beverages), Britt and Lerner retail stores, variety and auto-home accessories stores, and other companies making everything from ladies lingerie to bowling bags. At various times it has bought and sold big names like Platex Corp., B.V.D., and even movie theaters.

In 1975 Rapid American was losing money. But things have changed. In June of this year Rapid American paid stock

holders their first dividends since 1975. Before the fiscal year is out they expect to have paid the maximum dividends allowable under current bank loan agreements.

On August 23rd, 1978, Chairman and President Meshulam Riklis stated that Rapid American's operating earnings for the year ending Jan. 31, 1979 would exceed the previous year by more than 25%!!

## WORKERS MAKE THE SUITS BUT DON'T GET THE MONEY

That takes care of the owners of Botany "500". What about the workers who made all those suits? Are they getting rich?

Hardly. The average hourly wage for clothing workers is \$5.25. Their union contract guarantees them a 30 cents per hour raise in wages each year, a raise of 5½%. With the cost of living going up by 10%, this represents a 4½% decrease in real wages for Botany "500" employees.

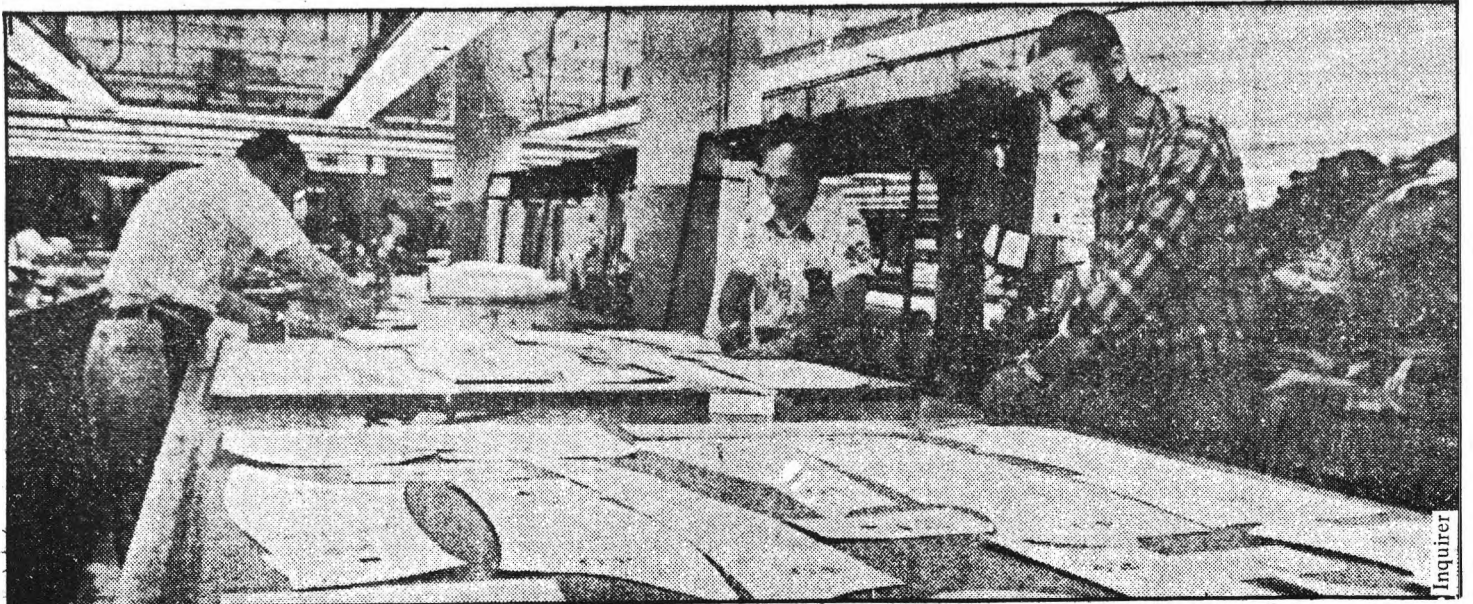
These same workers can't remember when they were last paid machine-down time, waiting time, or reporting pay. Clothing workers at other shops in the city are paid in such circumstances.

Wages aren't all that is "hard times" for Botany "500" employees. Things have gotten so bad that on one floor workers had to supply their own

toilet paper. Wiring is repaired with masking tape instead of electrical tape, and machines sit around for months waiting for parts.

Years of watching one clothing shop after another close down or leave town has left workers with an "I'm just lucky to have a job" attitude. (Goldsmiths, McCloskey, and Lawrence Clothing all closed this year.)

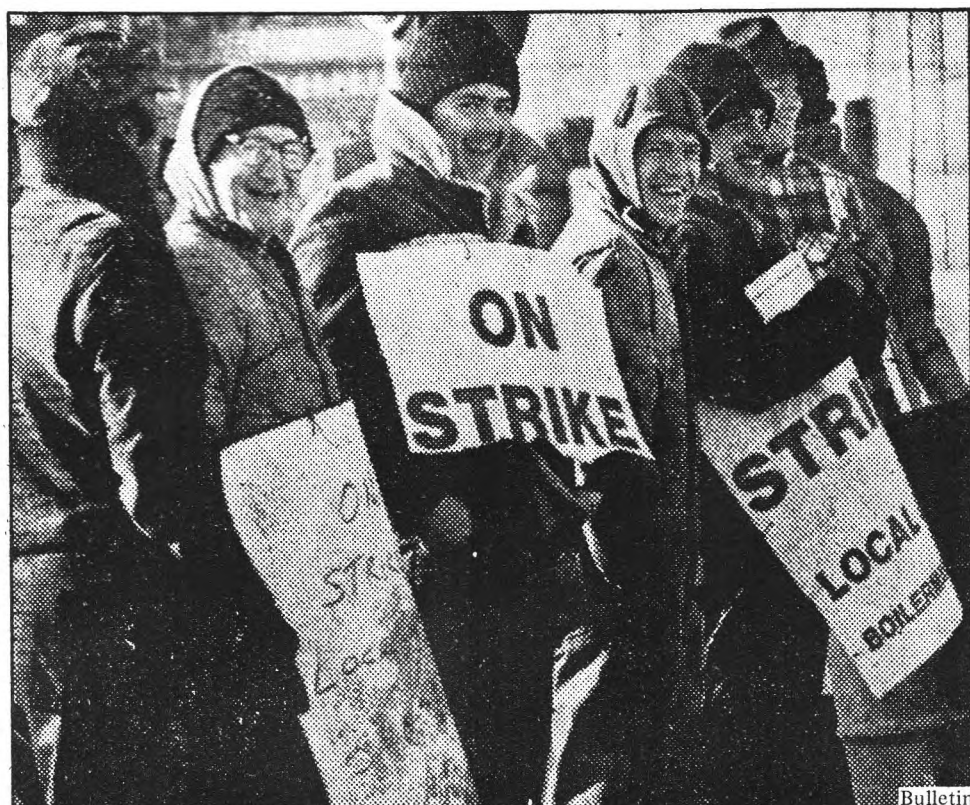
This attitude has helped Botany "500" cut back and speed up. This attitude as well as a lot of hard work has made that 25% increase in earnings; a profit the stock holders are benefiting from. Isn't it about time Botany "500" workers pocketed some of that cash?!



Inside the Botany 500 building (Cohen's) at Broad and Lehigh, Philadelphia's garment square. 2,000 workers make 20,000 suits a week. Three years ago 1,750 workers made about 7,000 suits a week. This speed-up has resulted in increased profits for the owners, but has done nothing to improve the working conditions or standard of living for the employees.



# Sun Ship Workers Hold Fast



Three thousand Sun Ship workers have been on strike since Jan. 3, 1979. The workers are prepared for a long strike in order to win a real wage increase and better job protection.

Three thousand Sun Ship workers, members of Local 802 of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, have been on strike since January 3, in Chester, Pa. The latest company proposal offered a \$1.90 wage increase over three years, but tied it to a productivity clause which would have completely broken down job classifications and called for a regressive absenteeism clause. It was turned down by a 1200-12 vote at a mass meeting on January 5.

The company, which has gradually eroded long standing trade lines and job descriptions over the past few contracts, is now trying to smash the concept altogether. The company's proposals which would give it the right to assign work and transfer at will, would be a virtual return of the shipyard to World War II conditions.

The company continues to wrap itself in the American flag insisting that the wage increase fall within Carter's 7% guidelines. The company is holding the hard line it has taken throughout negotiations on speed up and forced attendance. It continues to send supervisors across the line to scab and obtained an injunction limiting pickets to five at a gate on January 12 despite a virtually incident-free strike up to that point.

The union leadership has told the membership to be prepared for a long strike and has taken a strong position against the 7% guideline, the speed up, and the absenteeism clause. There has been better communication on the negotiations than before the strike, but the union leadership has made little effort to mobilize the rank and file and to integrate them into developing the strike strategy. They still cling to the notion that it's a few superstars that make a union strong and that win strikes.

There has been a small but solid picket line since that strike began. Although they have not been drawn into active participation, the rank and file is solidly behind the strike. They are not about to give back gains won over 40 years of militant struggle at Sun Ship. Sun workers have demonstrated a clear willingness to remain out however long it takes to win a real wage increase and better job protection, despite receiving only \$40 a week in strike benefits.

The Sun Ship strike represents the first major test of the Carter 7% wage guideline in the Delaware Valley and deserves the support of the entire labor movement and all working people.

## Rank & File School Employees Back Desegregation

On January 31st and February 1st school employees who were laid off last June will return to Philadelphia schools. This date is also the deadline for reducing class size from 37 to 33 as negotiated in the contract with the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. Finally, teachers will be transferred to achieve racial balance in school faculties and to honor seniority rights.

These changes in the middle of the school year mean that children will be leaving the classes they've been in since September. This disruption for students and staff is largely due to a contract which delayed recall of laid off employees until February 1st and to the Board of Education postponing serious desegregation efforts until the last minute.

Previously, desegregation occurred through new hiring and voluntary transfers, but Philadelphia schools were far from meeting new federal guidelines. The Board did little to encourage voluntary transfers and waited until it was threatened with the loss of millions of dollars in federal funds before moving to comply.

The federal guidelines call for the following percentages of minority employees:

Elementary schools - 31-52%  
Junior high and middle schools - 30-50%  
Senior high and vocational/technical schools - 18-30%  
Special education centers - 32-53%.

The School Employees Action Caucus (SEAC), a rank and file caucus within the PFT, has taken a good stand on this issue, one that the PFT as a whole should emulate. The remainder of this article is taken from a SEAC leaflet.

### SEAC'S STAND

SEAC is in favor of desegregation of both students and staff and sees it as a crucial component of providing quality, integrated education.

... But the Board of Education has instead provided chaos. How else can we explain the mass confusion in the transfers that have taken place and a future plan for 2000 employees to be transferred in two days. By doing this the Board has created the false impression that desegregation is an obstacle to quality education. Historically, the Board has blocked the way to desegregation.

\*The Board failed to assign new staff in order to promote racial balance.

\*The Board resisted the order to desegregate faculties until the very last minute.

\*The Board failed to make contingency plans in case they lost their appeals.

\*The Board failed to encourage voluntary transfers to promote racial balance.

\*The Board allowed chaos that promotes racial division instead of unity.

We need unity to provide a quality education for our students. We believe it's

necessary for all children to experience integrated schools and to see Black as well as white adults in roles of authority as positive role models. Our children need schools which reflect the racial diversity of our nation, in both their staff and student body.

The Board has consistently set back plans for desegregation through a divide and conquer policy which is also used to weaken our union. Divided, none of us have the strength to win the fight for programs and jobs. This means we all lose in the end.

Children lose necessary programs and minority children who now make up 70% of the population receive the least amount of resources and care. All employees lose jobs; minority employees are especially vulnerable since they have least seniority and are in positions (e.g., NTA's and para-professionals) which are first to go.

Desegregation was only ordered after Black people struggled for many years to win the right to a decent education. In 1954, in Brown vs. Board of Education, the Supreme Court ordered the desegregation of schools on the basis that "separate schools are not equal". If we, as a union, are to truly fight for quality education then we must fight for desegregated schools. And the desegregation of faculties is a necessary part of a total desegregation plan.

Historically, the PFT has taken a progressive stand on desegregation. How-

ever, this can only be seen on paper. For instance, both the '76 and '78 contract proposals included approaching HEW guidelines of 30% minority staff in elementary schools and 18% in secondary schools. Unfortunately, the PFT never put these proposals into practice.

### WHAT WE MUST DO

\*Our seniority rights must be protected within the desegregation plan.

\*The PFT should promote the recruitment of minority employees.

\*The PFT must promote the upgrading of minority employees because presently, minorities are inordinately represented in lower status, lower paying jobs. In a school system where students are 70% minority, teachers are 63% white, 36% Black, and 1% other national minority.

\*We must demand in-service training for staff and communities. Stop the loss of millions of dollars in federal funds available for this purpose.

\*The PFT must mobilize its members to work with the community to demand and develop an effective student desegregation plan.

\*We must pressure the Board for no more delays and confusion in this necessary plan. Twenty four years delay is enough!...

### Babies & Banners

Movie dealing with the key role that women played in the great Flint sit-down strike of 1937

Saturday, February 17, 1979 8 pm

Calvary Episcopal Church  
Manheim and Pulaski Sts.,  
Germantown  
sponsored by SEAC

## Martin Luther King

January 15th marked the anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. In many workplaces, workers have won the right to celebrate Dr. King's birthday as a legal holiday. While Black people recognize this day, King's birthday should be honored by working people of all nationalities.

King, as a leader of the civil rights movement of the 1960's, stood with the Black people during the long struggle to abolish segregation and Jim Crow laws. But King's struggle and that of the Black people did not end with the passage of civil rights legislation in 1964.

King viewed that poor and working people of all nationalities had more in common than they had dividing them. An example of this view was the organizing of the "poor people's march" on Washington, DC, in which organizing was extended beyond the Black community to include the oppressed of all nationalities.

The organizing King was engaged in at the time of his death, supporting the struggle of sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee, was an example for us today: the need to build unity between the workers' movement and the movements of the oppressed nationalities.





# BLACK POLITICAL CONVENTION

## votes thumbs down on mayoralty candidates

by Michael Simmons

In the last week of December the Black Political Convention, brought together a broad spectrum of political forces in the Philadelphia Black community and adopted a platform called the "Human Rights Agenda." The platform reflects the urgent needs of Black people in this city and coincides with the needs and interests of working people generally. (See January issue of the *Organizer*.)

In early January the delegates reconvened to hear from the candidates seeking nomination and office in this year's election. Recognizing that in the post-Rizzo era, no candidate can boycott the Black community as in the past, both Al Gaudiosi and Bill Green were on hand. Charles Bowser, the front runner among Black voters, was naturally there. Hardy Williams, the other announced Black candidate for the Democratic Mayoralty slot stayed away, mistakenly denouncing the Convention as a stalking horse for Bowser. The Consumer Party was also represented. In addition, some 20 odd candidates for the row offices presented themselves.

The behavior of the Democratic mayoralty candidates was a sign of the times. They tripped all over themselves in a rush to disassociate themselves from the most blatant symbols of Rizzoism. Gaudiosi and Green, as well as Bowser, said they would sack School Superintendent Michael Marcuse and Police Commissioner

Joseph O'Neil. But when it came to substantive policies this boldness disappeared.

Al Gaudiosi, as Rizzo's long time henchman at City Hall, naturally had the biggest credibility gap. Gaudiosi tried to close it by pointing to his break with Rizzo over the charter change issue and with bland reassurance that he would be a Mayor of "all the people." He also hoped his endorsement by long time activists Walt Palmer and Mohammad Kenyatta would boost his stock, but instead it only discredited Palmer and Kenyatta. Gaudiosi's public relations effort collapsed when he tried to argue that Frank Rizzo had had the potential to be "the city's greatest Mayor ever." While disassociating himself from Rizzo's most recent excesses, Gaudiosi naturally had to defend Rizzo's earlier policies and actions, since he, himself, was in on them. While Gaudiosi's decision to come before the Convention shows that he is more astute politically than his former boss, he did nothing to convince the delegates that he should be taken seriously as a "born again" friend of Black people.

Bill Green also failed to win friends and influence people. He trotted out his rather vague pledges, apparently failing to realize that something more is needed in 1979. Green was raked over the coals by the delegates for his wishy-washy, Johnny Come Lately, stand on the charter change. He was also hit for failing to back welfare rights demands while a Congressman.



Guardian/cpf

Charles Bowser, as might be expected, was most in tune with the Convention, but he too fell way short of meeting the expectations the delegates have for a Mayoral candidate. While Bowser did endorse some of the specific items in the Human Rights Platform, like the demand for an elected school board, he too specialized in vague phrases. To the extent he outlined a program, it was well within the bounds of corporate liberalism. Bowser's supporters also alienated many delegates by attempting to stampede the Convention into endorsing their man.

### NO CLIMBING ON ANYBODY'S BANDWAGON

None of the candidates gave what could be considered an endorsement of the Human Rights Platform. All of them pleaded that they had not had time to seriously study and evaluate it. At the same time they had "studied" it sufficiently to conclude that they agreed with "most of it." Since it is possible to agree with "most of it" and still not agree with

the most far-reaching demands, this general "agreement" did little to reassure the delegates.

In the end the Convention affirmed the kind of independence it had demonstrated earlier in framing its platform. While some delegates, notably Bowser supporters, urged that an endorsement be made now, warning that by delay the Convention would forfeit its influence, the majority was not willing to extend support to any candidate at this time. By a 3 to 1 margin the delegates voted to withhold endorsement, focus instead on popularizing the Human Rights Agenda in the community, and reconvene in March to reconsider the question.

By this decision the Convention showed that it is not willing to be the appendage of any candidate, and that it takes its program seriously. The candidates had better begin to take that same program seriously between now and March if they expect to line up any support among the thousands of independent voters who buried Frank Rizzo last November.

## City Jails Public Housing Demonstrators

Twenty-four Puerto Rican public housing tenants and supporters, mostly women, were arrested Tuesday, January 16, after trying unsuccessfully to meet with Thomas Kelley, Director of the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA), and the PHA Board.

The tenants and activists arrived around 10 AM to present their list of demands. They demanded that PHA stop evicting so-called "squatters", build and rehabilitate more public housing, and repair existing PHA houses. The action

was initiated by Congreso de Latinos Unidos, a social service organization which is part of the Scattered Site Public Housing Coalition. Other groups in the Coalition include Padres Unidos, Resident Advisory Board, Tenant Action Group, El Comité de P.U.E.B.L.O., Kensington Joint Action Council and members of the Puerto Rican Alliance.

The Scattered Site Coalition has been organizing tenants who live in the 7000 individual houses owned by PHA. It has been struggling for over one year to get

PHA to fix up these houses, straighten out its waiting list, and rehabilitate many scattered site units lying vacant in the neighborhoods. The situation with available scattered sites is especially critical now, since the actual supply of PHA units has dropped during Rizzo's administration.

Hundreds of Black families were forced to move out of high rises that were located in white neighborhoods. Due to legal and political pressure, PHA relocated many of these families in scattered sites, which meant that other tenants waiting for these units were out of luck.

Rizzo's racist policy has had a deep effect on Puerto Rican families who are recent applicants and tended to apply for scattered site units because many scattered sites are located in the Puerto Rican community.

The "squatters" are Puerto Rican, Black, and white families who, desperate over their sub-standard living conditions, moved into empty PHA units. Many of these families had previously lived without utilities or in parked cars. They are now being threatened with eviction and criminal proceedings by PHA. Meanwhile, PHA is allowed to break the law by refusing to build Whitman Park or any other housing for poor, unemployed and working people.

Feelings of anger ran high as tenants and supporters were once again ignored by PHA on January 16, 1979. The group of 70 was not permitted inside PHA's headquarters at 2012 Chestnut St. to raise their concerns at a public Board meeting. Instead, PHA and city police

guarded the doors and let the crowd, mostly women and children, freeze outside.

The tenants then blocked traffic on Chestnut St., and Judge Gelfand issued an injunction stating that the tenants could not block the street. Nothing was issued, however, to stop the illegal lockout of tenants from the Board meeting.

Naturally, the demonstrators refused to leave the street unless they were guaranteed a meeting with PHA officials, and at five o'clock police vans drove up and arrested the singing protesters. But the city must have been nervous about holding mothers and fathers whose "crime" was their need for decent housing. By 7:00 PM those arrested were let out after an emergency court hearing.

The day's actions showed to what lengths the city will go to deny the housing needs of the people of Philadelphia. PHA policies are part of a larger housing plan that seeks to remove low income people from certain neighborhoods so that fancy hotels and shopping centers such as the Gallery can be built to benefit big business. Since Tuesday, the Coalition has learned that PHA will not fix up any scattered site units if it costs more than \$2500. Instead, PHA will let the unit rot or tear the house down. When asked if these houses could be sold to people on the PHA waiting list for \$1, PHA replied that it was "illegal".

Members of El Congreso de Latinos Unidos and the Scattered Site Public Housing Coalition intend to put a stop to this master plan of urban "removal". Actions and an educational campaign around public housing issues are planned for the future.



Above, demonstrators are picketing in front of the Philadelphia Housing Authority demanding leases for "squatters" in authority houses, repairs on authority houses, and more scattered-site public housing. Twenty-four persons, 17 of them women, were arrested as a result of the protest.



# The Banks --- The Power Behind City Hall

by Joe Lewandowski

Rizzo may be on his way out, but The Force lives on. The Force is the power behind Rizzo's throne which has for decades determined the policies of city government. The Force is the maker of candidates and the destroyer of neighborhoods. The Force is the giver of loans and the taker of great profits.

The Force which we are describing is not the spaced-out variety, but the down-to-earth powers which control city hall and whose influence is felt in each of our lives. The Force we describe is the growing power of the banks.

For most of us the bank is where we cash our checks, get mortgages and car loans, and save a little if we can. But in the world of big city finance and politics the banks are The Force to reckon with.

Because Philadelphia has not been dominated by any one industry like steel, auto or other heavy industry, the commercial power has centered in its major financial institutions — its banks and insurance companies. In a local urban economy the banks play a key role as unifier of the interests of the capitalists as a class. Through their control of hundreds of millions of dollars in investments and loans, the banks are able to extend their influence and the will of the capitalist class into almost every aspect of our political and economic life.

In the past twenty years the largest banks in the nation have found themselves in the midst of a contradiction. The big industrial cities of the Northeast and the Midwest have been plagued by a migration of industry to the anti-union states of the South and Southwest. This migration has sparked financial crises in many of these cities as the source of municipal revenues has declined along with the loss of jobs and industry.

These banks have encouraged this migration through their own investment policies, yet they remain rooted, to some extent at least, in their own regional economy, now a declining economy. How do you get blood, or profit, from a dying city? This is the problem as the banks see it. It is therefore not surprising that the solutions which the banks offer as the salvation of the cities, never quite revive the patient. Rather, the banks and the economic interests which they represent grow like healthy cancers at the heart of the city while everything around them falls into decline and decay.

If that seems a little far-fetched and melodramatic, let's examine the various ways the banks have recently made their power felt in Philadelphia.

## CONTROL OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND FINANCES

When the banks stepped in with a \$50 million loan to "save" the public school system, their only interest was in guaranteeing a fat return on an investment. As a condition of the loan, they took control of the school district's budget.

This bank control of the school system has produced massive lay-offs of teachers and other school workers, the elimination of many educational programs, cuts in basic supplies like textbooks, and the crippling of an already puny effort to desegregate the school system with voluntary magnet schools.

First Pennsylvania banker John Bunting said that Philadelphia just wasn't wealthy enough to afford a decent school system. But apparently he thought Philadelphia was rich enough to pay the top interest rates the banks demanded with their loan.

The banks are effectively able to control the city budget in a number of

ways. First, according to the provisions of the City Charter, they must approve the city finance director. Secondly, if the budget contains items with which they disagree, the banks can withhold the short-term loans the city regularly needs to solve its cash flow problems. Or they can threaten to withdraw the financing on some project that is dear to the mayor's heart or pocket. Or they can call in the chips on the long-term obligations. There are countless ways for the banks to make their influence felt in city hall.

Some of these influences were undoubtedly brought to bear on Rizzo during the Great Crisis of 1976 when Rizzo admitted that the city was at least \$80 million in the hole. The banks, holding a \$154 million debt over the head of city officials, demanded and got cutbacks in city services and 30 per cent increases in wage and real estate taxes.

## CONTROL OF CITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Obviously one way the banks influence city development is through their own investment policies. In general the banks take more interest in investments in commercial projects and real estate than they do in investing in projects with a social purpose.

The banks have for the past thirty or so years been working out a "master plan" for what they call "urban renewal". The plan is pretty simple and obviously self-serving. It calls for the development of an "island" of wealth in a sea of urban decay. This center city "island", as it grows, surrounds and protects the offices of the banks and insurance companies which dominate the skyline of Philadelphia.

This master plan has given us Market Street East, the Gallery, Penn's Landing, the commuter tunnel, a half dozen new hospital buildings and three new hotels. All of this development is creating big profits for the banks who finance it; and it has fueled a slight boom in the health care, law, education, banking and insurance industries.

But how has "urban renewal" affected the Black, white and Latino Philadelphians who have been disadvantaged by the loss of manufacturing jobs? In Spring Garden, Fairmount, and Queens Village, families have been forced out by soaring real estate taxes and speculators.

The only jobs being created for the working class by this center city devel-

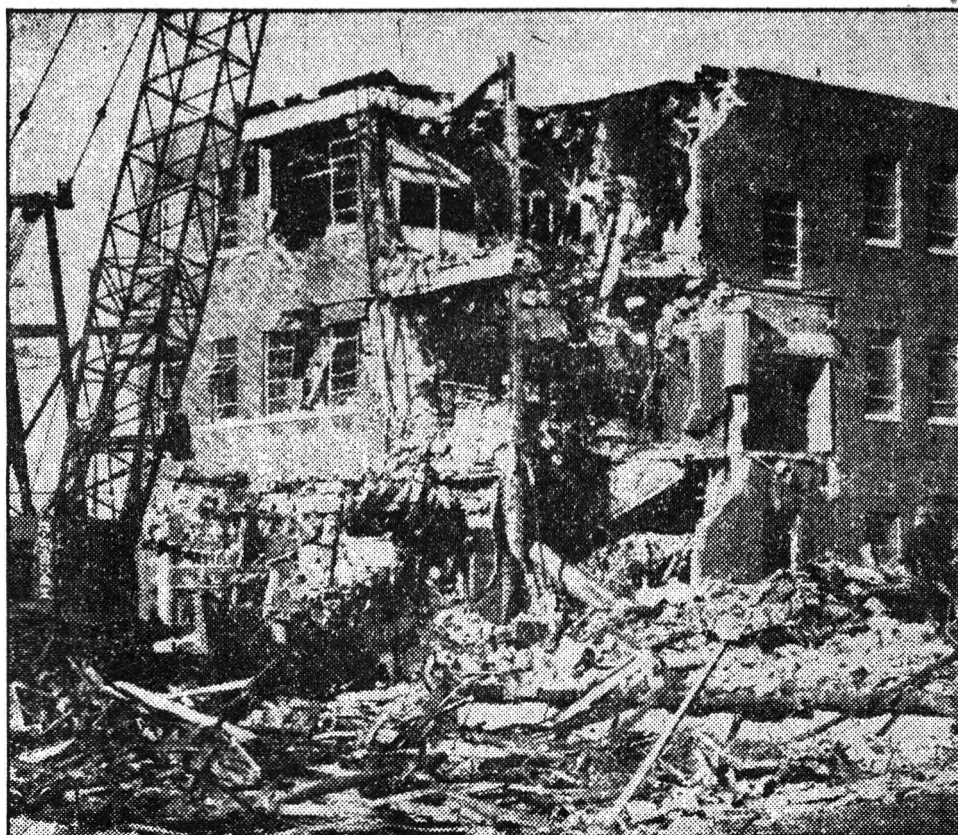
opment are short-term jobs in the construction industry, or low-paying non-union clerical jobs. The boom in service jobs which the banks promised never really materialized. There has actually been a decline of 1% in all service industries since 1973. The most healthy sectors — health, education, banking, insurance and law — require large numbers of professional, technical and executive workers who are imported from the suburbs or who have been attracted to the "redeveloped" areas of center city.

Center City redevelopment has been financed not only through bank loans and private investment. It has also been the target of millions of federal, state and city dollars. The banks have played no small role in lobbying for this massive investment of public funds to benefit private and commercial interests. The Gallery shopping complex was financed through public funds, and so was the commuter tunnel. By diverting public funds to big commercial development projects, the banks have starved out the smaller businesses in the neighborhoods and have squandered millions which could have given new life to aging communities.

How does it feel to be a worker who lives in a city which is being "redeveloped" by the banks? There's a good chance you will be unemployed since about one in eight of us are looking for work. If you are young and Black, the odds are 50-50 that you've been looking for work for a long, long time.

You may have had trouble getting financing for a modest rowhouse since your neighborhood was "redlined" out of mortgage loans by the banks until recently when they were forced to limit that practice. Your neighborhood is probably blighted by abandoned housing and vacant lots too, all the result of redlining which has accelerated the decline of many working-class communities.

The average Philadelphia worker makes less, per capita, than a worker in Kokomo, Indiana. In fact the Philadelphia worker averages less than workers in 52 other US cities. This is due to a combination of high unemployment, the loss of unionized manufacturing jobs, and the growth of low-paying unorganized jobs in the service industries.



The banks make huge profits from "urban renewal" at the expense of the working class. The destruction of manufacturing plants, such as above, means real job losses and higher and higher unemployment.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Despite the fact that the banks rule the economic and political life of the city...despite the great suffering this regime is inflicting on the working class and the poor, and especially on national minority workers...it is not at all likely that the present candidates for mayor — Green, Klenk, Bowser, Gaudiosi and Tayoun — will say a word about it. None of these candidates have shown that they are in essential disagreement with the rule of the banks. The fact is that most of these candidates spend their time courting the bankers in order to receive the financial support and prestige that could put them into public office.

Only a candidate willing to combat the power of the capitalist class, specifically the stranglehold of the banks over the city's life, can hope to deliver on promises to improve the standard of living of the people of Philadelphia.

The people of Philadelphia need more and better city services, instead of cutbacks. We need jobs, not the continual decline of manufacturing employment. And we need decent housing, not more abandoned homes and vacant lots. The importance of these demands was underlined recently by the Black Political Convention, and a candidate who fails to take them up will fail to capture broad and deep support, particularly in the Black community.

But how are these demands to be realized? Only a candidate who is willing to challenge the logic that "what is good for the banks and big business is automatically good for working people" can hope to deliver. Decent services, housing and jobs are incompatible with the interests of Big Capital.

Thus a program that will really serve the people of Philadelphia must raise additional demands. Three areas must be highlighted: The democratization of city government, the reversal of development policy and priorities, and the way in which Philadelphia finances its programs.

The present form of city government, the product of the now famous City Home Rule Charter, facilitates the political domination of the financial interests. The strong mayor form of government, by centralizing power, provides the means for carrying out the policies desired by these interests, as long as they succeeded in placing "their" man in office. To combat this domination, city government must be made more accountable. Unrestricted recall of the mayor and all public officials would provide one check. A more responsive City Council would provide another. This would require elimination of racially gerrymandered districts and the council at large positions, which generally have been political plums passed out by the political machines.

The provisions of the city charter which gives the financial interests veto power of the appointment of the city's finance director should be abolished as inconsistent with the most basic ideas of democracy. The people should have the veto power not a handful of bankers and university presidents.

Finally we need an elected school board. The present board, appointed by the mayor is clearly under the thumb of John Bunting and Co. An elected board will be more likely to stand up to the blackmail of the banks because it must answer for its performance at the polls.

These measures taken together would, by providing mechanisms for more direct accountability, undercut the financial interests' control. But as we pointed out earlier, the present methods of financing the costs of city government

(continued on page 9)

Organizer, February 1979, page 7



# The Wreck of the People's Party...

## Sold Out to the Democrats

by Duane Calhoun

These words, describing American big business, come from a political manifesto written some years ago:

*"They have crushed competition, bankrupted thousands of honest men, oppressed the poor, robbed and plundered the helpless, until today they are absolute and supreme masters of the situation, able to regulate production, control prices, grind the faces of the poor, build up enormous fortunes for the trust funds, elect Governors and Presidents...purchase Legislatures and Congresses, and hold high carnival while...people starve...all over the land."*

These words did not come from the Communist Party chairman, nor from a radical student of the 1960's. They were written by Congressman Milford W. Howard of Fort Payne, Alabama, who was elected to the House of Representatives on the People's Party ticket in 1894.

The People's Party (also called the Populists) was a radical political party organized by farmers, industrial workers, and middle-class reformers. Its founding convention was held in Cincinnati, Ohio in May of 1891. In the Presidential election of the following year, its candidate, General James B. Weaver, polled over a million votes. The Populists elected the Governors of Kansas and Colorado, and in 1884 elected six senators, six congressmen, several hundred mayors and other local and state officials.

The 1890's were hard times for most Americans. Farmers, especially in the South, were hit hard by the falling prices of crops and the rising prices of tools. The *Southern Alliance Farmer* newspaper reported from Georgia in 1891, "Hundreds of men will be turned out of house and home, or forced to become hirelings and tenants in fields that they once owned...The doors of every courthouse in Georgia are placarded with the announcements of such (sheriffs') sales."

Workers fared no better. Their strikes for decent wages were met with strikebreakers imported from other cities. Private "detective" agencies like the Pinkertons used spies and clubs against union supporters. The National Guard and the Army were sent out to break up picket lines and enforce court injunctions against strikes. Unlike the "Gay 90's" of our schoolbooks, jobs were hard to get, unions were almost unheard of, and the average laborer spent an hour's wages to buy five pounds of flour.

The delegates to the second Populist convention, at St. Louis in 1892, represented a grass-roots movement of Americans. Almost two-thirds of the delegates were from farmers groups; nearly one-third represented labor unions; the rest were middle-class reformers and intellectuals. Rich bankers and industrialists of the kind that dominated the Republican and Democratic conventions were nowhere to be found.

### THE POPULIST PLATFORM

The People's Party called for radical, democratic reforms. They sought the extension of democracy, calling for the use of the initiative and referendum. This was a means of bypassing the corrupt, capitalist controlled legislatures through adopting legislation by direct, popular vote. They demanded a graduated income tax, the eight hour day, the outlawing of anti-labor court injunctions, and public ownership of the railroads.

The Populist Platform also called for "the protection of the colored race in their legal rights," by opposing the disenfranchisement of Black voters and the lynch law then prevailing in the South, a center of the populist revolt.

Tom Watson, the Populist leader from Georgia, had this to say about the role of racism among poor whites:

*"You might beseech a Southern white tenant to listen to you upon questions of finance, taxation, and transportation; you might demonstrate with mathematical precision that herein lay his way out of poverty into comfort; you might have him almost persuaded to the truth, but if the merchant who furnished his farm supplies (at tremendous usury) or the town politician (who never spoke to him excepting at election times) came along and cried 'Negro rule!', the entire fabric of reason and common sense which you had patiently constructed would fall, and the poor tenant would joyously hug the chains of an actual wretchedness rather than do any experimenting on a question of mere sentiment..."*

Unfortunately the Populists did not build on this understanding. The movement in the South was largely segregated and steered away from the issue of social equality, leaving the white farmers prey to the very sort of demagoguery Watson describes. Watson himself, one of the most politically astute and far-seeing of the Populist leaders, later became one of the most rabid, racebaiting, segregationist politicians in the South.

Another plank in the Populist Platform called for "Free Silver" — the minting of silver money at the rate of \$16 from every one gold dollar. This was a response to the "hard money" policies of the capitalist class. The farmers, in particular, favored inflation as a means of dealing with their chronic indebtedness. While there was a certain logic in the free silver demand, it became a panacea, that is a simple-minded answer to a many-sided, complex problem. The more conservative elements in the movement seized on it because it tended to obscure the more fundamental causes of the impoverishment of the workers and farmers — namely the system of private property and wage slavery. In fact Free Silver was one of the least threatening of the populist demands and thus quite naturally, far-seeing elements of the capitalist class sought to divert the movement into a singular focus on this issue.

As Tom Watson explained:

*"Free silver is right and we ought to have it, but it is a mere drop in the bucket...Certain wirepullers in Washington are scheming to sidetrack the People's Party by having it surrender all of its platform excepting the Free Silver plank. In a Party whose only test of membership would be the advocacy of free silver, how*

*could we keep the corporations from coming in and forever checking our advance toward governmental ownership of the railways? How could we purge it of these privileged classes who oppose an income tax? Our enemies, seeing us sweeping onward with steady growth, seek to divide us, confuse us, side-track us..."*

Watson's warning was to prove all too prophetic.

From the 1892 Omaha convention, where the basic People's Party program was hammered out, to the high-water mark of the 1894 elections, Populist membership and support at the polls grew and spread. In the 1894 Congressional elections, the People's Party got nearly a half-million more votes than they had in the 1892 Presidential campaign. Their vote grew even faster in the industrial cities and states — from 2,000 to 40,000 in Chicago, from 500 to 3,000 in Pittsburgh, from 12,000 to 45,000 in Wisconsin.

A poll taken by the American Federation of Labor in 1894 showed that nearly all the union members who were running for political office in that year campaigned on the People's Party ticket. This was in spite of the hostility of Samuel Gompers, president of the AFL, who claimed that working with the two old parties was the only "practical" political policy.

### "POPULIST LAMB LIES DOWN WITH DEMOCRATIC LION"

The rapid growth of the Populists threatened the future of the Democratic Party. In order to preserve its social base and take the steam out of the Populist movement, the Democrats moved to steal the Populist thunder and destroy the People's Party. In this effort they were aided by a faction of the People's Party, known as the "fusionists", who favored amalgamation with the Democrats. Many of them were officeholders, hungry for more patronage and anxious to advance their careers. While not representative of the sentiments of the Party rank and file, the fusionists were well organized and had secured control of the national Party machinery.

At the Democratic Convention, the Democratic National Committee and the fusionist faction of the Populists worked out a joint plan for pulling the rug out from under the People's Party. The 1896 Democratic Platform incorporated a number of Populist demands — the graduated income tax, opposition to anti-labor

injunctions and, of course, free silver. William Jennings Bryant, a spellbinding orator and Senator from Nebraska, was chosen as the Democratic nominee for President.

At the People's Party Convention that same year, the fusionists, through manipulation of the Party's rules, secured a large chunk of the delegates. While they were well organized, the anti-fusionists were not and the fusion faction succeeded in steamrolling their program through, securing the Party's nomination for the Democrat, Bryant. The anti-fusionists managed to get Tom Watson nominated as the Vice Presidential candidate, but the fusionist Party leadership later ignored this and other convention decisions and Watson was stricken from the ballot in many states.

In the campaign William Jennings Bryant focused almost exclusively on the demand for free silver, ignoring the rest of the Populist platform, including those planks adopted by the Democrats. Much of the Populist rank and file, disillusioned with the sell out to the Democrats and the nomination of Bryant, sat out the election. The result was that the Republican, McKinley defeated Bryant in a tight race.

The People's Party survived for a few more years but never recaptured its former support. From 1½ million votes in 1894, the Populist tally plunged to 50,000 in 1900. Of the 1500 Populist newspapers publishing in 1896, only 23 remained in 1904. As Tom Watson said:

*"The Populist Lamb agreed to lie down in the same pen with the Democratic Lion. Result: lamb soon dissolved in the gastric juices of said lion."*

### DEMOCRATS BURY REFORM MOVEMENT

And what did the Democrats do with their new Populist sounding platform? Some demands, like the income tax and the referendum, were adopted in some states in later years. But for the most part, the Democrats dumped the Populist program as soon as the heat was off. In 1900 the Party continued to make a few cautious concessions to Populist principle, just to insure the dying People's Party didn't revive. But by 1904 the Democratic National Committee felt safe in saying that the Party "required safety and conservatism as the strongest issues."

True to these words, the Democrats nominated the notorious anti-labor judge, Alton B. Parker, for President. The Democrats continued as the most outspoken defenders of white supremacy, standing solidly behind the system of Jim Crow instituted in the South during the 1890's. The People's Party was dead and the Democrats had returned to business as usual.

It would be a mistake to see the demise of the People's Party as the result of a pure and simple conspiracy between the Democratic Party chieftains and the Populist fusionists. The political weaknesses of the movement left it open to absorption by the Democrats. The lack of a clear class perspective on the part of the Populist leadership and rank and file left the movement vulnerable to free silver demagoguery. A limited and shallow understanding of racism facilitated the takeover by the Democrats, a clear cut party of white supremacy.

Revolutionary political leadership could have combatted these weaknesses. But the leading Marxist party of the time, the Socialist Labor Party (SLP), was ill equipped to supply it. The SLP had a sound critique of the Populists lack of class perspective, but gripped by dogmatic and sectarian prejudice, the Party remained outside the movement and con-

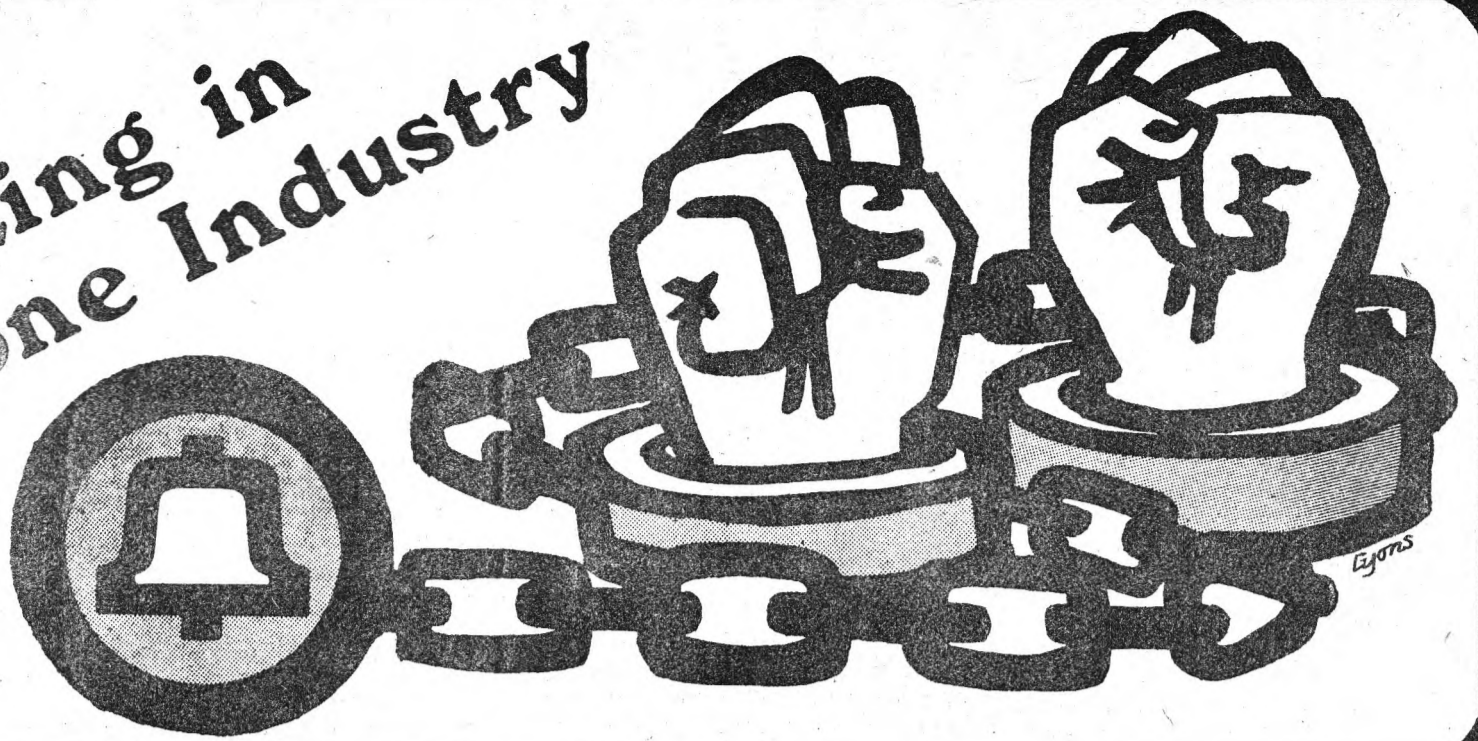
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"General" Jacob Coxey, a Populist, leads his "army" to Washington in 1894 to demand relief action from the federal government. The laboring masses were in sympathy with the marchers, and they were drawn to the Populist Party and its assault against the privileged classes.



# Part I Union Organizing in the Phone Industry



In the 1930's the workers in the mass production industries, in a series of militant organizing drives and strikes, built powerful industrial unions embracing the bulk of the workforce in each respective industry. This is how the United Auto Workers, Steelworkers, Rubberworkers and countless other unions were born.

In the telephone industry the development of union organization, while influenced by the great upsurge in industrial unionism, was significantly different. These differences are not just a matter of ancient history. The relative weakness of labor organization in the Bell system today can be traced to the origins of unionization in the industry.

## BEGINNINGS OF ORGANIZATION

The first union members in the Bell System were members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). These workers were electricians and skilled workers who were already union members when they went to work for the phone companies, not phone workers who were organized by the IBEW.

The IBEW, as a craft union of skilled workers, was singularly unequipped to tackle the task of organizing phone companies. The craft philosophy was to organize workers by trade rather than by industry.

The craft form of organization, appropriate enough in the earliest period of trade unionism, was rendered obsolete by the rise of mass production. Dividing workers by craft within single industry left them in a weakened position when faced with huge monopolies. Moreover craft unionism left the semi and unskilled workers, who formed the bulk of the labor force in the mass production industries, without organization.

The craft leaders became defenders of the narrow interests of the skilled tradesmen and ignored the needs of the rest of the workers. To justify their outlook these leaders argued the unskilled were incapable of being organized. Consistent with this, most of the craft unions limited their membership to white men

and wrote exclusionary clauses into their constitutions barring Blacks and women.

The IBEW was part of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), an organization dominated by craft unions and a craft outlook. The formation of the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations) in 1935 as a militant center dedicated to organizing the unorganized, posed a threat to the old AFL. In order to compete with the CIO, some of the craft unions were forced to modify their practice and begin organizing on an industrial basis.

The IBEW was one of these. As the newly formed CIO union, the United Electrical Workers (UE), rapidly organized the giants of the industry, the IBEW tried to compete with an organizing drive of its own. But the craft outlook and practice of the union carried over and undermined this effort. The IBEW was able to establish itself in a few pockets of the mass production industries, but the bulk of the unorganized workers naturally chose the more militant, democratic industrial union, the UE.

The IBEW's experience in phone paralleled the pattern in the electrical industries. The union succeeded in establishing itself here and there but did not touch the vast majority of phone workers. It organized on a department by department basis rather than industry wide.

## COMPANY UNIONISM

Fearing the growth of unionism in the 1930's, many companies sought to forestall it by creating company unions. The Bell System was quick to come up with such a plan, designed to systematically eliminate all real union influence. A whole series of "employee associations", financed by Bell, were created to divert the workers from joining real unions.

The passage of the National Labor Relations or Wagner Act in 1935 established the legal right of workers to organize into a union of their own choosing and outlawed company financed unions. This freed the Bell employee associations of the most direct and

blatant forms of company control. Still these organizations remained extremely weak. Organized only on a local and department by department basis they were ill matched against the huge Bell System. Nevertheless some of these local unions conducted militant actions and were able to win limited victories.

The Washington Telephone Traffic Union, representing operators, was one of these. The union organized a sitdown strike involving 3,000 operators to fight what the union's President, Mary Gannon, called "sweatshop conditions."

The rigid rules and harrassment to which these operators were subjected is described in the company's own instructions:

*Keep a plug in your hands at all times, be alert, use a courteous tone of voice at all times, keep your eyes on the board at all times, don't talk to the adjacent operator, keep your headset adjusted one eighth of an inch from your mouth, do not change headset from one ear to the other without calling your supervisor, sit up straight with both feet on the rail, keep hands on the edge of the key shelf, if the customer says good morning don't answer him, hold the plug at a 45 degree angle, don't take an aspirin without being relieved from your position...*

Anyone familiar with working conditions at Bell today will quickly recognize that things have changed very little.

## FIRST ATTEMPT AT NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

As the Bell System became more and more centralized, the need for national organization became increasingly clear to phone workers. The Bell System, by maintaining the fiction that each of its regional affiliates was largely autonomous, tried to convince its employees that national organization was unnecessary. But Bell's practice showed otherwise. It was the issue of pensions that brought this home in the clearest way. The pension plan was controlled at the top by AT&T and the individual, locally based, employee associations were powerless to negotiate with the company.

This and other issues pushed the phone workers to take action. In 1938 a conference of Bell System Employees Organizations, attended by delegates from 31 organizations representing 140,000 workers, founded the National Federation of Telephone Workers (NFTW).

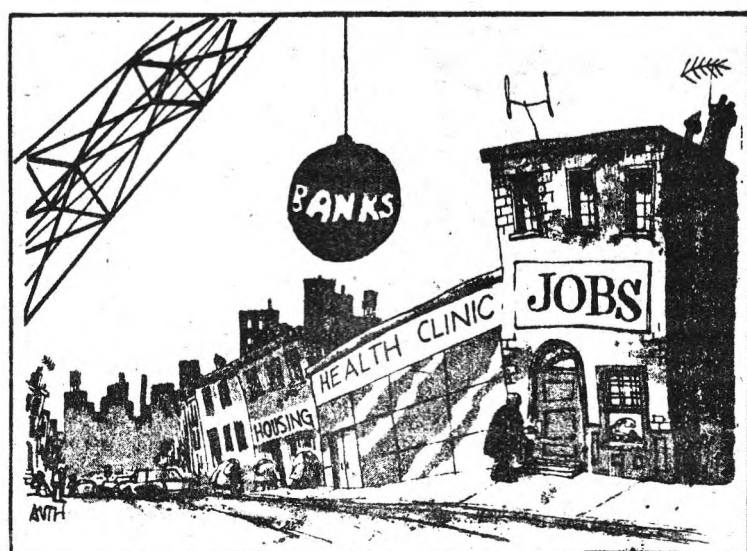
While the founding of this organization was a definite step forward, the legacy of craft divisions and company unionism infected the NFTW from the outset. The governing body of the NFTW was made up of representatives from each of the affiliated organizations with each group allowed one vote, regardless of the size of their membership.

One motive for this form of organization was the prejudice of the skilled trades that if representation was based on numbers, the traffic groups (composed of women operators) would dominate since they outnumbered all other departments. This system also reflected the strong emphasis on local autonomy on which the federation was founded, a real weakness when facing a huge centralized monopoly like AT&T.

Having developed in the framework of company unionism, the employee associations suffered from an inferiority complex in relation to the Bell System. Having had little experience with militant struggle and being small and fragmented, they were prone to accept the company dictates and the view that collaboration with management is the best means of making progress. These traits were carried over into the new national federation and were to hamper its effectiveness.

Nevertheless the NFTW was to address more systematically some of the most pressing problems of telephone operators. The organization took a stand for equal pay for equal work, organized against the widespread practice of subcontracting, and launched a campaign to upgrade the job classification of telephone operators. The most important achievement of the NFTW was the winning of the first national contract in the telephone industry — in March of 1946.

We will take up the story of unionizing the phone industry at that point in the next issue of the *Organizer*.



## banks....

(continued from p.7)

give the banks an enormous lever for shaping city policy. As long as the banks provide so much of the financing they will be able to dictate to city government.

Minimally, city government would have to end the practice of deficit spending and meeting its cash flow problems through the device of high interest, short term loans. A real declaration of independence from the banks would be to proclaim a moratorium on payment of interest to service the city's present debt, a debt that will hang like an albatross over any new administration.

Of course alternative means of revenue and financing must be found. The city's working people already pay too much in taxes. The corporate net income tax must be restored and a progressive tax on high salaries and unearned income must replace the present city wage tax. An alternative to relying on the banks for capital financing (long term construction programs etc.) would be low interest loans from the federal government.

Willingness to fight for such a program will be the true test of whether a candidate is really committed to the people's needs or is just throwing out the usual election time bull.



# US Recognizes the People's Republic

For 20 years, spanning the administrations of seven presidents, the US has held that the legitimate, "real" government of China was the regime of Chiang Kai-shek and his successors whose authority was limited to the island of Taiwan and its 17 million inhabitants. The People's Republic of China, the government of 800 million mainland Chinese by virtue of routing the corrupt, Kuomintang regime in a civil war, was denied official recognition.

In the early years of the cold war, the US regarded the People's Republic as "bandits" or as "Moscow agents" imposed upon the Chinese people. US policy was based on the assumption that the government of Mao Tse-Tung and the Communist Party of China would be shortlived. With US backing, Chiang Kai-shek would retake the mainland and restore the "old" China where the western imperialists in conjunction with Chinese landlords and capitalists reigned supreme.

## U.S. POLICY FAILS

This fondest hope of the US imperialists was not to be, although it was not for lack of trying. The US armed Chiang to the teeth and encouraged constant provocations and subversion aimed at the People's Republic. The US took the lead in seeking the political and economic isolation of China, opposing its seating at the U.N. and imposing an embargo on trade. In Korea, the most reactionary US circles, represented by Douglas MacArthur, sought to provoke a full scale war with China.

All these efforts failed. The discredited Kuomintang forces found no

support among the working people of China and failed to make good their promise to return to the mainland.

In spite of the US led diplomatic boycott, China's prestige and recognition constantly grew, particularly among the newly independent nations of the third world. In spite of US imposed trade restrictions, the Chinese people, aided initially by the Soviet Union, took giant steps forward toward building a socialist economy and raising their living standards. And finally China refused to capitulate to the military provocations and bullying of the US. When MacArthur ordered US troops to drive toward the Yalu River and the Manchurian border, during the Korean War, China intervened and drove the US forces back down the peninsula.

Forced to abandon the prospect of "rolling back" communism in Asia, the US turned to a policy of containment. Meanwhile, in the middle fifties the Soviet Union turned away from a policy based on proletarian internationalism and sought to strike a bargain with US imperialism. This bargain compromised the interests of the workers and oppressed peoples in the interests of what has come to be known as detente. People's China during this period remained an uncompromising, revolutionary voice. As such China continued to incur the wrath of the imperialists and earned the hostility of the Soviet revisionists as well.

The US continued its policy of hostility and non-recognition. It sought to construct an anti-communist alliance in Southeast Asia based on client regimes.

The US brought pressure on the Soviet Union to "moderate" China and make its leaders more "reasonable". The Vietnam war was fought, at least in some part, to "teach China a lesson" and demonstrate US "seriousness" in its commitment to contain communism.

## FORCED TO RECOGNIZE CHINA ON ITS TERMS

The prospect of US defeat in Vietnam represented a turning point. No longer were the US imperialists able to so effectively dominate events. One manifestation of this new situation was that the US could no longer isolate China. More and more nations established friendly relations, and after many years, China secured admission to the UN on its terms. Seeing the handwriting on the wall, the US began to shift its policy... Nixon's ping pong diplomacy, the Nixon visit, the Shanghai Communiqué, and now full diplomatic recognition and the establishment of normal relations.

US recognition is fundamentally on China's terms. For many years US policy makers have seen the alternative to non-recognition as a Two Chinas policy — recognition of the People's Republic while retaining recognition and ties with Taiwan. This policy was always seen in Peking, and rightfully so, as a gross infringement on the principle of China's sovereignty and as such it was unacceptable.

Now the US has been forced to recognize the principle of one China with sovereignty over Taiwan, a concession that has the extreme right wingers in Congress howling mad. The

US was able to gain some window dressing for its concession in the form of a Chinese commitment not to use force in taking steps to unify China. But having conceded the point that the resolution is China's internal affair, the US is not in a position to challenge the People's Republic's actions. Nor does there appear to be any inclination to do so in top policy making circles.

That the US has been forced to abandon its policy of hostility and establish relations is clearly a victory for the people of China and for the people of the US. The new ties mean that friendship and mutual understanding between our two peoples can grow.

## ANTI-SOVIET COLLABORATION

At the same time the establishment of ties must be looked at in another context — the growing coincidence of policy objectives in relation to the Soviet Union on the part of both the US and People's China. This is the dark side of the emerging relationship.

US policy is presently the result of a delicate balancing act. On the one hand there are the advocates of detente, symbolized by Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance. The detente faction believes US imperialism's interests are best served by trying to reach a limited sort of accommodation with the Soviets, based on the recognition of separate spheres of influence. While the detente advocates are not opposed to bettering relations with China, they subordinate this concern to the improvement of Soviet relations, currently focused around the SALT negotiations. The timing of recognition

## Editorial....

# A NEW WAR IN SOU

In a lightning attack beginning on Christmas Day, the Vietnamese armed forces, aided by Kampuchean (Cambodian) insurgents, deposed the Pol Pot regime and established a new government pledged to reverse both the domestic and international orientation of Kampuchea.

This version of events is disputed by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the USSR, which claim that the government of Kampuchea was overthrown by its internal opposition unaided by Vietnamese troops. While information from reliable sources is admittedly scant, this explanation flies in the face of what facts are known and defies common sense.

Even if we discount the numerous reports of refugees, observers, and Western intelligence agencies, it defies reason to think that an insurgent force could mount such a swift and devastating attack

on a regular army, effectively destroying it in a matter of days. Such a rapid military collapse could only have been brought about by a large, well equipped force backed by substantial air support. That Vietnam would deny the undeniable only squanders its credibility and casts suspicion on its motives.

## WHAT PROMPTED VIETNAM?

Why did Vietnam see fit to launch this aggression against Kampuchea and overthrow its government? Since the DRV chooses to hide behind the fiction of non-involvement, we have no official brief for its actions. Informed speculation must take into account the history of border conflict, the growing hostility between the DRV and the People's Republic of China, and the DRV's turning away from the path of non-alignment toward a closer identification with the Soviet Bloc.

All these developments are closely interconnected. The border conflict contributed to worsening relations between Peking and Hanoi, which in turn further propelled the Vietnamese toward the Soviet camp.

It is the Sino-Soviet rivalry, more than any other single factor, which explains events in Indochina. Without the context of Soviet-Chinese contention, it is unlikely that the Vietnam-Kampuchea conflict would have escalated to all-out war. Without Soviet diplomatic backing and military support, it is unthinkable that the DRV would have launched a full scale invasion of Kampuchea.

While the Soviets clearly desired the overthrow of Pol Pot, Vietnam is no Soviet puppet, taking its marching orders from Moscow. The DVR had its own reasons for its action which coincide with the Great Power interests of the Soviet Union.

Vietnam would seem to have been motivated by a desire to protect its western flank and strengthen its overall political and military position vis-a-vis China. The degeneration of relations with the People's Republic, coming at a time when US imperialism is entering a period of deeper collaboration with China, left Vietnam isolated, sandwiched between two hostile states.

In the minds of the Vietnamese leaders this situation posed a long term, if not an immediate, threat to the sovereignty and independence of their country. What seems most likely is that the DRV acted to undercut this development.

Vietnam's concerns certainly cannot be dismissed out of hand. The direction of events has left Vietnam practically encircled and increasingly vulnerable. US imperialism, with its numerous clients, remains a power in Asia. People's China, fixated on building an anti-Soviet

alliance, views Vietnam as a Soviet client, "the Cuba of Asia". Kampuchea, a militantly anti-Soviet ally of China, with its own set of grievances against Vietnam, serves as an instrument of this policy.

Aggression against another country violates the socialist principle of peaceful co-existence. Aggression against another socialist country is an even more profound violation of proletarian internationalism. Yet, consistent with the understanding that every situation must be approached on the basis of concrete analysis and not abstract principles, Marxist-Leninists do not hold categorically that an invasion is never justified.

Prior to World War II, Marxist-Leninists defended the actions of the USSR in occupying the Baltic states and invading Finland as necessary defensive measures against Nazi Germany. Marxist-Leninists upheld Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956 as necessary to forestall counter-revolution and protect vital interests of the socialist camp in relation to US imperialism.

## A CASE OF AGGRESSION

Does a concrete analysis of events justify Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea? In our view it does not. Only if there were a clearcut danger to Vietnam's independence would such a drastic course be justified, and then only after all peaceful means to deter such a threat had been exhausted.

No case for such a danger has been made. The Vietnamese reliance on the fiction of non-involvement implies that the hard evidence for such a case is lacking. If Vietnamese sovereignty was genuinely threatened by the Pol Pot regime, then the DVR should have presented its case to the court of international opinion. The reservoir of respect and goodwill toward Vietnam, based on its credentials as a staunch opponent of imperialism, is



Kampuchean children prepare to defend their country against invasion. Vietnam's act of aggression against Kampuchea violates the socialist principles of self-determination, peaceful co-existence, and proletarian internationalism.



# The People's Republic of China

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of China and the inclusion of an anti-hegemony clause in the agreement undoubtedly concern the detente faction.

Grouped around National Security Council Chief, Zbigniew Brzezinski, is the other faction. While not willing to totally scrap the framework of detente, they favor a more aggressive, anti-Soviet policy. This grouping favors exploiting the so called "China card". In short they are prepared to promote and support China's hostility to the USSR as a means for countering Soviet influence and advancing US imperialism's interests. This faction is the source of Soviet alarm and concern in relation to the development of US policy.

The contradictions in the Carter administration's policy can more often than not be traced to the contention between these different outlooks. The timing of recognition was clearly a victory for the Brzezinski faction. On the other hand President Carter's efforts at "reassuring" the Soviets, shows that there is no definitive change in US policy. The balancing act will continue.

It is, of course, not surprising that the US imperialists are prepared to exploit the division between the People's Republic and the USSR to their own advantage. What is far more disturbing is that the People's Republic of China is increasingly willing to collaborate in this design.

The international line of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the foreign policy of the People's Republic



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have gone through a complex evolution since the beginning of the Sino-Soviet split. In the earliest period China's policy was militantly anti-imperialist. The main criticism of the Soviets was that they failed to consistently oppose US imperialism and objectively collaborated with it.

# WAR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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enormous and would assure it a fair hearing.

The border conflict with Kampuchea in and of itself certainly provided no threat to Vietnam's independence. It remains murky as to who was the aggressor in this border conflict, but in any case Kampuchea is small and militarily weak compared to Vietnam. The People's Republic of China, of course, is neither small nor weak, but there is no evidence that China was or is contemplating any military action against Vietnam. Aside from the political morality of such a move, it would be foolhardy adventurism from the standpoint of the Chinese with several million Soviet troops on their northern border.

In short, while we can recognize that developments in Southeast Asia along with the shifting relations between Washington, Peking, and Moscow negatively affect legitimate Vietnamese interests, no threat to these interests was posed that justified violating the norms of peaceful co-existence and launching a wholesale aggression against another socialist state.

**The character of the domestic policies pursued by the Kampuchean government has no bearing on the legitimacy of Vietnam's actions. If, as seems likely, the Pol Pot regime was guilty of excesses and pursued a generally ultra-left line in its efforts at national reconstruction, then this is a matter for the Kampuchean people to decide and correct. Marxist-Leninists make no brief for imposing a correct line at bayonet point from a foreign invader.**

## INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES

While the emergence of a pro-Moscow regime in Kampuchea would appear to be a plus for the Soviet Union, the more far-reaching implications rebound to the advantage of US imperialism. The

invasion will propel China further in the direction of alliance with the US, and thus enhance the US overall position in Asia.

Any immediate advantage gained by the Soviets is more than offset by the distrust and hostility Soviet actions have created, especially among third world and non-aligned countries. As in the case of Czechoslovakia, when the Soviet leaders believe their Great Power interests are jeopardized, they do not hesitate to trample on the rights of another country, even a socialist country.

The newly independent countries, long bullied by the imperialists, are naturally not going to look with favor on a Soviet backed invasion of one of their number. This was born out in the UN where all the countries on the Security Council, with the exception of the Soviets and, ironically, Czechoslovakia, voted for the removal of all foreign troops from Kampuchea.

The invasion of Kampuchea reminds us that China's concern with Soviet hegemonism has a definite basis in reality. At the same time the People's Republic has hardly acted in a way that is consistent with proletarian internationalism in relation to Vietnam. When the border dispute between Kampuchea and Vietnam escalated, rather than use its good offices to bring about a peaceful settlement, China, with its eye ever on building the "united front against hegemonism", sided with Kampuchea.

Similarly motivated, China interfered in Vietnamese internal affairs, charging ill treatment of ethnic Chinese. In fact this "ill treatment" consisted predominantly of the expropriation of the privileges of Chinese merchants and traders. China's actions objectively extended support to counter-revolution in Vietnam.

China's turn toward the US, ignoring the US' continued hostility toward Viet-



# of China

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have gone through a complex evolution since the beginning of the Sino-Soviet split. In the earliest period China's policy was militantly anti-imperialist. The main criticism of the Soviets was that they failed to consistently oppose US imperialism and objectively collaborated with it.

During the Cultural Revolution China's line underwent a profound shift. The Soviet Union was designated as a social imperialist superpower and an enemy of the world's peoples. China called for opposition to both superpowers but continued to target the US as the main enemy.

Following the warming of US - China relations, the People's Republic's policy shifted again, focusing on the USSR as the main antagonist. The formal conception of the united front against both superpowers was retained, but was increasingly remote from China's actual practice.

Now it appears that even this formulation is being scrapped. The communique from the recently concluded plenary session of the Chinese Communist Party speaks of the "new and important successes in developing the international united front against hegemonism." There is no mention whatsoever of opposition to the "other superpower", US imperialism. Thus the Chinese leadership is becoming increasingly open in acknowledging the real content of its policy. As we have argued countless times, this is a wrongheaded and dangerous policy which must be opposed.

## MODERNIZATION

Another controversial feature of the developing relationship between China and the US concerns China's policy toward foreign investment, credits and trade. Committed to rapid industrialization, China needs credits and foreign technology to achieve a fast pace of development. Questions have been raised about the terms on which China is to secure these. We think it is premature to judge China's plans since they are still in the process of definition. There is, however, a certain irony in that many of the features of China's projected modernization program bear a similarity to measures taken by the Soviet Union, measures which were roundly condemned as evidence of capitalist restoration by the Chinese leadership.

The negative features of China's foreign policy and questions about its approach to modernization should not blind us to the positive character of diplomatic recognition and normalization of relations. The establishment of ties including trade relations between capitalist and socialist nations is, in and of itself, no violation of revolutionary principle. On the contrary such relations are in the best interests of promoting peace and in the final analysis the worldwide socialist revolution. While the context for China-US recognition can't be glossed over, the fact of recognition should nevertheless be welcomed by all revolutionaries in the US.

# THE EAST ASIA

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Any immediate advantage gained by the Soviets is more than offset by the distrust and hostility Soviet actions have created, especially among third world and non-aligned countries. As in the case of Czechoslovakia, when the Soviet leaders believe their Great Power interests are jeopardized, they do not hesitate to trample on the rights of another country, even a socialist country.

The newly independent countries, long bullied by the imperialists, are naturally not going to look with favor on a Soviet backed invasion of one of their number. This was born out in the UN where all the countries on the Security Council, with the exception of the Soviets and, ironically, Czechoslovakia, voted for the removal of all foreign troops from Kampuchea.

The invasion of Kampuchea reminds us that China's concern with Soviet hegemonism has a definite basis in reality. At the same time the People's Republic has hardly acted in a way that is consistent with proletarian internationalism in relation to Vietnam. When the border dispute between Kampuchea and Vietnam escalated, rather than use its good offices to bring about a peaceful settlement, China, with its eye ever on building the "united front against hegemonism", sided with Kampuchea.

Similarly motivated, China interfered in Vietnamese internal affairs, charging ill treatment of ethnic Chinese. In fact this "ill treatment" consisted predominantly of the expropriation of the privileges of Chinese merchants and traders. China's actions objectively extended support to counter-revolution in Vietnam.

China's turn toward the US, ignoring the US' continued hostility toward Viet-

nam was hardly a policy designed to build solidarity with the DRV. China's actions helped provide the context in which Vietnam more closely tied itself to the Soviet Bloc and felt compelled to take the action it did in Kampuchea.

What will happen in Kampuchea now? While the new regime may garner a certain amount of popular support on the basis of its repudiating the ultra-left policies of Pol Pot, it is unlikely to establish widespread legitimacy for its rule.

The National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea, as the new powers style themselves, would seem to be hopelessly compromised by virtue of being installed in power, not by the Kampuchean people, but by a foreign occupying army. The ousted followers of Pol Pot may well establish a successful resistance based on an appeal to patriotic sentiment. Thus there is the bizarre prospect of an Indochina war pitting the Khmer Rouge against Vietnam, with China and the Soviet Union as the principle backers and antagonists by proxy.

In opposing Vietnam's actions, we must be careful to distinguish our position from the hypocritical stance of the US imperialists, and be vigilant against any attempt by the US to further its advantage through more active intervention. The pious phrases coming from the State Department condemning Vietnamese aggression, coming on the heels of a genocidal war waged by the US against the Vietnamese people, should take no one in.

The US refusal to honor its responsibility to aid Vietnamese reconstruction and its continued opposition to diplomatic ties underline that US hostility to Vietnam is not ancient history, but present reality. The possibility of US intervention in the future cannot be ruled out, especially since the struggle in Kampuchea shows every sign of continuing.



# Shah Takes an "Extended Vacation"

by Jenny Quinn

The Shah of Iran is on an "extended vacation". If the Iranian people have their way he'll never get back on the job and his peacock throne will be put in cold storage.

Both the US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and the Shah's new hand-picked prime minister, Bakhtiar, are taking some pleasure from the Shah's departure. They hope the mass movement against his rule can now be tamed and that order can be restored — in other words, that US political and economic interests come out of the struggle intact.

The Shah was a fine fellow as long as his repressive regime promised stability, but with millions of Iranians clamoring "Death to the Shah", it is clearly time for his retirement. Both the US and the Iranian ruling class now hope to salvage what they can of the Shah's system without the Shah's presence. The smart money says they're not going to be able to pull it off.

## AN AROUSED PEOPLE

People are awake and moving in Iran. The sense of democracy and egalitarian spirit which has characterized their struggle is impressive. Food and fuel shortages have been met with neighborhood cooperation to share the resources available. Workers have consistently backed each other's strikes. Peasants and workers, who have traditionally struggled separately, are cooperating in regions where their resources can be shared.

Their struggle is full of Iranian national pride and unity against the Shah as a degrading dictator, and against the US, whose ruling class has stolen their resources and denigrated their ancient culture.

At this point the Iranian people don't seem particularly well organized in their fight. How could it be otherwise since all opposition has been so brutally

crushed in the last two decades? But there is logic and consistency in the targets they have chosen. The prime objects for attack have been SAVAK (secret police) headquarters, and its sister the CIA, banks, police and military headquarters, and the offices of enterprises controlled by the Shah and international capital.

Some interesting stories by an Iranian student in this country who had just talked to his sister on the telephone were related at the convention of the Iranian Student Association last month in Oakland, California. In one city, three thousand people converged on a prison full of political prisoners and freed it in a two day battle. At the CIA headquarters in another city, no matter what was fed into the computers, the only answer it would return was "Down with the Shah!"

Folk songs which tell stories of the 1905 revolution in Azerbaijan, a northern province, are being revived and new lyrics added to them about the present struggle. The democratic revolution begun at the beginning of the century by the Azerbaijani fighters will be completed, the songs say, in the days that follow.

The Iranian people have brought oil production to a standstill, costing the Shah's government an estimated \$40 billion in revenues. At least 700 banks have been destroyed, crippling the financial institutions and making it impossible to deal in Iranian currency internationally. The Shah has been forced to cancel the construction of sixteen nuclear power plants and a number of military purchases from the US and West Germany, and to import kerosene to fuel his fighter-bombers.

Whoever tries to pick up the pieces of the Iranian economy when some resolution is reached will have a hard time of it. International credit is gone, and a bulk of the internal financial system will have to be started from scratch. Whoever it is, recently appointed prime minister Bakhtiar is not likely to be the man. Bakhtiar,



a longstanding member of the loosely knit National Front (a group of politicians and businessmen opposed to the Shah's policies) is seen by most as a traitor. He was chosen for some very crafty reasons, but the people have not been fooled.

## BAKHTIAR: SHAH'S CHOICE

Bakhtiar is a member of the Bakhtiar tribe, a nomadic people, many of whom settled around Abadan after the construction of the oil industry there at the turn of the century. More than 60% of the oil workers in Iran are from the Bakhtiari clan. The Shah was hoping that this appointment would appease the oilworkers and get them back on the job. Bakhtiar was also close to Mossadeq, the president who was overthrown in a CIA-inspired coup in 1953 which brought the Shah back as absolute monarch.

Bakhtiar was jailed after the overthrow of Mossadeq, and was known as a nationalist. He is talking a nationalist line now, but most people don't believe him, given that he was handpicked by the Shah, probably in consultation with the US.

Khomeini, leader of the Shi'ite Moslems, has denounced Bakhtiar from his headquarters in Paris. Given Khomeini's influence over mass opinion, this finished Bakhtiar as a political leader. Even State Department officials now rate

Bakhtiar's chances of survival at no better than 50-50.

Meanwhile back in Washington, the boys in the State Department are trying to figure out what went wrong in their scheme to rely in the Shah forever. As with the "massive intelligence failure" in Vietnam, the CIA is being faulted with accepting the outside agitator approach to Iranian politics. More worried about exiled dissidents returning to the country and Iran's neighbors, Iraq, Oman and the Soviet Union, the CIA somehow overlooked the massive discontent of the Iranian people. Small error, if you believe that a brutal government can hold down the people indefinitely. A disastrous error if the real history of real people is your guide.

The final resolution between an awakened and dedicated people and an enormous rightwing military machine will not come right away. The incredible losses already suffered by the people will most likely be doubled or tripled before the struggle is over.

The economy is a wreck and there is no political force which unites all the major elements of the opposition. Moslem leaders hold great respect, but they have not posed clear political alternatives beyond the ouster of the Shah and nationalization of major resources. Whatever the outcome, the Iranian people are taking a heroic step towards determining the destiny of their country.

## Save the Life of Jose Maria Sison Political Prisoner in The Philippines

The following "statement of concern" comes from the International Committee to Save Jose Maria Sison. Sison's life is currently in grave danger, and it is urgent to bring pressure on the Marcos dictatorship in order to save him. The Organizer urges it's readers to send a letter or post card to President Ferdinand Marcos, Malacanang Palace, Republic of the Philippines endorsing the four demands listed below.

### STATEMENT OF CONCERN FOR THE LIFE OF SISON

Jose Maria Sison is a Filipino nationalist and patriot who has been held incommunicado since November 1977 by the Marcos government. Reliable sources report that he has been severely tortured and is now chained to his cell. Even more disturbing is the fact that he is said to be one of the prime candidates for "salvaging" — the policy of unofficial execution which is becoming increasingly popular with the Marcos military.

Sison's case has a unique characteristic which prompts us to speak especially in his behalf. The Philippine government accuses him of being the legendary Amado Guerrero, chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines. This makes him very vulnerable to repression and official assassination. It also causes many to hesitate in expressing their concern for his welfare.

As advocates of human rights and justice, we feel compelled to bring the case of those men and women like Jose Maria Sison to worldwide attention. These committed individuals are expressing political alternatives to what they see as injustices committed against their people. Jose Maria Sison and many other political prisoners are in jail because of their ideas and nationalist convictions. As peoples who uphold the right to free thinking and human justice, we have this responsibility to monitor the inhuman conduct of regimes like the Marcos dictatorship and to call an end to these abuses.

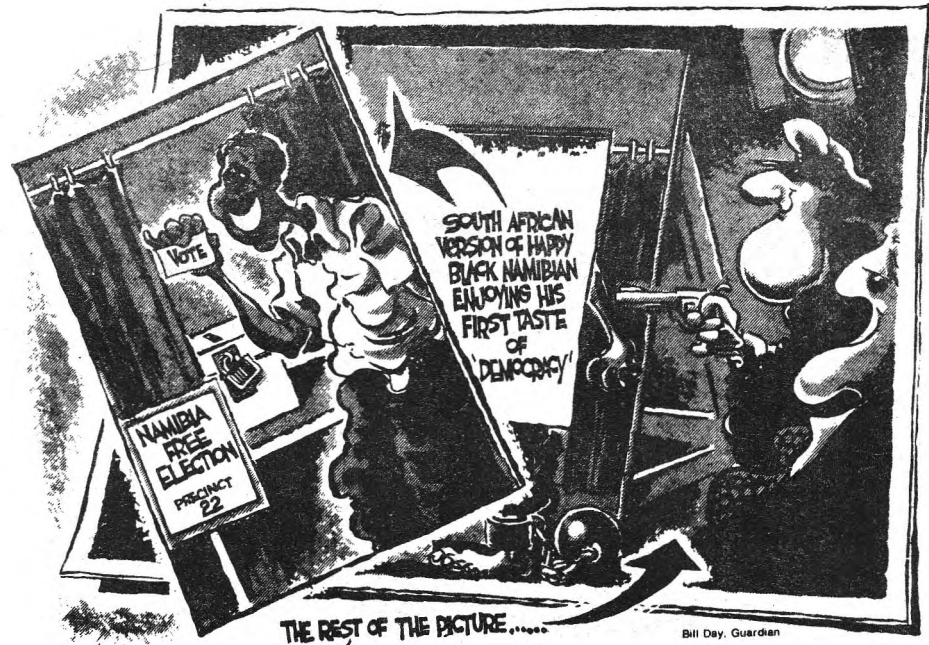
We therefore urge all who are concerned with human rights to join us in asking the Philippine government to:

1. End the torture of Jose Maria Sison.
2. Transfer him from isolation to regular detention.
3. Transfer his case to a non-military judicial body.
4. Release him immediately if these conditions cannot be met.

For further information and inquiries, please write:  
International Committee to Save Jose Maria Sison  
PO Box 24737  
Oakland, California 94623



# South Africa Manufactures Election Hoax in Namibia



by S. Bunting

If you were a coal miner, would you trust the coal companies and the electric utilities to negotiate your contract between themselves? If the company gave you the option of voting for the head security guard for union president or losing your job, how would you vote? What if there were no secret ballot?

The people of Namibia, a large country in southwest Africa, faced this situation in December. According to South Africa, which has held Namibia as a colony since World War I, the recent elections brought independence to the country. According to the US, the December election was a step in the right direction. But according to the UN, and most importantly, to the Namibian people, the election was a vicious fraud designed to mislead the world about South Africa's continued colonial rule of the territory. What really happened?

We have to go back a few years to get a complete picture. After World War I, South Africa was assigned a "Mandate" over Namibia, formerly a German colony, and instructed to guide it toward independence. In 1966, the UN revoked the mandate because South Africa had extended its racist laws and exploited Namibia. Since 1966 the UN, under international law, has sought to take direct control of Namibia, in order to promote its independence. South Africa has tightened its control and has refused, with one brief exception, to allow UN personnel into the territory.

Also in 1966, the UN called for all nations to cease trading with Namibia through South Africa, to preserve Namibia's resources for use by its own people. The US has never heeded this resolution.

South Africa profits from Namibia in several ways. There are large reserves of gold, diamonds, uranium and other metals. There are profitable wool and fishing industries. Namibians labor in

South Africa's mines, and Namibia buffers South Africa from liberated Angola, and is the base for attacks on Angola and Zambia.

The mines of Namibia are largely owned by US, British, and German corporations, and are worked by migrant laborers under the South African gun. Profits are unbelievable. The Tsumeb mine, for example, owned by AMAX and Newmont Mining, (both American firms) has made an estimated 400% profit per year on an original investment of \$1.2 million 30 years ago.

Namibians have never accepted colonialism peacefully. In 1958 they formed the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO), which now leads their struggle for genuine independence. The UN recognizes SWAPO as the only genuine representative of the Namibian people.

## SWAPO STRUGGLES FOR INDEPENDENCE

SWAPO has led strikes and trade union struggles, despite the ban on such activities by South Africa. Last month, for example, a five day strike by 2000 miners at Rossing uranium mines won wage increases. It has led massive civil disobedience campaigns, and boycotts of the migratory labor system. SWAPO conducts education in the countryside, and provides Namibians with an international voice.

Since 1966 SWAPO has led an armed struggle against South Africa. Today South Africa has 15,000 troops stationed in Namibia to fight SWAPO and to terrorize African villages in an attempt to destroy popular support for SWAPO.

In January 1976, the Security Council adopted a resolution calling for free elections, conducted and supervised by the UN, to establish an independent government in Namibia according to the desire of the Namibian people. The dead-

line for these elections was set at December, 1978. South Africa was to withdraw its troops, and release all political prisoners in order to guarantee free elections.

This resolution has never been backed up with any measures which would compel South Africa to comply. The African nations have called for economic sanctions (boycotts), but the Western powers which would veto such a measure in the Security Council, are more concerned about their profits than about Namibian rights.

South Africa knew free elections would mean a SWAPO victory, and the end of its influence, but it could not simply refuse — the South African economy is already suffering from the international anti-apartheid movement. Therefore, South Africa relied on its friends to plead its case.

These friends, which have substantial financial interests in Namibia formed the "Contact Group" — the US, France, Britain, Canada and West Germany — which sought to buy time for South Africa with diplomatic games. Meanwhile, South African authorities worked double time to develop a puppet government in Namibia to which it could give "independence" without giving up control. Namibia was to become the largest Bantustan.

What South Africa came up with was the "Democratic Turnhalle Alliance" (DTA), named for its meetingplace in Windhoek, capital of Namibia. The DTA is composed of leaders of Namibia's ethnic groups, as defined by South Africa, nine African tribes, and German and South African whites. While SWAPO has fought tribalism in its attempt to build a modern country, South Africa has encouraged it to reinforce colonialism and keep Namibians divided. Most of the African chiefs in DTA derive their authority from South African appointments and sa-

larities. SWAPO was categorically excluded as "Marxist-dominated terrorists".

It just so happens that SWAPO will not agree to the terms laid down by South Africa for Turnhalle — surrender of Walvis Bay, the only port of Namibia, to direct South African rule; continued and unlimited South African military presence in the territory; and a commitment to protect foreign control of Namibia's resources.

Announcing that the UN terms for an election would leave Namibians helpless before a terrorist onslaught, South Africa scheduled elections under its own observation and set about registering voters in August, 1978.

## VOTING UNDER THE GUN

Voter registration was most unusual. Employers of Africans, particularly farmers, instructed their employees to register in the Turnhalle Party or lose their jobs. In some villages, South African Army units conducted registration, and the refusal to register or an indication of support for SWAPO frequently meant arrest.

SWAPO urged Namibians to boycott the phony elections. As a result, South Africa had to register counter-revolutionary Angolans, mercenaries, and quite a few ghosts in order to get a registration figure which was a respectable percentage of the voting age population. There were 440,000 registrations from a total population of 2.5 million, still much less than one half the adult population.

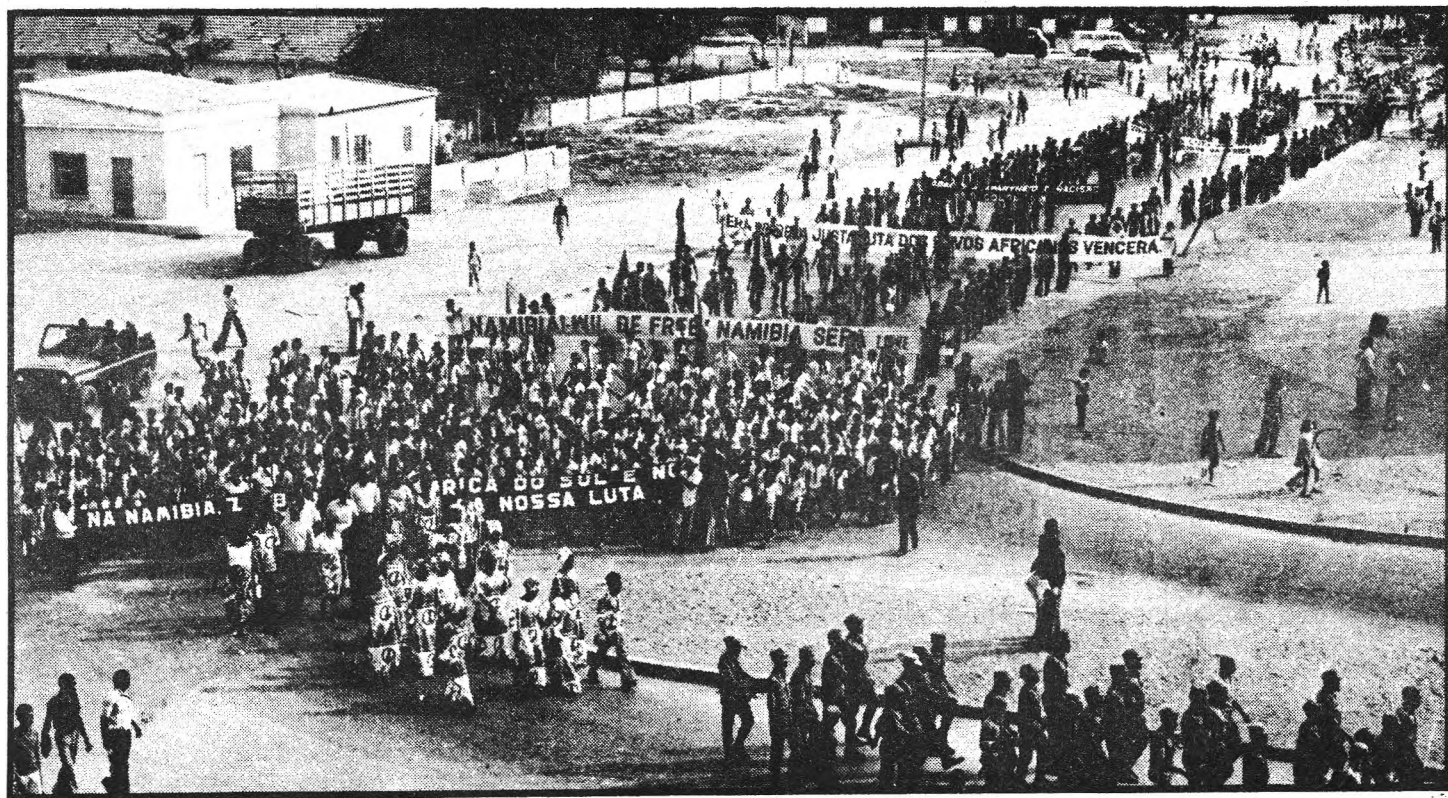
Elections were conducted in a similar fashion. Polling went on for several days, with South African Army units taking the polling materials to farms, villages, and workplaces. Balloting was not private. Not only were voters watched, but each ballot was put in an envelope with a serial number, so that vote against the DTA could be traced. Threats of blacklisting, detention, or deportation to the reserves were used to pressure voters.

Church officials who documented these practices were expelled from the country. Justin Ellis of the Church Center of Namibia, which represents six major denominations, talked to newsmen in London after his expulsion for publicizing the election process.

When UN representative Martti Ahtisaari was allowed to tour Namibia one month before the election, he was greeted with massive pro-SWAPO demonstrations. One week before the election, however, hundreds of SWAPO activists were jailed in a sweep through the country by South African Police.

Not surprisingly, DTA received 80% of the votes cast. Also, as expected, the new "sovereign" government sees no need for UN-supervised elections in the future.

South Africa is satisfied with Turnhalle, but its puppet show has not changed the loyalty of Namibians. The war of liberation is heating up, led by SWAPO. Just as Rhodesia's transitional government, announced last March, has been exposed as an irrelevant and pathetic strategy to maintain white racist control, so Turnhalle will not deter the Namibians in their fight for genuine independence and freedom.



Pro-SWAPO demonstration. The Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO) was formed in 1958 to fight colonialism. SWAPO leads the Namibian people's struggle for independence and is recognized by the UN as the only genuine representative of the Namibian people.



## People's Power in Cuba

By Jim Griffin

*With this issue we return to our series on Democracy in Cuba as part of the Organizer's ongoing dialogue with J. Edgar Hoover on the truth about Communism.*

Even the rulers of the US have been unable to completely conceal the facts about socialism from the people of the US. The process of rapid development from once largely agricultural, backward countries to modern industrial economies that is occurring under socialism is a fact that few try to deny. And all but the most hidebound anti-communist must grudgingly admit that socialism has raised the living standards of the masses of people.

Given this, in order to maintain their claim of the superiority of the capitalist system, the principle theme of anti-communism is that under socialism there is no democracy or freedom. As J. Edgar Hoover put it: "Under Communism all would become, as so many already have, twentieth century slaves."

Cuba, lying only 90 miles off the coast of the US, provides us with a concrete example of political life under conditions of socialism. The well publicized myth is that Fidel Castro, aided and abetted by the Communist Party, exercises a dictatorship over the Cuban people. The reality is considerably different.

In the early years of the revolution Cuba's political institutions had an improvised quality. The tasks of consolidating power, defending the island against counter-revolutionary attacks backed by US imperialism, and beginning socialist construction under conditions imposed by the US embargo took precedence over the need to give the revolution an enduring form.

The Provisional Revolutionary government, based on the cadres of the July 26th Movement and the old Communist Party, derived its authority, not from elections but from the popular character of its policies. In spite of the absence of formal accountability, the new order was characterized by a profound democracy. Cuba's new leaders, far from fearing the masses, actively mobilized them to build a new Cuba.

The revolution unleashed the enormous creative energies of the masses who enthusiastically took up the tasks at hand. The armed self-defense against invasion, the literacy and health campaigns, the struggle to boost sugar production, the formulating of new laws...all these things were achieved on the basis of the free and democratic participation of the masses of Cubans.

Cuba's democracy in this period took the form of the interplay between the state, the party and the mass organizations to which most Cubans belonged. It relied heavily on the democratic instincts of the revolution's leadership and on the spontaneous ardor of the masses for the revolution's program. As such, the Cuban leaders themselves recognized, it was not an adequate foundation for enduring socialist democracy. As Fidel noted:

*"Sometimes we feel anxious because we analyze our revolutionary processes, we observe that they do not seem to be consolidated and institutionalized and offer no guarantees for the future. When the revolutionary process becomes consolidated through institutions...we see the great stability this gives the people...enabling them to move forward."*

### CUBA'S NEW CONSTITUTION

Beginning in the early 1970's the Revolution moved toward creating a stable institutional framework. A new constitution was drafted, discussed throughout the country, tested first in a single province and then adopted nationwide following its approval in a special referendum by 97% of the voters.

The new constitution is based on what the Cubans call "People's Power." It is a system of direct control of government by the people at every level. The process of People's Power begins in the neighborhoods. Every block holds a meeting to nominate candidates to the local or municipal Assembly of People's Power. The voters on the block nominate those among them who they think are best qualified to represent them. There is no limit to the number that can be nominated. The voters freely discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate, whom they are likely to know well as neighbors. At the end of the meeting one single candidate is elected by simple majority vote.

From these candidates the voters in each "circumscription," an area roughly equivalent to our voting precinct or division, having approximately 1,000 voters, will select one delegate to represent them in a secret ballot election. All citizens over 16 years of age are eligible to vote.

How do these elections work? Each candidate provides a full biography and a photograph which is printed and posted in all public places. The work and accomplishments of each candidate is his or her only campaign poster. There are no slush funds, dirty tricks or backroom deals...no mudslinging ads and campaign hoopla. The voter read the biographies and discuss their opinions of the candidates and then make up their minds. No one is forced to vote, but over 90% of those eligible vote.



At a mass rally, some million and a half people of Cuba celebrate the successful completion of the First Party Congress. Communism is not an alien or frightening word; for the Party belongs to all the people, who actively contribute to its functioning.

A journalist asked a voter in the town of Veradero about the difference between elections now and before the revolution. The voter answered: "What? There isn't any comparison. Before the Revolution, it was an outright circus... threats, payoffs all over the place. They'd promise anything: to build a bridge where there was no river. Whichever candidate had the most money or the biggest gangsters won. As soon as the election fraud was over, they didn't know you."

The candidates who are elected form the municipal assembly of People's Power. These assemblies are responsible for the direction of local government, supervising the administration of production and services in their respective areas. They also elect the delegates to the provincial or regional assemblies and the national assembly.

Delegates are elected for two and a half year terms. They are subject to recall at any time if their constituents are unsatisfied with the job they're doing. Each delegate must hold a meeting in his circumscription every three months to report on his or her work and respond to the grievances of the people. The delegate must hold smaller meetings at shorter intervals and also set aside a certain time to meet with constituents individually.

### PEOPLE'S POWER IN PRACTICE

Contrary to the idea that the people are cowed and afraid to criticize the government, these meetings are often quite heated. People come with problems and complaints and they expect answers and solutions. If they don't get them they have the option of removing their delegate from office.

Cuba's leaders stress the accountability of the delegates to the people. As Raul Castro said:

*"The delegates should never present the people with absurd explanations or formal reasons to sidestep the issue... the delegates must gather together all the complaints and suggestions of their electors and present them to their respective assemblies. A complaint or suggestion or opinion which is put forward and supported by the majority of the electors should be transmitted by the delegate to the Organs of People's Power, even if he himself is not in agreement. The delegate doesn't represent himself, but the people who have elected him."*

The delegates are not professional politicians but ordinary working people.

They keep their old jobs after being elected and discharge their functions as delegates after work. A delegate receives no salary for this work. Because the delegates continue to face the same conditions of life as those that elected them they are much more likely to truly represent their constituents.

The National Assembly of People's Power, elected by the local delegates from among their number and subject to recall by the voters of their district, has broad responsibility for national policy. The Assembly selects from its ranks the President and the Council of State which exercises its prerogatives between sessions. The Council of Ministers, the highest executive body and similar in function to the President's cabinet in the US, is selected by the President subject to the approval of the National Assembly. Thus Fidel Castro as President is directly accountable to the people's representatives and not an arbitrary despot as he is painted in the US.

### THE COMMUNIST PARTY

"But aren't only Communists allowed to hold office? Is there really a choice at the polls?"

Membership in the Communist Party is not a requirement of running for office in Cuba, nor is it any automatic ticket to election. In fact many non-party candidates run for office and are elected delegates. That many Party members are elected at the same time is because of the prestige enjoyed by those members among the people. There is no law that says the people have to elect so many Communists to office. In the province of Mantanzas, for example, 46.1% of the delegates elected were Party members while 15.1% were members of the Young Communist League. The remaining 41% of the delegates elected belonged to neither.

It is true that the Communist Party is the only organized political party and plays a leading role in Cuban society, a role that is institutionalized and written right into the Cuban Constitution. However the party's authority does not rest on coercion and its leading role does not contradict, but rather enhances, the development of democracy. Nor is the Party an alien institution, existing separate from and above the masses. The role and character of the Party will be the final installment in our series on democracy in Cuba.



Election campaigns in Cuba are completely different from those in the US. There are no posters, buttons or bumper stickers. There are no speeches, rallies, or paid ads on radio or TV; there are no back-room deals, dirty tricks or slush funds. The only "campaigning" is done with a photo and a biography which is posted in public places with all the others.



# The PWOC's "Leftism": A Self-Criticism

By Clay Newlin

In July of 1977, the majority of the Committee of Five (DMLO, PSO, SUB and PWOC, but not El Comite-MINP) advanced their conception of the party-building process in a document entitled, "Draft Resolution for a Leading Ideological Center" (hereafter referred to as "DR"). This document centered around a call for an ideological center for the emerging Marxist-Leninist trend. "What is needed most, at present," it reads, "is a form to organize, centralize and give leadership to the independent elaboration of Marxism-Leninism for the specific condition in the U.S."

While never formally adopted, this statement played an important role in laying the basis for the successor to the Committee of Five — the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center (OC). The specific nature of an ideological center, the identification of its main tasks and the method for establishing it were explicitly left open to further debate, but all who joined in forming the OC agreed that the development of an ideological center was a key task.

The OC's Steering Committee is presently engaged in drafting a plan for an ideological center. In light of this, it is necessary to reassess the DR and determine how it stands up in light of developments since July 1977, particularly the OC's first year of existence.

On the whole we think that the DR is correct. Its analyses of the state of the working class movement, the consolidation of revisionism in the CPUSA, and the failures of successive efforts to restore a viable vanguard party are still generally accurate. The thesis that the party-building movement exists as a unity of two contending wings — the dogmatist or ultra-left trend and the Marxist-Leninist trend — retains validity. And its summary of the state of the anti-revisionist, anti-dogmatist forces as an "embryonic Marxist-Leninist trend...characterized... (by) theoretical underdevelopment, amateur methods of organization and work, and fragmentation" has lost none of its poignancy.

But the strong point of the whole document — and the key to its predominantly positive contribution — is its call for the development of a single national center for anti-revisionist, anti-dogmatist elements, a center directed towards advancing the application of scientific socialism to the concrete problems of the US revolution. In essence, this was then, and remains so today, a concrete call for all anti-"lefts" to commit themselves in both word *and* deed to the development of a common plan for party-building.

## THE QUESTION OF PRE-PARTY ORGANIZATION

Nevertheless, the DR is severely flawed. In particular, the document states that the main objective of a national center would be to lay the foundation for a "national pre-party organization." (A pre-party organization is one that explicitly views its main task as party-building and attempts to conduct all-sided work towards that end.) And further, it maintains: "Such an organization is an absolutely essential transitional step towards the development of a real vanguard party."

The scenario laid out here is this. First, develop an ideological center which will allow all opponents of "left" opportunism to contribute to the process of resolving the outstanding theoretical questions and unite around the solutions arrived at. Then, consolidate that unity in a single organization which will continue to deepen the work generated by the ideological center up to the point when it would be possible to call the Party Congress. Thus, a national pre-party organization is the "transitional step" between an ideological center and the Party.

This scheme is wrong on a number of counts. First, and most importantly, it fails to recognize that an ideological center can only really be supplanted by the Party and nothing short of it. As (correctly) defined in the DR, an ideological center has two main tasks: first, it must generate the basic program, strategy and fundamental principles of tactics for the US revolution which will allow for the principled unification of the bulk of genuine communists; second, it should create the conditions where revolutionaries can be voluntarily won to this program through a protracted process of open, movement-wide ideological struggle.

The maturation of this two-sided advancement will complete the welding of the core for the class vanguard. The resolution of the theoretical questions of program and the uniting of communists around those results — a process that can only ripen in the context of fusing communism to the class struggle — is at the heart of the development required for forming a Party. Once it has reached its culmination, the time will be right for the Party's Founding Congress.

Theoretically speaking, then, an ideological center can only be dialectically negated — i.e. replaced by a higher form — by the Party. Short of the formation of the Party, there will still be a basis for a single center open to the participation of all Marxist-Leninists regardless of whether they are part of a communist organization, study group or join in the movement as individuals.

The DR's failure to reflect this truth only serves to blur the real character of the pre-party period. It fosters the illusion that the development of communist unity on the basis of program for the US revolution — the unfolding of which would inevitably mean the realization of the vanguard relation in embryo — is insufficient for the formation of the Party. It thus opens up the door for a quantitative view of party-building — that is, that it somehow turns on such questions as the number of members in communist organizations, the circulation of the chief organ of the movement or the multinational or class composition of the party-builders.

A related error of the DR is that it creates the impression that it is possible to make the ideological center for the movement's theoretical struggle the same as the organizational center for its practical activity. While, in principle, genuine communists will strive to unite the ideological center with the organizational one, they must recognize that the full identity of the two can only be realized in the Party.

## IMPLICATIONS OF ERROR

This becomes apparent if one considers the limitations on any communist organization directing practice in the pre-party period. No pre-party organization will have a fully matured program. This necessarily leaves certain fundamental questions unresolved. Where it does *not* have program, it clearly will not be able to intervene and provide communist leadership to the class struggle. And even where it does have aspects of a communist program, its abilities to guide activity will be limited both by the inadequacies of what already has been elaborated and by the lack of program in other areas.

For example, take the PWOC. The PWOC has achieved its furthest programmatic development on the trade union question, but is only in the initial stages of developing a conception for the electoral arena. In addition to the limitations imposed by the still insufficient clarity in the trade union struggle, the failure to have a more developed perspective on electoral work further blunts our ability to fully respond to the impact of bourgeois-democratic influences on the advanced workers.

The failure to be clear on this fact can only lead to the premature polarization of communist forces. To the extent that some revolutionaries think that the ideological and organizational centers for Marxist-Leninists can become one in the pre-party period, they will tend to demand that everyone immediately unite in a single national organization.

This demand will be made without reference to the degree of maturity of the particular organization's program and strategy. Those outside the given formation will be asked to base their unity on the general need for communist unification instead of their concrete agreement or disagreement with the organization's program.

The detrimental effect of this kind of thinking can be illustrated by the following, unfortunately not far-fetched, example. Suppose a predominantly white organization demands that all Marxist-Leninists unite behind its banner prior to having developed a genuine program for the struggle against racism. What will be the impact of its call on national minority communists? Will not the call itself be both profoundly racist and also objectively sectarian?

A third difficulty of the conception developed in the DR is that it tends to imply that no national pre-party organizations should be created prior to the completion of the ideological center's agenda. Since, as we have seen, the fulfillment of that agenda prepares the way for the formation of the Party itself, a rigorous application of this view effectively rules out any role of national pre-party organizations whatsoever.

While some forces subscribe to this view, to us it seems one-sided. Certainly, the anti-revisionist movement is replete with examples of pre-party organizations that did have a destructive influence on the process of ideological struggle. But this is not inherent in the nature of the form itself.

Instead, whether such an organization's role is positive or not depends on the line it pursues in its intervention in

the party-building movement. A key question would be clarity on the need to subordinate its development in both word and deed to the overall progress of an ideological center. If it saw its role as one of deepening and strengthening the process generated by the center, it would more than likely make a positive contribution — provided, of course, it did not have a general opportunist orientation.

## PART OF "LEFT LEGACY" ON PARTY BUILDING

All three of these errors flow from a mechanistic view of the relationship between ideological struggle and organizational unification in the pre-party period. The primacy of the struggle for ideological unity is not taken in the context of interpenetration and interdependence of ideology and organization where each contributes something of value to the other but with the ideological aspect playing the principal and leading role. Instead, the primacy of ideology is taken to mean that full ideological unification must be achieved first and then, and only then, can national organization be created.

This incorrect perspective resulted from the failure to rigorously follow through on the critique of the ultra-left party-building line. The DR did represent a break with the "left" economism underlying much of the dogmatist approach to party-building, but not a thorough one.

In particular, it did separate itself from the narrow pursuit of organizational hegemony practiced by the "lefts." The DR's emphasis on the importance of developing an ideological center is a clear recognition of the need to engage the common efforts of all the anti-"lefts" in the process of elaborating Marxism-Leninism for the US revolution. And it also demonstrates clarity that the unification of Marxist-Leninists can only develop through a protracted process of open, movement-wide ideological struggle.

But by calling for a pre-party organization as the "absolutely essential transitional step," it stops short. It actually concedes one of the principal points of "left" economism — that the ideological center and the organizational center can have identical boundaries in the pre-party period. True, it postpones that development to a later stage of the party-building process, but allows that it can occur prior to the formation of the Party just the same.

For a number of reasons this serious error did not have a dramatic impact on the formation of the OC. Since the DR was never submitted for adoption, the question of the role of a pre-party form was not raised sharply. And, because the OC clearly left this and related questions open to further discussion, no one who disagreed with the DR would have any reason to leave the OC in any case.

Nor was it a primary question in the opposition to the OC by El or PUL and its adherents, or the *Guardian*. El Comite-MINP was opposed to any attempt to centralize the ideological struggle; they felt that the molding of communist cadre in localized revolutionary struggle should be primary.

(continued on p.17)  
Organizer, February 1979, page 15



## Part II

# Inflation : A Disease of Monopoly Capital

by Jim Griffin

In the earlier period of capitalist development in the US, prices tended to rise in periods of prosperity and fall during hard times. But since 1940 a permanent upward trend in prices has emerged. Prices continue to rise, even during periods of recession. Up until the 1970s, while prices rose during recession, the rate of increase slowed. However, in the most recent recession the rate of inflation increased as well, and increased dramatically at that. This "stagflation" flies in the face of the capitalist theories of economics. More importantly it sharpens the impact of the economic crisis on working people.

This long term inflationary spiral, which is not limited to the US but encompasses the whole capitalist world, has not affected all prices uniformly. Retail prices have risen the most, while wholesale prices for finished goods have gone up at a slower rate and wholesale prices for raw materials have gone up the least and in some cases have even fallen.

For example from 1958 to 1968 the consumer price index rose 21.7% for all items, but only rose 1.2% for raw materials and 8.0% for finished goods. The most dramatic example of this gap is the case of food prices. Between 1950 and 1970 wholesale prices for farm products rose a mere 2%. During the same period consumer food prices increased by 46%. The price the farmer receives for his product fluctuates and often falls, but the price we pay at the supermarket keeps going up.

### MONOPOLIZATION

These facts are primarily an expression of the impact of the enormous growth of monopoly. A relatively small number of giant corporations have come to dominate most industries. One of the features of this domination is the ability to manipulate and fix prices. The cigarette industry provides a graphic illustration. In 1969, following the exposure of smoking as a health hazard, cigarette sales declined in the US. Under competitive conditions we would expect that the price would decline as well. Instead, between May of 1969 and June of 1970 prices rose by 17%. In spite of declining sales the cigarette companies increased their profits. These price increases all occurred simultaneously and were clearly the result of monopolistic price fixing by the handful of Tobacco combines. The same pattern is observable in all the monopolized industries and goes

largely unchallenged by federal agencies which are supposed to regulate industry.

The domination of monopoly does not put an end to capitalist competition. The anarchy of production, characteristic of capitalism, continues. Monopolized industries compete with each other and with the non-monopoly sector, the latter being at a severe disadvantage. At the same time the monopolies are often able to fix prices above value, small firms are compelled to sell their products below value. Even a completely monopolized industry, like the utilities, is subject to competition. For example, consumers who heat their homes with electricity may turn to gas or oil if the price of electric heat dramatically rises over the price of these other sources. Monopolization does not put an end to competition. It does, however, enable the monopolies to gouge the consumers through price fixing.

### MONETARY INFLATION

While the term inflation is popularly understood to mean any rise in prices, properly speaking inflation is the depreciation of money. When a dollar buys less it becomes inflated. Inflation in this sense results when the amount of money in circulation increases more rapidly than the amount of commodities in circulation. There is a close correlation between this monetary inflation and the upward movement of prices.

Between 1929 and 1970 the amount of money increased by ten times while the volume of production increased by 3½ times. The ratio of money to commodities produced increased by 2¾. Prices almost tripled during the same period, increasing at practically the same ratio.

Monetary policy and the money supply is determined by the action of the federal government, through its control of the budget, and by the large banks through their control over credit. Coordination is generally achieved by means of the federal reserve system, the quasi-governmental central banking institution.

Usually we associate money with the coins and bills we handle every day. In fact this is only one form of money, currency, and constitutes only a small fraction of the money stock. Most money takes the form of deposit money, that the bank deposits which only exist as notations in the accounting systems of the banks.

When the banks lower their interest rates, thus expanding credit and encouraging borrowing, the amount of deposit money naturally increases. When the federal government engages in deficit spending, that is it spends more than it takes in as revenue, this also dramatically increases the amount of deposit money since the difference in the deficit is borrowed from the banks.

Since World War II the leading capitalist circles, including the top government policy makers and the big bankers, have pursued a course of encouraging "moderate" or "gradual" inflation. The rationale for this policy was that it would stimulate economic growth by encouraging capital investment and discouraging saving. Even more important a selective and controlled inflation was a means of exacting greater profit at the expense of labor, the small farmers and the underdeveloped countries.

In the earlier period the capitalists could and did protect their rate of profit through instituting wage cuts. The rise of strong unions largely foreclosed this option. An inflationary policy, along with an emphasis on increasing labor productivity, has been the principle response of the monopolists to this new situation. Constantly rising retail prices negate the effect of wage increases and allow the monopoly capitalists to realize a higher rate of surplus value. (see box below.)

There is an apparent contradiction here. For while this policy clearly benefits industrial capital, which realizes profit through the sale of commodities,

it has certain negative consequences for the banks, whose bonds and loans depreciate in value. In the past this fact has led to some sharp contention between industrial and financial interests and still causes a degree of conflict. But for the most part this contradiction is more apparent than real. One of the features of the monopoly capitalist system is the merger of industrial capital and finance capital. The modern banking institutions are controlled by the same interests which dominate industry. As a result the banks are responsive to the interests of the monopoly capitalist class as a whole.

### MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR

While the monopolists favored a policy of gradual inflation, they have gotten much more than they bargained for. Through the middle 1960s their aim was an annual increase in the rate of inflation of 1% to 3%. With the intensification of the Vietnam War, this goal was abandoned and official administration policy was to keep inflation below 5% per year. Still inflation pushed upwards to double digit proportions. Presently the Carter administration, facing inflation calculated at 9% per year, aims to reduce it to between 6% and 7%.

The high rates of inflation characteristic of the last decade pose a definite threat to the interests of the capitalist class. Inflation has undercut the ability of US corporations to compete in world markets. Corporate propaganda tries to blame OPEC and foreign oil producers for

(continued on p.18)

Prices, Labor Costs and Workers' Share in Production  
1946-1970 index numbers, 1946=100

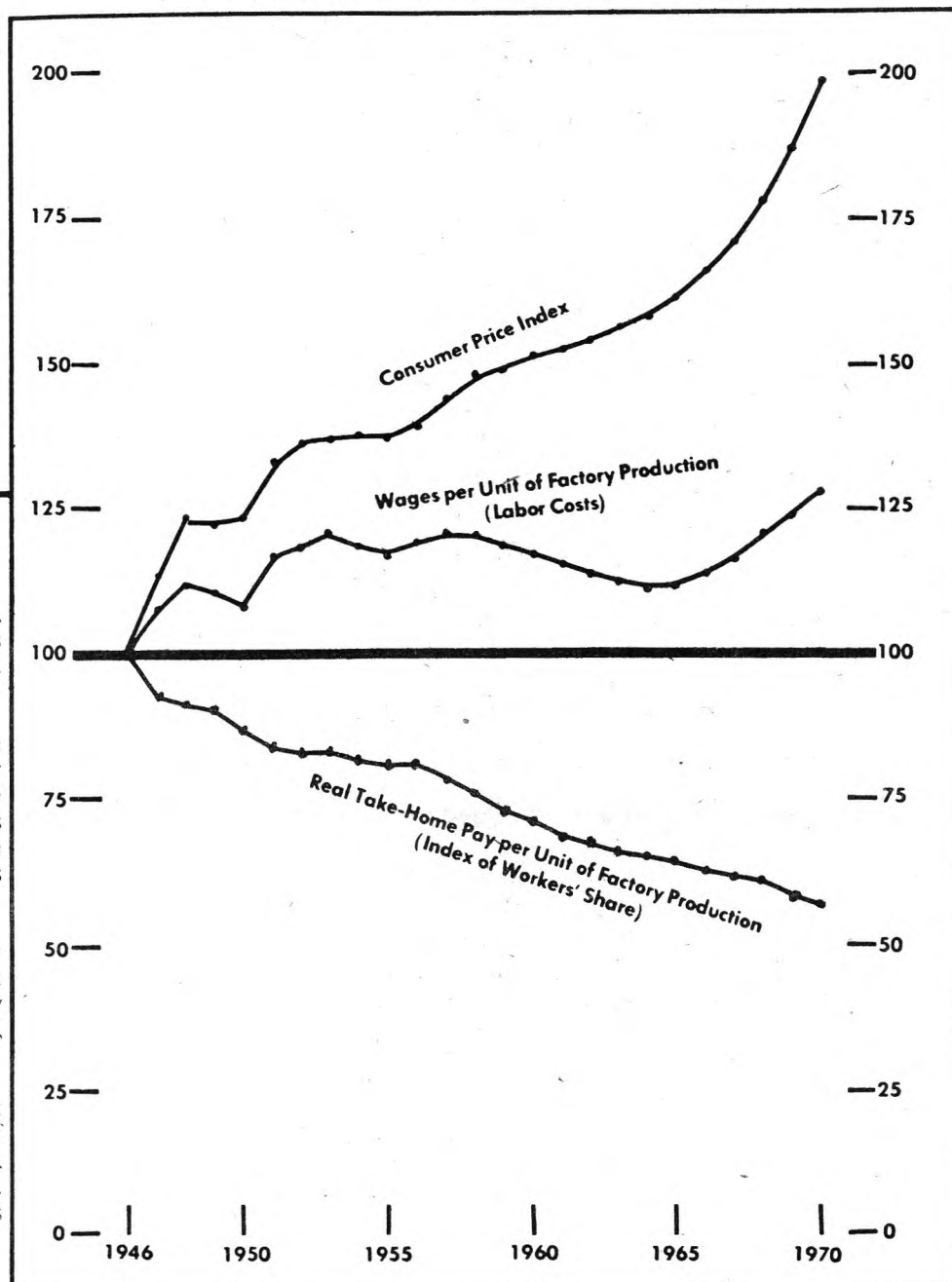


Chart: Victor Perlo, *The Unstable Economy*

## Workers Cause Inflation?

In the last issue of the *Organizer* we analysed theoretically the idea that workers, by demanding and winning wage increases, cause inflation. We tried to show how this idea contradicted the underlying principles on which the capitalist economy operates. The falseness of this notion can also be concretely demonstrated.

The accompanying table shows that prices doubled between 1946 and 1970. The second line on the chart indicates that labor costs during the same period have risen far less, by roughly 25%. This figure is not based on increase on wages per say, which have risen much more than 25%, but on the expenditure on wages per unit produced. Increases in labor productivity have enabled the capitalists to keep labor costs down. If it was the cost of labor which drove prices upward, then why have prices exceeded labor costs by 4 times?

The third line shows that the workers share of the wealth they produce is actually and continually declining. Again the chart is based not on simple take home pay, but take home pay per unit produced. Real take home pay during this period increased by 41%. But productivity per man hour, that is the value of commodities produced, increased by 139%.

In other words, a worker in 1970 was producing nearly two and a half times what he or she produced in 1946, but was receiving in wages less than half again as much. If the worker produced \$2.00 worth of value while being paid \$1.00 in an hour in 1946, that same worker would produce \$4.78 worth of values for a wage of \$1.41 in 1970... In Marxist terms this means the rate of surplus value, or the rate of exploitation, is increasing.



# Support Norma Jean Serena Fight Sterilization Abuse

by Sarah Murphy

In 1970, Norma Jean Serena, a Native American woman, was sterilized against her will. As with thousands of other national minority women, Ms. Serena is a victim of the racist, sexist bureaucracy which admits in writing that she was sterilized for "socio-economic" reasons.

At the time she was sterilized, her newborn son and two older children were placed in foster homes. She was told that they were ill, and would come home when they recovered. In reality the children — supposedly for their own welfare — were being placed for adoption.

What was Norma Jean Serena's crime? She was poor, she was not married, and she was living with a Black man.

Last month a civil suit against the social workers, medical personnel, hospital and government agencies which participated in this sterilization process finally got underway after five years in the courts. In her suit, Ms. Serena claims her civil rights were violated. If she wins, her victory will be a victory for us all in the struggles against sexism and racism.

## THE RIGHT TO DECIDE

The issue at stake here and in thousands of other cases, mostly undocumented, is the right of women to decide if and when to have children. Also at stake is the right of poor people to raise families. The racist government agencies have no business whatsoever deciding when a family is too poor to have children. The widespread coercion of national minority women to undergo sterilization surgery can only be termed genocide.

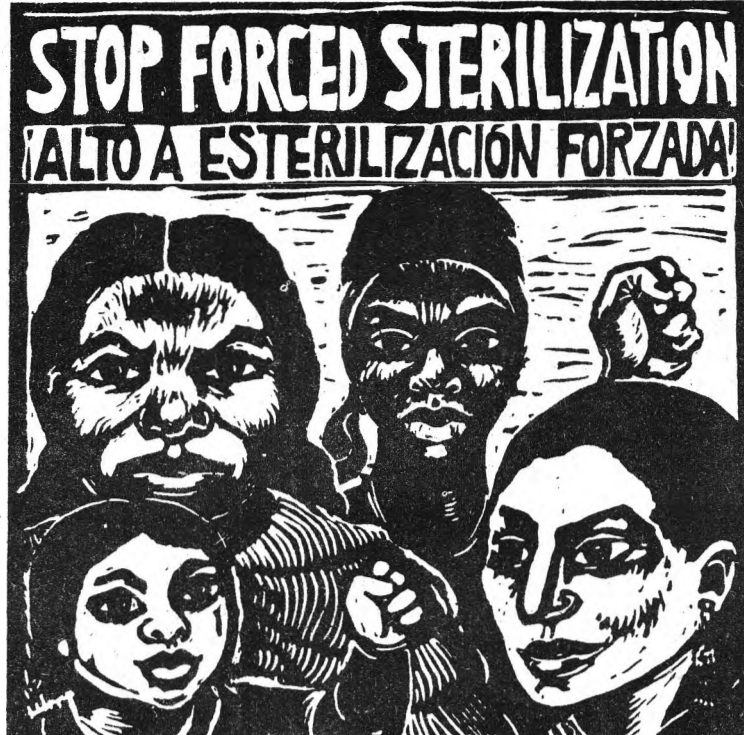
Sterilization is a widespread method of "population control" used by the US government both internationally and domestically against third world and oppressed nationality people. Puerto Rico, for example, has the highest rate of sterilization in the world: close to 50% of all women of child-bearing age have been surgically sterilized! A study done in 1973 indicates that 20% of Black women and 21% of Chicana (Mexican-American) women under the age of 45 who have been or are married have been sterilized.

Abuses run rampant and take many forms: consent forms are in English and not clearly understood by women for whom English is a second language.

Often women are given forms to sign while they are in active labor, then surgery is performed immediately after delivery. Women are often not informed that the operation is definitely irreversible. Often they are not told that benefits such as food stamps, welfare, and medic-aid can *not* be terminated if they refuse the operation. Alternative methods of contraception are not explained or provided.

Women and men of all nationalities must oppose these abuses and demand that family planning be made a real democratic right. The problems of poverty will not be overcome by brutal sterilization practices, but only by ending the corrupt, racist, profit-gouging system of imperialism. We must demand an end to these genocidal abuses and promote instead the right to training and jobs, and to decent housing and health care, quality child care, and a guaranteed annual income.

(Donations to the Norma Jean Serena cause may be sent to Women Against Sterilization Abuse, 4433 Osage Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104)



## self-criticism...

(continued from p.15)

PUL and its circle opposed the formation of the OC primarily because of its break with "left" internationalism. They did attempt to drape their cause with anti-sectarian rhetoric. But, as been recently revealed, the essence of their opposition was the charge that the identification of US imperialism as the main enemy of the peoples of the world "concocted" revisionism.

And finally, the *Guardian's* opposition to the OC was rooted in its own "leftism." Both factions in the *Guardian* staff at the time desired to bypass centralized ideological struggle and establish themselves as the central committee for their own national pre-party organization.

(Those who have doubt about Silber's unity with the rest of the *Guardian* staff on this score should, among other things, consider his "Fan the Flames" column of August 16, 1978; in this article he belittles the danger of "leftism" on party-building line only a few weeks before he was to begin to denounce his own previous line as sectarian!)

Nevertheless, the DR could only serve to strengthen the hand of the OC's opponents. Each, to one degree or another, did try to play on peoples' fears that

the OC would become a form for the Committee of Five — and the PWOC, in particular, to pursue hegemonist ambitions along the lines of the CL, RU and OL.

Given the DR's perspective on national pre-party forms, it cannot be said that such fears were entirely without foundation. To the extent that comrades really saw the development of a single national pre-party organization looming on the horizon, they had a basis to raise questions as to the real intentions of the Committee of Five.

In our view, the majority of the Committee of Five shares some responsibility for both the incorrect views advanced in the DR and their impact on the OC. But with that majority, the PWOC and especially this writer must be especially self-critical for fostering a bad line. We played a leading role in the DR's development.

By publishing this self-criticism, we call on the whole anti-revisionist, anti-dogmatist trend to break with the DR's wrong-headed approach to pre-party formations. If our movement is truly to advance along the path of creating a single national ideological center for our tendency, it can ill afford to be burdened with any baggage laden with "Left-wing" communism.

January 17, 1979

## populists...

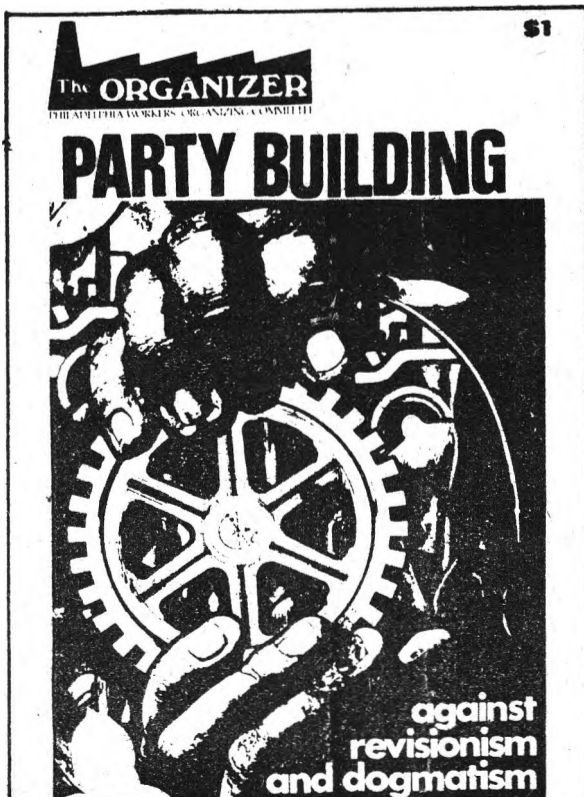
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temptuously dismissed its potential. Even if the SLP had chosen to participate in the Populist movement, its shallow and dogmatic view of both the farmers and the Black people's movements would have crippled its ability to correct the political deficiencies of the Populists.

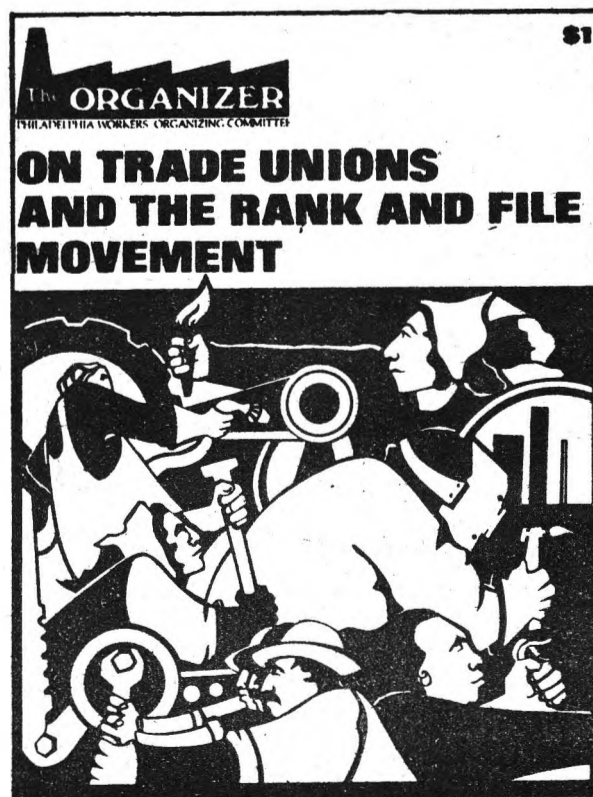
The Populist experience offers many lessons for us today — among them the consequences of trying to achieve fundamental change through the Democratic

Party. Tom Watson summed up this lesson in 1896:

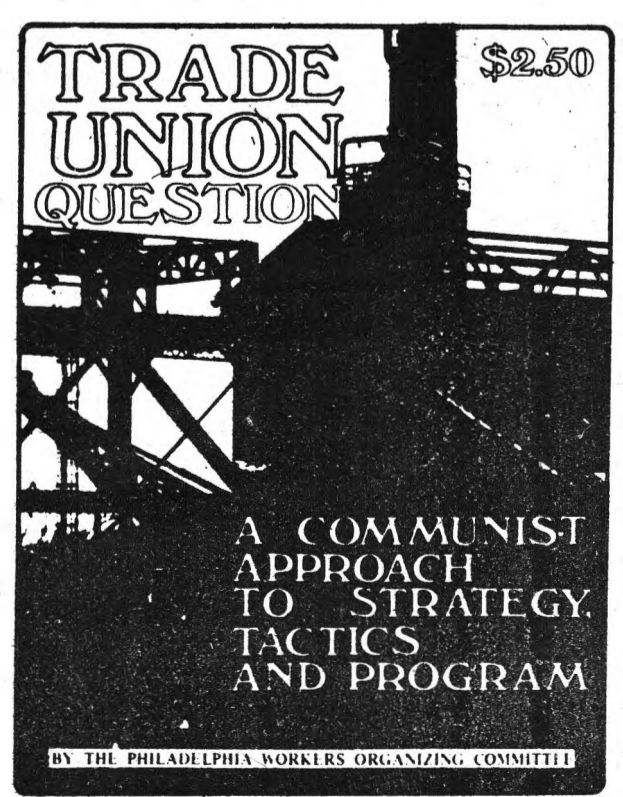
"Populists cannot denounce the sins of the two old parties, and yet go into political partnership with them. The moment we make a treaty the war must cease. By listening to the overtures of the Democratic managers our Party has been torn into factions, our leaders deceived and ensnared, and the cause we represent permanently endangered, if not lost. The labor of many years is swept away, and the hopes of thousands of good people are gone with it."



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# Do Doctors Make Too Much?

The following article is based on information provided by the People's Health Action (P.O. Box 35305, Detroit, Michigan 48235). People's Health Action, along with other groups, has been involved in a campaign for public control and more effective regulation of Blue Cross, Blue Shield. A recent demonstration hit at the secret negotiations between Michigan Doctors and the Blues.

Pity the Poor Doctor! Many reports over the last year or so have focused on the sharp rise in malpractice insurance which jumped by 84% in 1975 and 42% the following year. These increases have drawn a howl of outrage from the medical profession and have been widely pointed to, to justify increases in doctor's fees.

The facts are that physicians' fees have risen at a higher rate than expenses. In 1976 the physician expense index increased 8.5% while fees jumped by 11.3%.

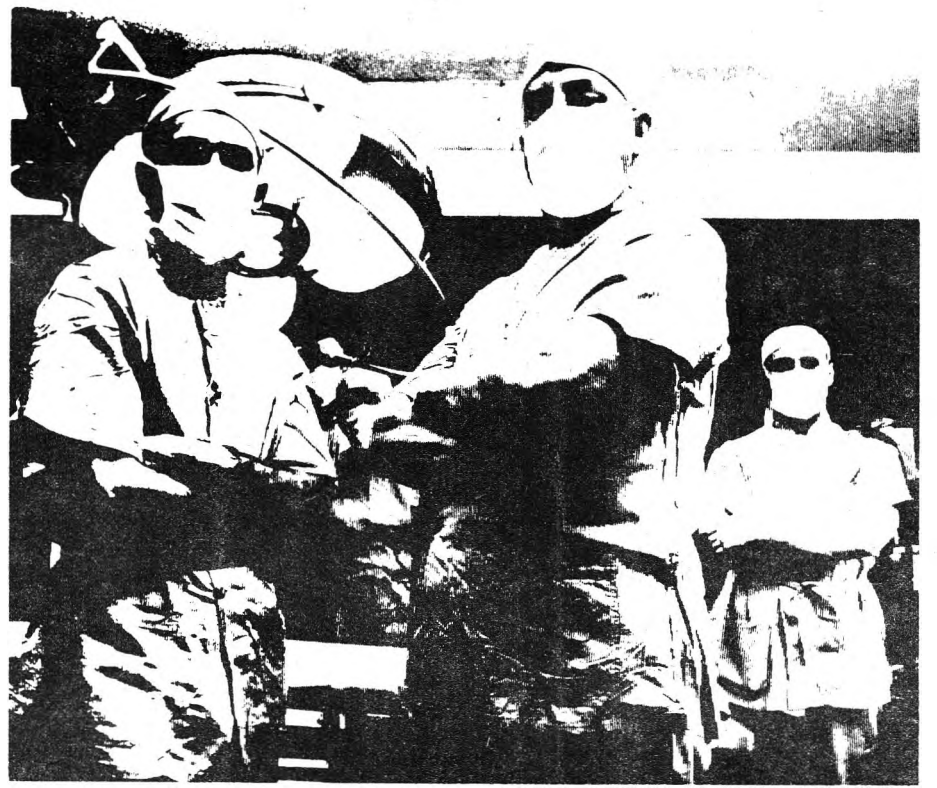
Defenders of high fees are quick to point to general inflation and claim that, after all, doctors cannot be expected to hold down the fees they charge patients when the cost of living for everything is rising. Yet the facts shows that Doctors' fees have outpaced inflation by 43% since 1950. Over the last 12 months doctors' fees have increased about 80%

more than the prices on non-medical care items.

Clearly the Docs have not just been plugging along trying to keep things together in the face of inflation. In 1939, Doctors made twice as much as the average professional, but lawyers, dentists and certified public accountants all had higher median incomes. Today doctors make 4 times the salary of the average professional and are at the top of the heap with a median income of \$63,000 per year.

## COST OF EDUCATION JUSTIFIES HIGH FEES?

The claim that high fees are justified by the high costs of medical education and training has no basis, especially for specialists who use this argument to justify fees that are on the average 26% higher than the non-specialist. In 1970 the tuition at a typical medical school for eight years of education and training came to roughly \$10,000 and lost income incurred by the student came to about \$80,000. On the average a doctor works for thirty years. Over the average doctor's professional work life the cost of training, including lost income, comes to no more than \$1.00 per hour. Moreover, much of the expense of medical education is borne directly by the public through state support to medical schools, research facilities and hospitals.



U.S. citizens presently spend more for health care than any other people in the world and get less per dollar spent. Doctors are not the only, or even the main culprits for the skyrocketing cost of health care. The medical profession is a junior partner in a syndicate made up of drug companies, hospital administrations and insurance firms that is systematically ripping off the U.S. people.

Through the American Medical Association (AMA) there has been a deliberate attempt to restrict the supply of doctors in order to maintain the profession's privileged position and high fee structure. From the 1930s to the 1950s the AMA lobbied for reduction in the

number and size of medical schools and opposed federal aid. Only in the 1960s, owing to the growing number of foreign physicians in the U.S., did the AMA reverse itself. According to none other than the Federal Trade Commission, the profession has acted to prevent competition among physicians. When price controls have been imposed doctors have increased their services and then deliberately cut them back when controls have been lifted.

While the AMA will scream "socialism", increased public regulation of doctors' fees and the profession generally is clearly going to be a necessary part of any real reform of the health care system in the U.S.



United Press International

Woody Hayes returns to his loyalists and a standing ovation

# So Long Woody

by Ron Whitehorne

It's not how you play the game, but whether you win or lose. That's the ethic of big time football, be it in the pros or on campus. Everybody knows it, and most in the sports world simply accept it. The trouble with Woody Hayes, the recently departed head coach at Ohio State, was that by playing this ethic out to its logical extreme, he threatened to give it a bad name.

Many were shocked when Woody just up and socked an ABC cameraman at the Rose Bowl two years ago. But boys will be boys, and after all, Woody and his Ohio State teams have one of the best records in modern football.

Then in this year's post-season play Woody outdid himself. Playing Clemson in the Gator Bowl, Woody showed that his devotion to winning goes beyond that of ordinary mortals like Vince Lombardi. When a Clemson wide receiver had the unmitigated gall to yank out an Ohio State pass, Woody rushed down on the field and began pummeling the offender with his fists.

Woody didn't see that there was anything to apologize for. I mean, if winning

is what it's all about why draw the line. You're supposed to kick their butts Woody figures. If his big strapping, subsidized, young collegians don't do it, well then, old Woody will just have to do it himself. But the Ohio State administration just didn't see it that way. I guess they were worried that in a bowl game next year Woody might just go further still, maybe drop a grenade in the other team's secondary or napalm their front four.

Woody's view of football was also his view of the world. In a speech recently, Woody advanced his global concerns. In urging a strong military defense, Woody noted that the US, having gone undefeated for most of the season, was tied in Korea and then dropped one in Vietnam. The Coach is concerned we don't blow the upcoming Nuclear Bowl. We can be grateful that Woody Hayes only coached Ohio State and not the US government.

Well, like his idol Richard Nixon, Woody is entering retirement in semi-disgrace, although they both still have their fans. We won't have Woody Hayes to kick around anymore. But at least he won't have us to kick around anymore either.

## inflation ...

(continued from p.16)

the US's unfavorable balance of trade and the decline of the dollar. These analysts conveniently ignore the spiralling costs of commodities the oil producing nations import from the US.

Since 1875 the US has enjoyed a favorable balance of trade...that is it exported more than it imported. But in the late 1960s the gap narrowed and by 1971, for the first time, imports exceeded exports. This proved to be not just a "bad year" but the expression of a definite trend. The US has registered trade deficits in all but 2 years of the 1970s. This unfavorable balance of trade aggravated an already serious imbalance of payments (balance of payments refers to the sum total of international monetary transactions encompassing trade, capital investments, foreign aid, etc.). The effect of these developments has contributed to the dethroning of the dollar as the unit

of international exchange. The gravely weakened dollar continues to slide in relation to other currencies in world money markets.

Besides threatening the international economic position of US capital, the recent high rates of inflation generate social and political instability. Thus the periodic "wars on inflation" that are launched by the monopoly capitalist class are real in the sense that they do want to secure a lower rate of inflation. But they are grossly hypocritical in that the capitalists seek a certain rate of inflation regardless of its ruinous effects on people with fixed incomes and the working class generally.

(This series on inflation will be continued in the next issue of the Organizer.)

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