

# The ORGANIZER

Newspaper of the Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

May-July 1975

Volume 1, Number 3

## ACWA Leaders Bail Out Manufacturers



Clothing Workers  
Lose Pay Raise

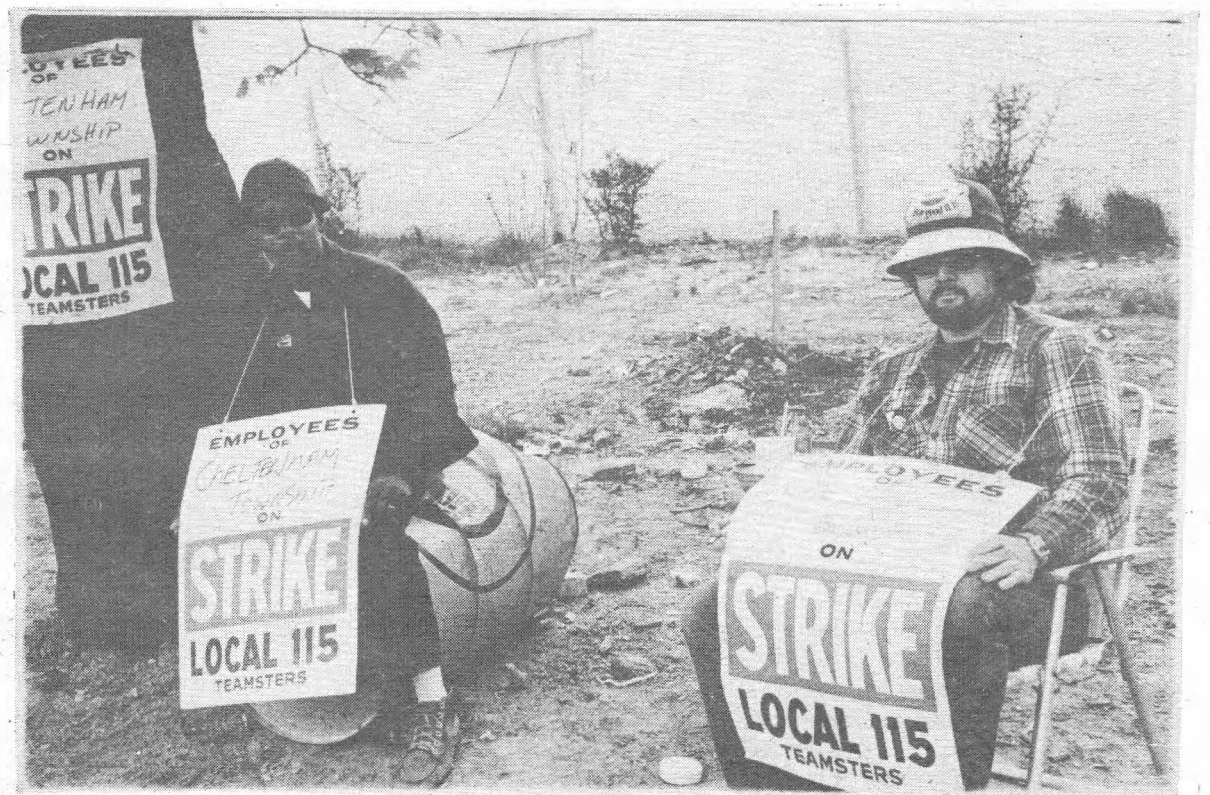
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# IS THE SUN SETTING ON THE U.S. EMPIRE?

Ever since the end of World War II the US has been the dominant imperialist power in the world. The powerful US monopoly corporations, backed up by the huge Pentagon military machine, the CIA and US diplomacy, spread their tentacles throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, squeezing huge profits out of the working people of these nations.

To insure that these super-profits kept coming, the full weight of the US government was placed behind corrupt and unpopular governments throughout the world who were willing to cooperate with the US monopolies in the exploitation of their own peoples. US aid, billed by the politicians as a helping hand to the peoples of the world, was used to strengthen imperialist control and oppression of the world's people.

This was the case with the Marshall Plan right after the war, which was used to prop up the capitalist class in Europe and enable the US monopolies to penetrate the European economy. It was the case with the phoney Alliance For Progress in Latin America inaugurated during the Kennedy years.



Over the last thirty years the US imperialists have, when other means fail, been quick to intervene militarily when their political and economic interests have been threatened. US weaponry, mercenaries paid with US dollars, and when necessary US troops have been employed throughout the world to suppress the attempts of the world's peoples to gain control over their own nations. Greece, Turkey, Korea, Lebanon, Guatemala, Cuba, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic -- the list is endless. Always the US actions are justified in the name of "national security" and the fight to preserve freedom from Communist dictatorship.

## NATIONAL SECURITY FOR WHOM?

But in the last few years this justification for US empire has become more and more transparent to the US people. It is clearer to many more people that "national security" really means security for the investments and profits of the monopolies. For the working class imperialism means fighting and dying in colonial wars, high taxes, unemployment and inflation.

## Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

# WHO WE ARE

As a communist organization the PWOC sees the root causes of the day-to-day problems of working people as the capitalist system itself. 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 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 their exploitation and today the movements in opposition to the monopolists are rapidly growing both in numbers and intensity. What is lacking is the kind of political leadership that can bring these movements together, deepen the consciousness of the masses, and build to May -- July, 1975, page 2

It is also clearer that the "free world" is a collection of corrupt and oppressive governments that represent not their own peoples but US imperialism. Many have come to see that it is the national liberation movements, often lead by Communists, who are the real patriots fighting to free their countries from foreign domination.

The one part of the world the US monopolies have not been able to sink their teeth into is the areas in which socialism has triumphed. After the war, the US set out to build a complicated series of alliances to at least contain and if possible destroy the Soviet Union and the new people's democracies in Eastern Europe. Later, after the "fall" of China the same approach was employed in Asia. NATO, SEATO, the Baghdad pact and the OAS were all products of the US's efforts to build a world-wide alliance against the socialist countries.

Again the rationalization for this policy was protection against "foreign aggression" but the reality was that the US sought to isolate and defeat the socialist countries in order to protect and expand the areas of the world where the monopolies plundered freely.

Today it is becoming increasingly apparent to the US ruling class that its dominant position in the world is crumbling. The US imperialists can no longer impose their will on the world's people. The defeats of the last few years culminating in the collapse of the Thieu clique in Vietnam have brought this home sharply. A review of the world situation reveals the following:

## LATIN AMERICA

While the US imperialists succeeded in overturning the Popular Unity government of Chile and instituting a vicious fascist regime, they have not stemmed the general trend toward independence and revolution. The blockade against Cuba is leaking like a sieve and even the State Dept. concedes privately that it is only a matter of time before the US is forced to recognize Cuba and abandon its attempt at economic strangulation of the Socialist island. The last major OAS meeting showed that the Latin American

major OAS meeting showed that the Latin American governments were increasingly unwilling to back US policy. Some of these governments have shown independence of the US in other ways.

Venezuela is kicking out the US oil monopolies and taking control of this most important resource itself. Peru is insisting on its sovereign right to control its own waters against incursions from the US fishing fleets. Mexico has attacked the unequal US trade relationship the US has imposed. And Panama wants an end to US control of its territory in the canal zone.

## AFRICA

The key to US policy in Africa has been the support of the white supremacist regimes in Southern Africa which have propped up US interests throughout the continent. Now

day'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 that present themselves on the difficult road to revolution. The PWOC seeks, in conjunction 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.



that policy is in shambles. The liberation movements against Portuguese colonialism have won in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea Bissau. The colonial war against these peoples was funded by US aid to Portugal. Now the US faces the prospect of anti-imperialist governments in the heart of southern Africa.

These developments gravely threaten the survival of the racist regimes in Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa. In these countries, the Liberation forces are making headway. This combined with their growing political isolation on the continent has forced the diehard racists of these states into dropping some of the most blatant features of apartheid and making conciliatory gestures towards their enemies.

But the peoples of Africa will not be taken in by any such gestures. They will settle for nothing short of real independence. Thus the days of white settler states in South Africa are clearly numbered. Without these regimes, the vast investments of US monopolies, particularly in South Africa, will be gravely threatened.

## ASIA

It is obviously in Asia that US imperialism has suffered the most crushing blows. All of Indochina has expelled US interests and influence. The victories of the Liberation movements combined with the growing strength of China have led even the formerly subservient governments of Thailand and the Philippines to move away from the US orbit. The client regimes on Taiwan and in South Korea are now extremely isolated and in the case of the latter face growing popular insurgency from within. Even sections of the US ruling class recognize that if these regimes come under attack there is little the US can do to save them.

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## election analysis

# RIZZO VICTORY SHOWS NEED FOR A NEW PARTY

Now that Frank Rizzo has beaten Lou Hill in the primary, all the political analysts have started telling us why and how it happened. The usual explanation is that Lou Hill had the machine, but Frank Rizzo had the people. But when we look beneath the surface of Rizzo's thirty-two thousand vote victory, this whole analysis begins to come apart. In fact what the election returns really indicate is that Rizzo is not the darling of the majority of the city's people. Instead he is the beneficiary of a vocal and dedicated minority.

Only 56% of the city's registered democrats (who outnumber Republicans three to one) bothered to go to the polls, and of those only 52% -- a slim majority -- actually banked on Frank. In other words, only 29% of the city's registered Democrats actually banked on Frank, less than one out of three people.

The real silent majority in Philadelphia consists of the anti-Rizzo people. The potential anti-Rizzo vote was not tapped by Lou Hill with his machine backing and his "business as usual" liberal program. This was especially the case in the Black community.

Black people in Philadelphia have been the hardest hit by the Rizzo austerity program, and have most to lose by having a notorious racist like Rizzo in City Hall. Yet Lou Hill failed to make racism an issue in the primary campaign, which is not surprising since nothing in his record suggests any real commitment to Black equality.

Given this, Lou Hill could not mobilize the anti-Rizzo Black vote and the Black voters stayed home in droves. The turnout in the poorest Black areas was the lowest in the city (North Philadelphia 32% as compared to 46% for the Germantown-Oak Lane area; by way of contrast, 67% of the voters in the Northeast actually voted.)

Rizzo is claiming he made great inroads into the Black community in this election, pointing to 32% of the vote in 26 wards that have a Black majority as compared to 19% of the vote in these same wards the first time around in 1971. Again, these figures are misleading.

Rizzo did succeed in rallying a rag-tag army of preachers and job seekers to endorse him in the Black community, but there is little evidence that these "leaders" were able to shift any significant support his way.

When we look at the Rizzo tally in the 17 wards that are predominantly Black, (80% and upwards) Rizzo's share of the vote slips to 25.4%.

Also, comparing the '71 primary with the '75 primary is misleading, in that Hardy Williams, a popular Black politician, and Bill Green, white but with good liberal credentials, were running in '71 and pulled out a bigger Black vote.

In 1971, 59,000 voted in the seventeen Black wards compared to 44,000 this time around. The 15 thousand more Black voters who undoubtedly came out to vote for Green or Williams against Rizzo in '71 stayed home this time.

A more realistic comparison is with the 1971 general election, where Rizzo went up against the Chamber of Commerce Blue Blood Thatcher Longstreth and drew 23.6% of the Black vote. In this primary he gained 1.8% over his showing against Longstreth, hardly indicating a great Rizzo groundswell.

In the white working class wards, Rizzo generally retained his 71 support and in some cases even drew a larger portion of the vote. In Kensington and the river wards, Rizzo culled 77.6% of the vote; in his baliwick of South Philadelphia, 85.7%; and in the Southwest, 71.7%. He retained his strength in the Northeast gaining 67.6% of the vote. The only exception to this pattern was the predominantly Jewish 53rd and 54th wards in the Oxford Circle area where Rizzo's role in the teachers' strike led to an erosion of his strength and cost him these wards.

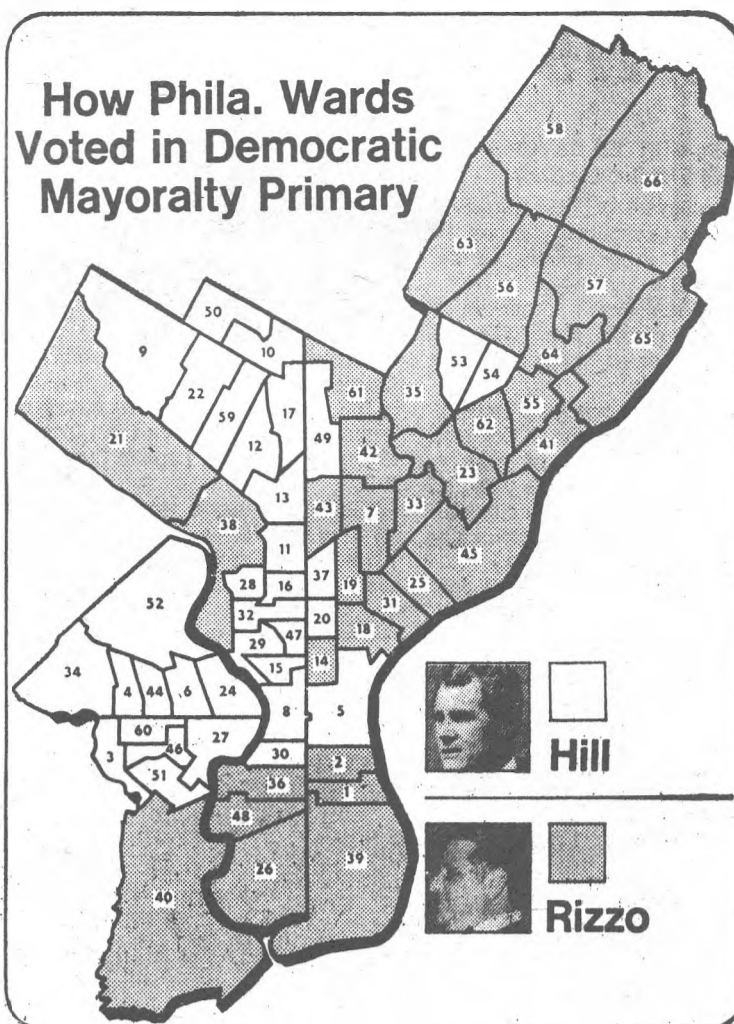
While significant numbers of voters stayed home, the voter turnout in these areas was much higher and it was, in the overwhelming majority, a Rizzo crowd. The inescapable conclusion is that Rizzo's demagoguery still has a broad appeal among white working people in this city.

In these hard times, Rizzo -- like that other racist George Wallace -- is subordinating his raw law 'n order pitch to populist rhetoric about the "little guy". And unfortunately, a substantial number of the "little guys" who rightfully have no faith in liberals, who can't get off on a politician from Chestnut Hill, who have been confused and misled by racism, and who are fed up to here with high taxes, continue to be taken in by the most cynical and manipulative politician of them all, Frank Rizzo.

Yet while Rizzo's margin of victory in the white blue collar wards underlines the continued strength and enormous danger of his Wallace style brand of racist populism, it would be a mistake to see his victory as a mandate for further reaction.

First, there is the already noted smallness of his actual recorded support. But also, Rizzo did not run on a platform calling for greater right wing reaction. Instead he stood on the status quo.

The major thrust of his campaign was that he has kept taxes down and has avoided fiscal chaos and massive layoffs in city services. In other words, while the election



results are hardly encouraging, neither are they an indication of a swing to the right on the part of masses of voters. If anything, the fact that Rizzo had to draw in his racist horns a few inches indicates the electorate is less willing to endorse reaction than four years ago.

The real lesson of the primary is that in order to defeat Rizzo and the politicians he represents, we cannot rely on the Democratic regulars and their bankrupt liberal politics. The Pete Camiels and the Lou Hills can neither mobilize the silent majority of anti-Rizzo voters nor make any inroads into Rizzo's base.

The kind of liberalism that has dominated the Democratic Party for the past few decades, whether it be personified by machine types like Camiel or aristocratic "reformers" like Hill, has proven its inability to meet the needs of the people.

The war, the decay of the cities, the prevalence of racism, the deterioration in the living standards of working people... to the masses of voters, traditional liberalism as represented by the Democratic Party has not only failed to solve these problems, but is responsible for their existence in the first place.

Only a new independent politics based on the interests of the working class and the

oppressed nationalities and committed to the struggle against the ruling monopolies is going to be able to speak to and mobilize the thousands of people who feel voting for a Rizzo or a Hill is a waste of time. And only a politics that speaks directly to the needs of the Rizzo working class constituency -- while exposing the costs of racism -- can win these voters away from the Rizzo fold.

Building a new independent political force is a serious long-range task. It cannot be fashioned out of personalities or images. The disastrous showing for Muhammad Kenyatta, who ran largely as an individual and never projected a strong independent program, should teach us that much.

Nor is Charles Bowser's effort at independence a vehicle for building a genuine people's party. Bowser and the forces he represents have only temporarily stepped outside the arena of the Democratic Party. They have not broken with it politically, and will undoubtedly return to it at a future date.

This election year is too far along to expect that a serious independent campaign can be mounted for November. But the time to bring home the need for a genuinely independent politics and lay the groundwork for building a new electoral party in the city is very definitely NOW.

## TWO PARTIES

In the last issue of the Organizer in the article on our election perspective we spoke of the need for a new party -- an anti-capitalist people's party that could effectively break away the allegiance of the masses to the two party system. In the article we did not distinguish this party from the worker's vanguard or Communist Party, leading to some confusion on the part of a number of readers.

To clear up this confusion we are speaking of the need for two different parties, neither of which now exist. But these parties are quite distinct in their political character. The Communist Party, as we have previously explained, is a party of a new type. It is distinguished from the bourgeois or capitalist form of party in several key ways.

First, it does not embrace organizationally the whole working class, but bases itself on the politically advanced workers. It has a high level of political unity based on adherence to a Marxist-Leninist program, and with it strict standards of admission. It is an action

## an explanation

party which seeks to lead the class struggle in all its varied aspects and does not limit its theatre of action to the electoral arena.

Finally, its role is to represent the ongoing interests of the working class at every stage of the revolutionary process from the first stirrings of revolt against capitalist oppression to the final consolidation of the classless, Communist society.

The anti-capitalist people's party is a much more limited conception. It is essentially a tactical instrument for dealing with the concrete problem of breaking down the political influence of the capitalist parties in the US.

It is a broad party that would base itself on the membership of the mass organizations of the working class and its allies -- the trade unions, civil rights organizations, women's groups, etc. It would not have strict criteria for membership but would rather be open for all those who were willing to actively take up the struggle for an anticapitalist program.

Its primary practical activity would be fighting the capitalist parties in elections and eventually in city councils, legislatures, and Congress.

The two parties we are speaking of do not exist in isolation from one another. They do not represent different stages in the revolutionary process. The PWOC believes the central political task for this period is the building of a new Communist party.

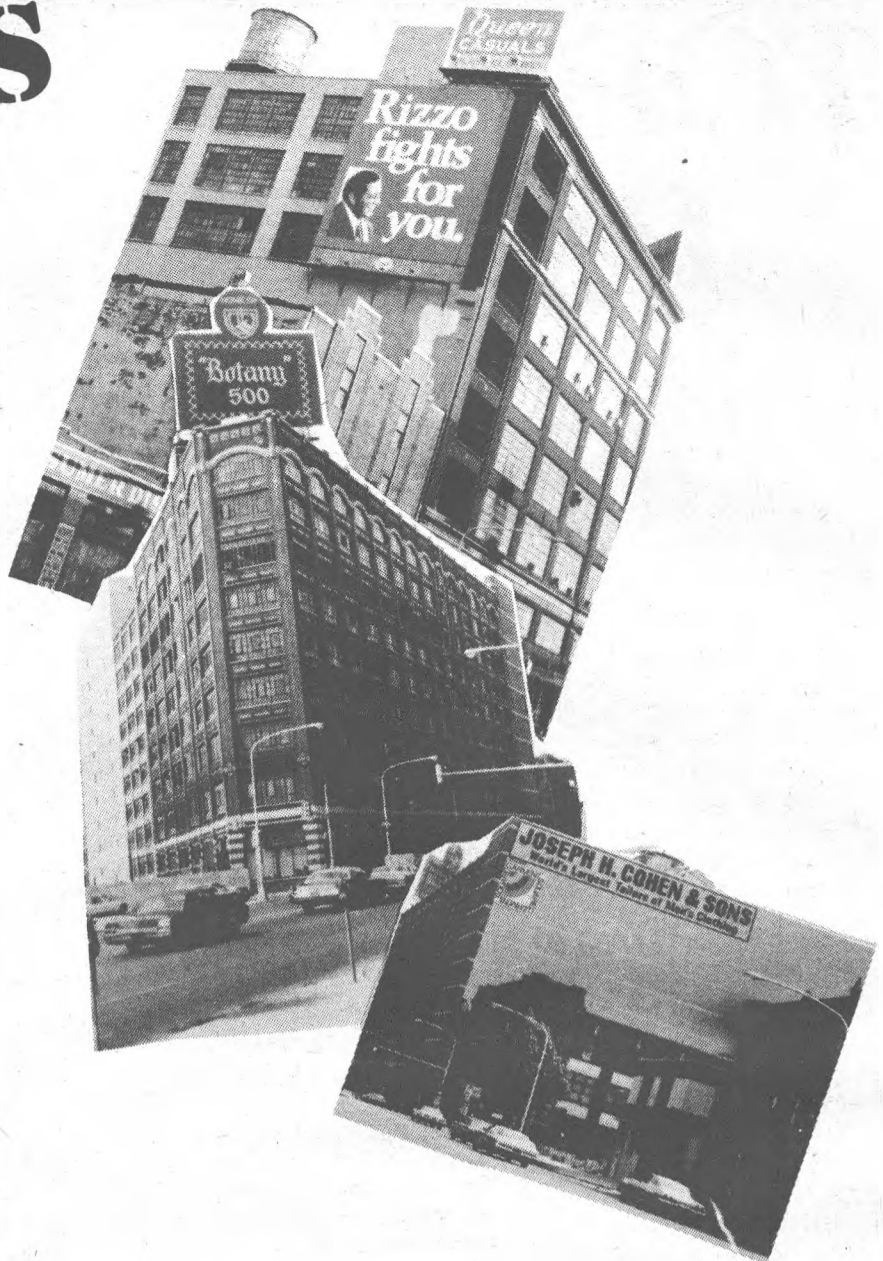
If a new people's party is to emerge and serve to advance rather than retard the development of the revolution in the US it is going to require Communist leadership. The strength and influence of Communists within such a formation will be a critical factor in determining whether such a party will represent an enormous political step forward for the working class or simply a new disguise for the bourgeois reformists who now inhabit the Democratic Party.

On the other hand, if the new Communist movement, and eventually the new Communist party, is to attain genuine mass influence -- if it is to succeed in winning thousands and then millions of working people to the path of class struggle, it is going to have to find forms that will serve as a bridge between its present isolation and its aim to stand at the head of a revolutionary movement encompassing the masses of the US people. The anti-capitalist people's party represents such a form.



# CRISIS SHAKES CLOTHING INDUSTRY

...and workers get the shakedown



Under the impact of the growing depression, Philadelphia's job drain threatens to become a flood. Nowhere is this more evident than in the ailing garment industry, long the largest employer in manufacturing in the Delaware Valley:

As of January, 1975, the unemployment rate in the apparel industry nationally was 17.6%, twice that of the rate for the labor force as a whole.

Here in Philadelphia as recently as last year, the city was second only to New York as a producer of men's tailored garments (suits and sports jackets) with over 15,000 workers employed in woolens and another 2,000 or so employed in cotton goods. Ten years earlier, the local men's clothing industry employed over 25,000 workers.

Today, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (ACWA) reports 11,000 workers on its rolls and many of these are laid off. The vast majority of those who are still employed are working a short work week in keeping with the industry's practice of sharing the work rather than laying off employees.

In the last few years many tailor shops have closed their doors. Daroffs, one of the largest and most prestigious firms folded over a year ago. Shortly afterwards, Robert Hall followed suit and closed its local shop. More recently, under the gun of depression conditions smaller firms like College Hall and Mini-shade have gone under.

Others, like Stanley Blacker have consolidated and cut their workforce back drastically. Now, Joseph H. Cohen's, the largest shop in the city, appears on the verge of closing as its parent company, the Rapid-American Corporation, a large New York based conglomerate, prepares to transfer its capital to more profitable ventures.

## THE EMPLOYED PAY TOO

The tailor shops that remain in business have stepped up the exploitation of the already poorly paid garment workers. The employers have resorted to sub-contracting work to cheaper firms that pay lower wages, all in clear violation of the union contract. Many shops have replaced the production of the traditional tailored garment with leisure wear (Eisenhower jackets and the like) and in the process have cut piece rates and wages.

One company, Cross Country clothes, laid off its entire work force and then reopened with a leisure wear line. Rates were slashed by as much as a half. Because seniority and recall rights are calculated by operation in the industry, the company, by eliminating operations, was able to hire a whole new work force at lower wages while the bulk of the laid off workers were left locked out on the street.

This "seniority system" has allowed abuses throughout the industry. One of the worst offenders is J.H. Cohen's. Cohen's receives a federal subsidy to operate a "school" for sewing machine operators as an on the job training program. The school employs workers at wages close to the minimum wage. Because garments can be produced cheaper in the school than in the rest of the shop, the bosses take work away from the regular employees and send it to the school, thus cutting these workers wages (most workers are paid on a pure piece rate basis.)

At the same time the school has continued to hire new workers while other workers with years of seniority are being laid off. The school is an outrageous scab operation that undermines the seniority principle and job security while driving down wages, all with an assist from Uncle Sam.

## WORKING CONDITIONS — CASUALTY OF THE CRISIS

Working conditions are another victim of the bosses' response to the economic crisis. Holding the threat of plant closings and layoffs over the workers' heads, the employers are demanding improved "quality" and higher "productivity."

Translated into working people's language this means more speed up, more work for the same amount of money in the paycheck. The bosses are seeking to minimize costs by cutting overhead. Much of these overhead costs are related to working conditions. Lights are being turned off, straining the eyes of sewing machine operators who must do close work in dim light.

At Cohen's, where in the pressing departments the steam and heat from the presses drives summer temperatures to intolerable levels, the management has announced it will eliminate air conditioning.

Hard times have also stimulated the drive to automate, an especially serious threat to the cutters, traditionally the most skilled and best paid workers in the industry. Technological devices like the lazer beam and paper markers have already been introduced in some shops with the elimination of most of the cutter's jobs.

## BLACK, WOMEN, AND IMMIGRANT WORKERS HARDEST HIT

Hardest hit by the employer offensive have been the victims of discrimination -- Black, women and immigrant workers. They feel the pinch first and they feel it hardest.

A blatant example of racism was the case of the closing of the Robert Hall shop where the predominantly white coat shop received severance pay while the almost wholly Black pants shop received nothing.

Women workers, who are a majority of the industry and perform most of the sewing machine operations, have been the main victims of speed up and rate-cutting.

Immigrants, many of whom speak little or no English, are tricked and manipulated by the bosses. For many of these immigrants the threat of deportation hangs over their heads and weakens their ability to resist the increased exploitation.

The employers seek to step up the oppression of these workers by playing on the prejudices of other workers. They aim at dividing White workers from Black workers, English speaking workers from workers who speak a foreign language and men workers from women workers. To the extent they succeed, they not only hurt these workers but all workers whose wages and working conditions are undermined by disunity.

## WHERE IS THE ACWA?

Both the employed and the unemployed clothing workers are being driven to the wall by the economic crisis. What is the ACWA which represents virtually all the men's clothing workers in Philadelphia, doing about it?

The union leadership is holding to its business as usual course, collaborating with the companies and sacrificing the vital interests of the membership to help the bosses maintain their profit margins.

The ACWA leadership serve as agents of the employers in aiding them in transferring the burden for the economic crisis on to the backs of the workers. In the case of College Hall, the union allowed the firm to lay off its work force and subcontract their work in return for payment of a portion of back benefits owed the union. They have, for the most part passively accepted the wage gouging and rate cutting that has accompanied the introduction of leisure wear, on occasion even arguing this is a good thing because it "saves jobs."

In Joseph Cohen's the union is anxiously working to "sell" the idea that the workers must sacrifice their interests in order to save their jobs.

## MISLEADERS SABOTAGE POLITICAL STRUGGLE

On the political front, the Finley-Sheinkman national leadership makes noises about the need for government action to stem the crisis, but shuns the kind of mass action and struggle necessary to win this fight.

The recent jobs demonstration in Washington illustrates the timid and bureaucratic attitude of the ACWA leadership. Here in Philadelphia not as much as a single leaflet was put out to educate and mobilize the membership around the D.C. demonstration. The union sent ten buses filled for the most part with union officials and hand picked rank and filers.

Many members, who found out about the demonstration through word of mouth, were not able to go because of lack of room on the buses. The outing was treated as a kind of picnic with plenty of booze and box lunches, a reward to the faithful for services rendered. A serious union leadership would and could have sent two or three times as many people and used the demonstration to educate its members and raise their fighting spirit.

The only time the ACWA leadership really makes any effort to bring out the ranks is for its periodic demonstrations against imports. This reactionary "buy American" campaign is a phoney solution to the jobs problem that only aids the employers (See article Jan-Feb. issue of Organizer).

The ACWA hierarchy is quite at home mobilizing workers to help the bosses by restricting their foreign competition. It also is quick to urge workers to vote for this or that capitalist politician (most recently that union busting friend of Big Business, Frank Rizzo.)

But when it comes to fighting the employers or their flunkies in Washington or City Hall the ACWA misleaders would rather stay home and keep their chairs warm.

## WHAT WE NEED

The only way out of the economic crisis is to wage a two-fisted campaign to hold the line on wages and working conditions in the shops while mobilizing the whole membership to fight for full employment at decent wages with the monopoly corporations, and not the working people, footing the bill.

Clearly the ACWA leadership, nationally or locally, has no heart for such a fight. In fact they fear struggle against the capitalist class above all else because it threatens their privileges.

Only an organized rank and file movement committed to militant, democratic unionism can lead this fight. The rank and file must push aside the bloated and corrupt labor bureaucracy that now has a stranglehold on the union and put the ACWA squarely on a fighting course.



# STOP THE RIPOFF!

## PHILLY CLOTHING WORKERS VOTE NO TO PROTECT RAISE

"Stop the ripoff! Vote NO to protect our raise!" The message of the Rank and File Committee of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers to the Union membership has been pretty loud and clear over the past two months.

The rank and file in the men's tailor shops of the city are up in arms one again. They are being told by their union leadership to choose between their raise and their full medical insurance -- but they want both, and they want their employers to pay for both.

Troubles never seem to just rain on the clothing workers -- they pour. The industry is declining, and bankruptcy after bankruptcy throws newly laid-off workers on the streets by the hundreds. Those shops that are open are slow, providing only part time work to the 10,000 or so members of the AMCS who are still punching time cards.

The employers are anxious to squeeze the last ounce of profits out of the remaining workers. Rates are being cut, leaving many working harder than ever for only 2/3 of their normal pay. In some shops, the summer vacation is being coupled with extended layoffs. In others, like JH Cohens, vacations will be staggered to allow the company to meet deadlines. No one speaks with much confidence about job security in the tailor shops of Philadelphia.

### WAGE CUT ANNOUNCED

And now the raise which they won in last year's ten-day strike is being taken away. On June 1, all working members of the men's and boy's clothing division of the ACWA were to receive a raise of 3 1/2 cents per hour -- which included a 4 cent cost of living increase.

The first week of May, however, news leaked out to the membership that the medical insurance fund was not only bankrupt, but millions of dollars in debt. The fund is managed by the union and paid for by the manufacturers on a percentage basis of the current payroll. According to the union, the fund went dry because of the recent rash of layoffs and clothing shop bankruptcies. Laid off workers continue to receive medical benefits for one year after their layoff, but the employers pay into the fund only on the basis of their current payroll. The union leadership's solution to the problem is very simple: They want all those presently working to divert their raise and cost of living allowance into the insurance fund for a minimum of 15 weeks.

When the Rank and File Committee of Philadelphia learned of the situation they moved into action almost immediately. The Rank and File Committee is a group of ACWA members who have been fighting for over four years both for a more democratic union and one which fights in the interests of the workers, not the manufacturers. "We worked hard last year to get a decent contract. The contract we got wasn't worth much, but we're not about to lose what little we did win!" pointed out one member of the Committee we interviewed outside the union hall.

### RANK AND FILE PAYS JOINT BOARD A VISIT

On May 8 the Rank and File Committee called a demonstration outside their Union Hall at 2115 South Street to urge their Joint Board -- the governing body of their district -- to vote against the wage cut proposal. About 250 angry workers --

Black, Puerto Rican and white, more than half women -- chanted "WE WANT BOTH" outside the Hall for a half hour before surging into the meeting itself.

Once inside the meeting, they refused to leave for almost an hour, forcing the Manager, Harry Goldsmith, to answer a series of sharp questions both about the plan itself and about his insistence that they leave. When asked if the membership didn't have the democratic right to observe their elected representatives in action, Goldsmith replied he didn't know all that much about civil liberties, but the Joint Board simply couldn't conduct their business unless the room was cleared of non-Joint Board members.

The room was finally cleared of the demonstrators, but only after some of the conciliating Rank and File Committee leaders urged them out -- these leaders apparently felt confident that they could defeat the plan in the Joint Board. The Joint Board proceeded to recommend that the membership forego their raise by a vote of 49 to 32. The local union leadership announced a few days later that the entire Philadelphia membership -- employed and unemployed -- would have the chance to vote on the proposal by secret ballot in the shops and at the Union Hall.



Members of ACWA went on strike in 1974 to win the wage increases which the union now wants them to give up.

"We feel the only reason we got the vote was because we put up a stink at the Joint Board Meeting, and now we've got to make sure the membership votes this lousy thing down," stated a member of the Rank and File Committee passing out a VOTE NO flyer outside one of the larger clothing shops in North Philadelphia. "A lot of guys down at South Street (the Union Hall) are trying to blame individual workers for this. They say its the abuse by laid-off workers or something like that. I guess there's some abuse, but that's not the point. They're just trying to make us go after each other. We shouldn't have to choose between our raise and the medical plan. We need both. Besides, how could there be millions of dollars worth of cheating! That's a lot of crap!"

### WORKERS VOTE TO MAKE BOSSES PAY

The Rank and File Committee argued that the contract itself provided the necessary solution to such a problem. They demanded that the manufacturers be asked to pay a higher percentage of the payroll into the insurance fund. Should the employers re-

fuse, they argued that the case be brought to arbitration, an option included in the contract.

"If all else fails," continues the VOTE NO leaflet, "Why doesn't our leadership organize a march on Washington of clothing workers to demand federal funds for our insurance? . . . Our paychecks should have been the very last place to look for money, not the first! We must . . . make our leadership go to work to defend our interests, and not the interests of the manufacturers."

The VOTE NO leaflet also pointed out that the membership was not being given all the facts. It suggested the possibility that this whole thing had been planned by the manufacturers and the Union leadership a year ago to get the strike over with without giving the workers any raise.

The final vote in Philadelphia was an overwhelming 2 to 1 against the plan. Thousands of petitions opposing the proposal were sent to the national office from shops in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Lehigh Valley. A few days later, however, it was announced that the proposal was passed nationwide by a vote of 63,015 for to 15,072 against.

On May 30 about 70 rank and file clothing workers, most from Philadelphia, went to the ACWA headquarters in New York to protest. We asked several of the demonstrators why the plan was passed so overwhelmingly in the rest of the country.

"The biggest problem was that the membership wasn't allowed to vote in most cities. Instead, the Joint Boards voted, and they don't represent the people. In fact they really don't give a damn about us. If there'd been a secret ballot across the country, this never would have happened."

In some places, the Joint Boards were forced to go to great lengths to avoid hearing the voice of their rank and file. In Baltimore, a first Joint Board meeting was prevented by rank and file pickets.

They held their next meeting 200 miles away, passed the proposal, and refused to allow the question to be brought to local meetings. In the four markets where membership voting was allowed (Buffalo, Lehigh Valley, New Bedford and Philadelphia) the proposal was voted down.

The rank and file is nowhere near giving up. As of the writing of this article, many clothing workers felt there might be a strike over the issue in the coming weeks. Plans were being made for meetings with other rank and file groupings in other markets, and within Philadelphia itself.

The whole struggle in the ACWA over the wage cut underlines the growing maturity of the rank and file movement in the men's clothing union. The Rank and File Committee put the blame squarely where it belongs -- on the bosses.

Many clothing workers, disillusioned and embittered by years of sell out policies, were inclined towards a solution that would compel the union, rather than the companies, to put up the money for the insurance fund. The Committee also understood the importance of standing clearly and firmly for both the wage

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## THUMBS DOWN!

(The following song, written by an ACWA rank and filer, was sung on the picket line at the ACWA Headquarters on Union Square in New York.)

### THUMBS DOWN

(to the tune of Sweet Betsy from Pike)

Come hear my story, its sad but its true  
Its about the rotten Finley-Sheinkman crew  
Its about union misleaders in bed with the boss  
and how all we workers are taking the loss

In 74 we went out on strike  
Managed to win a small wage hike  
In 75 here's what they say  
Gonna have to take your increase away

The insurance fund is broke say Murray and Jake  
We're taking your money for your own sake  
Well the rank and file don't see it that way  
We say its the bosses that gotta pay

There's one thing we know it ain't no lie  
The prices we're paying are reaching the sky  
We pay more for bread, we pay more for meat  
Somehow our families, they gotta eat.

So listen Mr. Finley and please get it straight  
We want our increase and we won't wait  
No excuses -- we won't hear no more  
That's not what we pay our union dues for

From old New Bedford up on the Bay  
From Lehigh Valley, down Philadelphia way  
From Buffalo and Baltimore town  
To this sweetheart deal we say "Thumbs Down!"

So come all you workers and join in the fight  
We're gonna set this union right  
We're the rank and file, ACWA  
and we're here to make the bosses pay.





# a program to fight the crisis make the monopolies pay

In previous issues of the Organizer, we have shown that the present economic crisis is an unavoidable product of capitalism. Scrambling for ever larger profits, the monopolists increased their exploitation of the working class. By introducing new and more modern machinery and by driving their workers harder, they expanded production to unprecedented levels. At the same time they held down the real incomes of their workers by fighting wage increases and by continually raising prices.

Eventually the ever larger volume of production clashed with the ever diminishing ability of the workers to consume. Stocks of unsold goods accumulated in retail stores and warehouses. Orders to the manufacturers for new goods from these distributors declined. The monopolists cut back production and the wave of massive layoffs began.

For the monopolists, the crisis has meant merely lower profits. For the working class it has brought severe economic hardship. Over eight million workers are officially listed as unemployed (more realistic estimates put the figure in the range of 10-12 million). Of these, some 3 million are not entitled to unemployment benefits and for some 600,000 benefits will soon run out. Inflation has continued at an alarming rate; every week bills grow while incomes shrink. Mortgage foreclosures and Sheriff's sales have already begun for some. For many others they are just around the corner.

In the plants, those workers remaining on the job are facing intensified exploitation. The bosses are cutting piece rates and altering work procedures. They are speeding up production, running assembly lines at faster rates and demanding that all workers give their all from whistle to whistle. In many operations the managers are threatening more layoffs unless the workers agree to forego wage increases and increased benefits.

National minorities (Blacks, Latino, Chicano, Asian and Indian peoples) and women bear a double burden. Those conditions which affect the working class as a whole strike them twice as hard as a result of discrimination. Denied any position on the economic ladder other than the very bottom, their rungs are the first to fall out in the crisis. Thus they are the first to suffer in a crisis, they suffer the most for its duration and they are the last to feel its recovery.

This is how the monopolists seek to make the workers and especially national minorities and women bear the brunt of the crisis. In the shops and the offices, in the cities and the communities, their aim is everywhere the same: intensify the oppression of the broad masses.

## MONOPOLY'S SOLUTION

Meanwhile in Washington, D.C., through their agents in the Republican and Democratic parties, the imperialists are pushing a program to "solve" the crisis. They have already initiated a tax cut on both personal and corporate income. To the average worker this cut will amount to about \$125 whereas to the corporations it will yield billions. They have proposed a federal jobs program of no more than a million jobs of which some 250,000 have been created; the total number of unemployed is well over ten times the total number of jobs proposed. Furthermore the bankers

in the federal government are manipulating the reins of government monetary and fiscal policy to encourage profitable investment and low interest rates for big business.

While the monopolists have iced their economic cake with some frills like the tax rebate, underneath that icing is nothing but hard rock for the working class. The core of their "solution" is an attempt to recreate the conditions for the renewed exploitation of the working class. Counting on continued high unemployment to check wage advances and tax and other monetary incentives to restore profits, they are struggling to revive the conditions which will make their businesses profitable again. This is the imperialist solution.

## THE WORKING CLASS SOLUTION

For the working class there can be no real solution to the economic crisis within the framework of capitalism. As the "solving" of the 1970-71 crisis has already shown conclusively, the imperialist solution to the 1973-5 crisis can only lead to a deeper and more severe downturn in the future. Since imperialism is an economic system which inevitably runs in continuous boom phases intertwined with bust phases, the only way to end economic crises for all times is to overthrow imperialism. Only socialism is crisis-free.

It would be foolish, however, to think that the overthrow of imperialism is an item on the immediate agenda. The working class movement is still too weak. Our forces, for the most part, do not understand either the real cause or the real solution to economic crises. We are not well enough organized; and our largest class organization, the trade unions, are in the hands of the agents of imperialism. Furthermore, even the most advanced elements in the working class movement are not yet organized; we still have no vanguard party to lead our struggle for socialism.

Nevertheless, the working class must fight against the monopolists' attempt to make it bear the burden of the economic crisis. The working class can win important demands, which while they do not provide an ultimate solution to the crisis, do speak to its most immediate needs; it can shift some of the burden back on to the shoulders of those responsible for the crisis.

## THE NEED FOR A PROGRAM

To do this the working class must do two things. First it must formulate a program of reforms that is entirely consistent with its vital interests. Such a program would include demands which would serve to rally the entire working class to the struggle against the monopolists.

It must speak to the special oppression of national minority and women workers, which is at the same time a source of division within the whole working class. It must also serve to draw the proletariat's allies, the liberation movements of the oppressed nationalities, the democratic women's movement and the progressive petty-bourgeoisie (small farmers, businessmen, etc.) into the movement against capital under the proletariat's banner.

Second, it must fight to implement that program. Uniting all those who can be brought into the fight against the imperialist crisis, the workers must use their organizations to rally the maximum possible forces behind them. Present-

ing their demands to both the individual monopolists and to the imperialist government in Washington, the workers must wage their fight on both the economic and the political front. Through a combination of job actions, strikes, rallies, and demonstrations the workers can make their voices heard.

While the struggle to realize this program is still yet a struggle against the effects of capitalist exploitation rather than an attempt to uproot the system itself, it is a struggle that, given sound revolutionary leadership, prepares the ground for the workers movement going over to its more directly revolutionary tasks. The program aims to educate the class as to the real nature of the crisis, provide a basis for effective mobilization of the class in struggle against the monopolists, and build the unity of the proletariat while strengthening its ties with its natural allies.

Furthermore, the building of a coherent mass workers movement based on a program of struggle against the monopolies in this period of deepening capitalist crisis is a central ingredient in the construction of a revolutionary workers' party. Marxist-Leninists, by seeking to lead the mass movement on the basis of such a program, will expand their influence in the trade unions and communities, and draw the most politically advanced workers towards themselves.

A revolutionary Communist practice in the struggle for the urgent and immediate economic and political needs of the working class is an essential element in the welding together of the advanced workers into a vanguard party.

It is with this understanding that we in the PWOC put forward the following program. It ties together in twelve demands the most vital immediate needs of the working class. We intend to fight for it in the trade unions, in coalitions and at political rallies. We intend to use it not only to rally the masses in the struggle against the imperialist crisis, but will also strive to build the unity, resolve and fighting capacity of our class. We intend to struggle for both the immediate and the long run interests of our class using this program as our standard. We invite all advanced elements in the working class movement and all progressive elements outside it to join with us in this effort.

## PWOC PROGRAM FOR THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Here is our program. We have formulated it in twelve demands. Following each demand we have written a short explanation of why we feel each particular demand is vital to the working class movement.

**I. 30-Hour Work Week With No Reduction in Pay.** The working class has not succeeded in winning a reduction in the work week in nearly fifty years. Such a reduction would inevitably create a demand for millions of jobs which are vitally needed. Our acceptance of the shorter work week is, of course, conditional on no reduction in pay!

**II. Guaranteed Minimum Annual Income of \$7,800 for a Family of Four.** With the prices of everything sky-high, every family needs a minimum weekly income of \$150 just to feed, clothe, and house itself. That there are millions of families in the US who have been denied even this minimum is a severe condemnation of US imperialism.



**III. Increase and Expand Unemployment Compensation.** The rate of compensation should be raised to equal a person's full-time weekly wage. Workers should not be penalized by a loss of income for a lay-off, something they have no control over or responsibility for. Also, benefits should be available to all unemployed willing to work including first time job seekers.

**IV. Jobs For All.** The Democrats, the Republicans and the AFL-CIO share in common a commitment to a federal jobs program. But they also share in common an inadequate commitment. Not one of them has called for more than one million jobs when there are at the very least ten million unemployed. The working class must accept nothing short of jobs at union wages for all those who are willing to work.

**V. Rollback Prices and Rents To 1970 Levels.** Since 1970, prices have risen in the US over 40%. What \$10 could buy in 1970 it takes \$14.05 to buy today. Since well over half of these price increases have come in industries where less than four companies control over 25% of the market, most price increases are really price gouges. All prices must be rolled back to their 1970 levels!

**VI. Nationalize the Energy Monopolies Without Compensation.** The large energy monopolies -- electric companies, gas works and oil companies -- have used their control of the market to rip off the people. In return for their generosity they should be nationalized without compensation to their present owners. A few large companies should then be formed operating under the direction of representatives from the working class and its allies. No Bankers or Businessmen!!

**VII. Moratorium on Consumer Debt -- No Foreclosures, No Sheriff's Sales.** Nearly twenty-five cents of every wage dollar a worker receives goes to pay consumer debt. In this period of unprecedented inflation and shattering unemployment, workers can no longer afford to carry this burden. Therefore an absolute moratorium on debt collection of any kind whether it is on a mortgage for a house or a time payment for a car or a major appliance should be declared for the duration of the crisis.

**VIII. Free Health Care For Everyone.** Many unemployed workers who were wholly or partially covered by their employer through a health plan no longer have any coverage at all. With the sky-rocketing cost of health care even a relatively minor operation or disease could spell disaster for those without coverage. Therefore, the government must provide free health care for everyone in need.

**IX. Low Interest Loans To Small Businesses and Small Farmers.** This may seem an odd demand to be put into this program. The fact is, however, that the working class has many potential allies among the owners of small businesses -- the corner grocer, the butcher, the local hardware store, home remodelers, independent truckers, etc. -- who are being forced out of business by the monopolies. Low interest loans to small businesses will prevent the stranglehold of monopoly from growing as rapidly as it normally would

during such a deep downturn. If the working class does not fight for the demands of its allies, it will weaken the forces arrayed in the struggle against imperialism.

**X. An End To Discrimination Against National Minorities and Women.** The imperialists are placing an especially heavy burden on national minorities and women during the crisis. Their unemployment levels are much higher than those of white men; and their compensation is generally lower. Therefore in any jobs program these oppressed groups must be afforded preference in hiring at all skill levels. Any necessary training must be at full pay and at government expense. Free childcare must be provided if women are to move toward real equality. The government must also take the necessary steps to see that all discrimination in any federal programs and in private industry is eliminated.

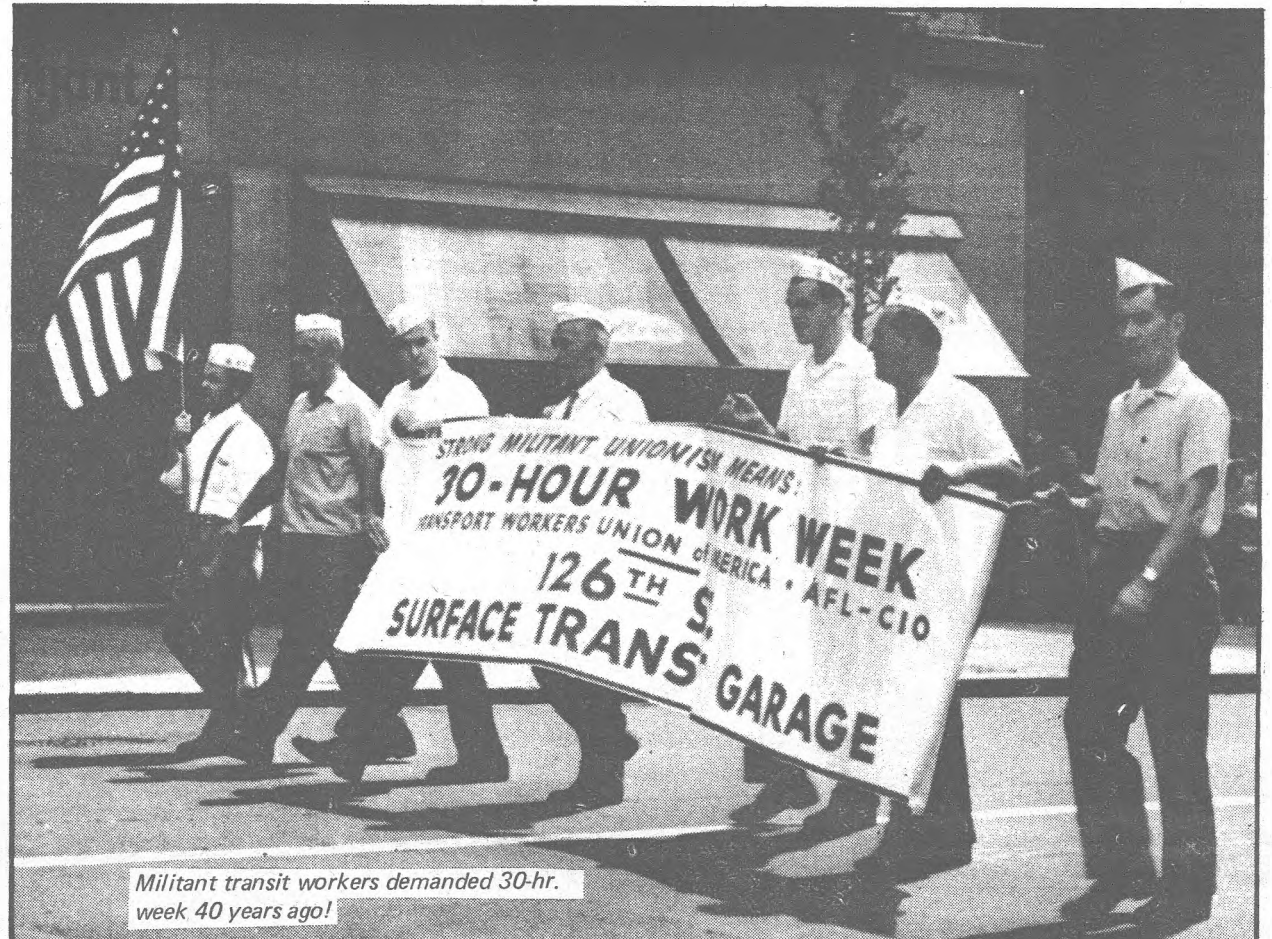
**XI. Cut Military Spending -- No Aid To Reactionary Dictatorships.** With over \$92 billion spent for defense, the US government is wasting colossal funds that could be spent on this economic program. Moreover, as a study by the Michigan Public Interest Research Group demonstrated, defence spending means a reduction in jobs. For every \$1 billion spent for military instead of civilian economy, the US loses 10,000 jobs in private industry or 21,000 jobs in

state and local government. Furthermore defense spending is a major cause of inflation.

Military aid to corrupt settler, racist or fascist regimes around the world (Israel, S. Africa, Taiwan, S. Korea, Chile, etc.) is not only a waste of money but also aids the enemies of the world's working class movement. All such aid should be halted.

**XII. Fund Program By Taxing Corporations, Banks and the Rich.** You don't have to be a financial wizard to point out tremendous waste in government spending, like the defense budget. Nor do you have to know all the ins and outs of Wall Street to know that many corporations and banks have continued to make substantial profits this year and that there are billions of dollars being held idle by large banks and rich individuals in the US. Since all these funds, in the final analysis, are the product of the exploitation of the working class, they should be made available to finance this program.

The actual financial mechanism we will leave to the economists with only two limitations. First, the funds are to be drawn from the profits of the banks and corporations and from the hoards of the wealthy. Second, there is to be no increase in taxes whatsoever for those with incomes under \$15,000.



Militant transit workers demanded 30-hr. week 40 years ago!

# 'DON'T STARVE-ORGANIZE'

## The Slogan of the Unemployment Movement of the '30's



A few months ago, the rising rate of unemployment was big news. The newspapers were full of pictures of long lines of weary people waiting in unemployment offices. Los Angeles police were reported to be preparing for food riots. The spectre of the Great Depression was in everyone's thoughts.

Now the official word is "Recovery" and "we've turned the corner." Yet unemployment increases monthly -- now more than 9 million of the nation's workers are unable to find jobs. In the Philadelphia area over 10% of the working population is out of work. The AFL-CIO predicts national unemployment figures will approach 12% by the end of the year.

In 1931 when 8 million Americans were jobless, Herbert Hoover promised that recovery was "just around the corner." Yet by 1933 between 15 and 20 million were on the street, without a job and destitute.

When capitalism finds itself in one of its periodic crises, it promptly tries to rescue itself on the backs of the working class. Layoffs, speed-ups, and wage cuts are all sacrifices the politicians

ask "for the good of the economy." High rates of unemployment become planned into the economy. Even Ford's most optimistic economists admit that unemployment will probably not drop below 7% in the next decade.

Even those of us who have not been laid off or have seen our workplace close down, are threatened by unemployment. We have all seen friends, relatives and neighbors who have been financially wiped out. We have seen their frustration and loss of self-respect. The bosses know this and use unemployment like a knife in our backs to force us to work harder and faster. Not only have wage increases of the past ten years been wiped out by inflation, improvements in working conditions have been likewise steadily eroded by the threat of layoffs.

Forty years ago when one-third of the nation was unemployed, the times were very hard indeed. There was no unemployment insurance and no form of nationally organized relief. If you were out of work you had to depend on soup kitchens and local charities for food handouts, you might have been forced out of your home and into a freight box house in a "Hooverville" shanty-town.

Alone, individuals and families could do little to alleviate their poverty. The slogan became, "Don't Starve -- Organize!" Across the country, Unemployment Committees and Councils were organized to fight for a public works program, unemployment insurance, an end to discrimination and the seven hour work day.

The power of united, militant action was shown again and again as unemployed workers joined employed striking workers on the picket line to stop scabbing. Hundreds and sometimes thousands of Unemployment Council members would forcibly halt evictions and replace the evicted families in their home.

The Unemployed Councils also collected food for distribution among the starving, held mass demonstrations for better relief services, and published their own newspapers. The Councils, often organized with the aid and support of communists, were democratically run organizations open to anyone who needed help or who wanted to fight for better living conditions. The Councils were organized in neighborhoods in almost every large town and city in 46 states and had a national membership of about a half-million by the mid-thirties.

It was this movement -- large, well-organized, and militant -- that forced the signing of the Social Security Act which included a watered down version of unemployment insurance.

The unemployment movement of the thirties did not accomplish all that it set out to achieve, but it did win some important victories and set forth a lesson for today. We are not going to get our jobs back or get a decent standard of living by sitting around waiting for a "recovery." It is up to us to recover our own pride, our jobs and a decent standard of living. There's only one way to do that -- "Don't Starve -- Organize!"



# THE GARBAGE AIN'T THE ONLY THING THAT STINKS IN CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP

The elected officials of plush Cheltenham Township would rather wallow in garbage than bargain fairly with the organized township workers.

Members of Teamster Local 115 -- workers who pick up trash and clean and maintain the township's streets and parks -- have been on strike since February 24. This is the first bargaining agreement for the workers since they joined the Teamster local and township officials are doing all they can to bust the union.

Initially the union negotiating team called for a \$2.40 per hour increase to bring wages in line with the Philadelphia city workers. The township refused to bargain in any serious manner and while negotiations were in progress they even cut one of the six trash collecting crews. The union viewed this as an act clearly taken to provoke a strike and immediately demanded reinstatement of the sixth crew.

## TOWNSHIP PULLS OUT THE STOPS

Township officials then called for a fact-finding report. The fact-finder recommended a 95 cents per hour wage increase, a pension plan with retirement after 20 years, and restoration of the sixth crew. The union accepted the report, but township officials rejected it. The union called for the strike. The report now forms the basis of the union's demands with one other major provision: no outside contracting.

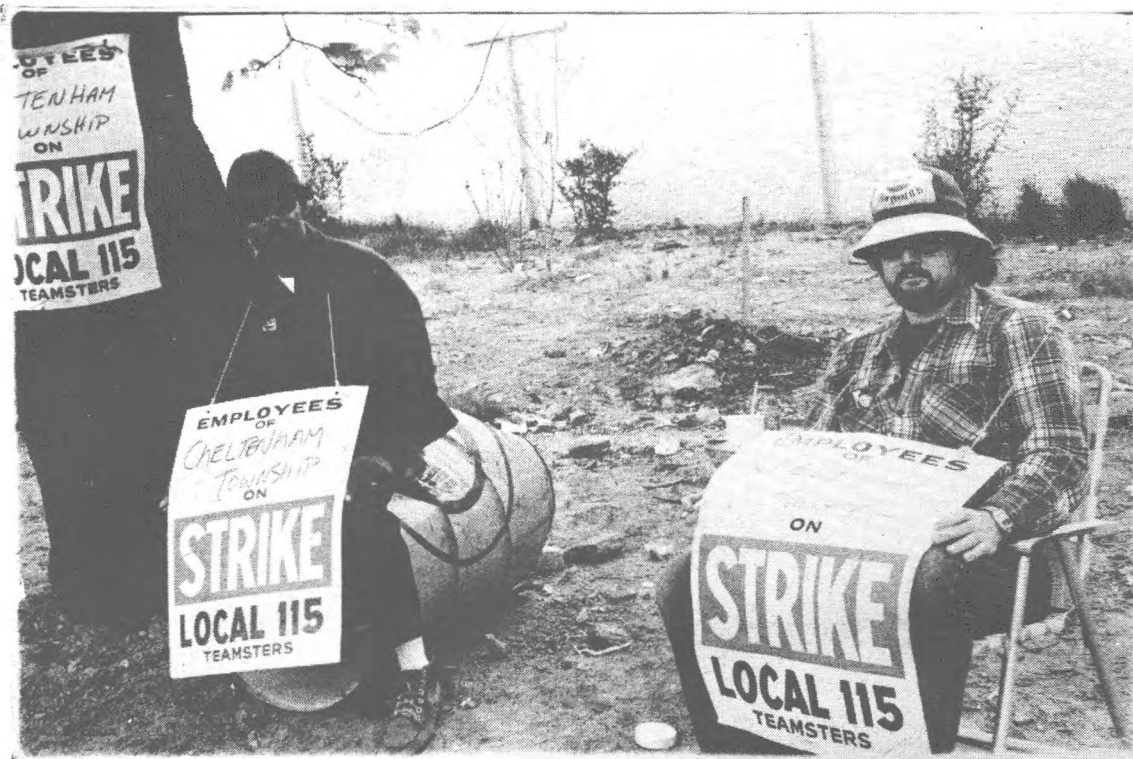
The township has pulled out all the stops in their effort to break the union. Elected township officials have never sat at the bargaining table; they've gotten an injunction against the strike, and they've hired scabs (at \$33 per hour!) to haul the trash away from the park where the residents have been dumping it.

## RACISM ANSWERED WITH BLACK-WHITE UNITY

Over 60% of the sanitation workers are Black. Apparently Cheltenham township officials want to run Cheltenham as one big plantation where poorly paid Black workers pick up the garbage of white suburbanites.

The racist indifference and hostility of township officials toward these workers has sparked broad support for the strike from civil rights organizations like the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Rev. Ralph Abernathy of the SCLC led a march through Cheltenham on May 24th and further activities on behalf of the strikers are planned.

The march and rally -- attended by some 700 people -- also drew support from many other trade unionists. Teamster Local 115 has the support of 35 other area Teamster locals who turned out their forces to halt all truck and bus traffic in the township for one day.



This show of Black-White unity has thwarted the efforts of township officials to isolate and break the strike.

Obviously township officials aren't really worried about the 95 cent per hour wage increase if they're willing to pay \$33 per hour to their scabs. They are worried, however, about having to deal with a strong union representing some of their workers and are even more afraid of a strong union representing all of their workers. At the moment, other township workers are organized into "associations" and other township-sanctioned organizations. The township knows that a victory for the trash and maintenance workers would give real impetus to organizing drives among other employees. They don't intend to give that victory to their workers unless they are absolutely forced to do so.

## THE WAY TO WIN

It is possible to win this struggle. If the Teamster Joint Council really supported the strike in the way that they should, they could shut down Cheltenham township for weeks. Other union locals should join this struggle too: No trade union should sit idly by and watch their fellow workers suffer the indignities that these Cheltenham workers have had to face.

Given the reluctance of most local "leadership" to go beyond mere vocal support, it will be up to the rank and file to pass resolutions supporting the strike in an active way, to teach Cheltenham Township -- the home of the rich and the powerful -- that when it is messing with organized workers, it will come up against real power -- the power of the working class!

## STRIKING WORKERS FIGHT RACIST UNION BUSTING ATTACK



## STOP THE RIPOFF! cont.

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*SOLIDARITY OR COLLABORATION? Originally intended to be a symbol of solidarity, this sculpture of clasped hands has become the symbol of the ACWA's collaboration with the clothing companies.*

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increase and for full insurance benefits, successfully thwarting the attempt of the ACWA bureaucracy to split employed and unemployed and young from old.

Finally, the Committee relied on mass action by the workers, rather than seeking to play one wing of the bureaucracy off against the other or simply appeal to the courts or the government to bail out the workers.

These features of the struggle show that the rank and file movement has learned important lessons and is taking steps to define through its actual struggle a new class struggle brand of unionism in opposition to the sorry practices of the ACWA hierarchy.

The major weakness of the anti-wage cut struggle was the failure to link the issue to the larger question of the economic crisis. The depleted state of the insurance fund is a direct consequence of high unemployment in the industry which in turn is only a reflection of the deepening crisis of the whole capitalist economy in the US.

The clothing wage cut is not an isolated occurrence but one of many similar attempts of the bosses to gouge the workers and make them pay for the crisis (the REA workers, for example, were wildcatting over a similar cut during

the clothing struggle). The problem of unemployment and along with it the assault on wages and working conditions can't be solved in the clothing industry alone.

It's going to take national action around a program that makes the bosses pay, to use the ACWA workers slogan, not only in clothing but throughout the whole country. Part of the problem with the ACWA bureaucracy is that it collaborates not only with the clothing manufacturers but with the whole monopoly-capitalist class at the worker's expense.

The Finley-Sheinkman leadership for the most part subscribe to the approach of Meany and the AFL-CIO -- Support the Democratic Party and get a few crumbs in return while the monopolies walk off with the rest of the loaf. The Rank and File movement, if it is to succeed in addressing the problems of working people, is going to have to take up the struggle on the political front.

It's going to have to expose the limitations of the ACWA's program for dealing with the economic crisis and hit at the bureaucracy's inaction. It's going to have to mobilize workers independently of the union leadership to take action for jobs. And it's going to have to link up with other forces who are moving into struggle against the economic crisis.



# Philadelphia COALITION of LABOR UNION WOMEN

## ALIVE but not WELL

### Rank & Filer Exposes Union Bureaucrats' Destructive Role

Over a year ago, a conference called in Chicago marked the founding of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (See article on CLUW in Issue 1 of *The ORGANIZER*). It was formed with the purpose of uniting working women into a viable organization to deal with their common problems on the job, in their unions, and in the political arena.

CLUW's ability to succeed in building this kind of organization has been seriously hampered by the attempts of women with a bureaucratic perspective to crush CLUW and CLUW programs. These are women who have no real substantial disagreements with the policies of the bureaucratic clique who run the AFL-CIO and the major industrial unions.

A struggle has ensued between the rank and file forces within CLUW and these misleaders, whose final outcome has yet to be seen.

The following article is an interview with an active rank and file member of CLUW on the present state of the struggle within CLUW in Philadelphia and what directions it is likely to take in the future.

**QUESTION:** How did the struggle between the forces of the rank and file perspective and that of the bureaucratic perspective begin within CLUW?

**ANSWER:** Up till the June meeting at the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers' Union Hall where Farmworkers Support work was set up, Philadelphia CLUW was still moving towards a strong action focus. We were looking for activities that would really speak to our needs as working women. This attitude showed in how we worked and planned for the May meeting -- our first mass meeting after the founding conference. Four committees worked for a month gathering material and working collectively on speeches; we put together a big visual display; leafletted at plant gates and office buildings; worked out a basis for our structure -- We really learned a lot and involved a lot of people!

Most of the women at that time were still really interested in helping organize the unorganized, giving concrete support to some of the various drives going on in the area, and inviting women from these drives to our meetings. There were tentative plans for a CLUW picnic and films throughout the summer to draw new members and give women's families a chance to see what CLUW was all about.

At the June meeting there were a lot of new people -- unfortunately most of them weren't interested in doing anything during the summer -- this sort of took the wind out of our plans. These women were largely from the PFT leadership, and they were fairly strong about how you couldn't expect any results during the summer. Other members felt that we'd get some stuff done -- nothing overwhelming, maybe. But we all had to work except for a week or two and our problems on the job still continued, so why shouldn't CLUW?

**QUESTION:** What happened after the June meeting?

**ANSWER:** That was only the beginning of CLUW breaking down in Philadelphia. Their plan wasn't just a summer vacation; they planned to crush CLUW as an active organization altogether. Since June not one film or other educational program has been held at a membership meeting, leaflets haven't been distributed to announce meetings, usually just a card goes out to our mailing list. Needless to say, anyone who's not on the list -- that is, most of the working women in the city -- have no idea that CLUW exists and has meetings.

**QUESTION:** What happened at the membership meetings if there were no educational programs or other activities planned?

**ANSWER:** The meetings themselves took a real turn for the worse. Philadelphia CLUW needed a structure, a charter (formal recognition by National CLUW), and an elected steering committee to help direct the organization.

The beginnings of a structure that ensured rank and file participation had been worked out already but we never seemed to get back to it. The PFT leadership began stacking meetings and squashing any attempts to do anything concrete.

When an anti-inflation rally was called in the city, we gave formal verbal support, and some rank and filers leafletted at shop gates and attended the rally under the CLUW banner. When the situation in Boston developed, CLUW did nothing either to educate around it or build for the march.

Our meetings began to be run by the strictest parliamentary procedure -- no attempt was made to educate the membership on the use of the Rules. We were laughed at for our ignorance and always out of order!

**QUESTION:** How did the rank and file respond to all these events?

**ANSWER:** It was about this time that some rank and file lost interest in CLUW. After all, it didn't do anything! They couldn't even speak at meetings, etc. Many of us weren't willing just to give up. We knew CLUW was too important -- or could be anyway -- to lose.

We started meeting separately before membership meetings to learn the parliamentary rules and to decide together what needed to be done.

We drafted a structure which insured maximum participation of the membership through monthly

meetings, active committees to do work around strike support, child care drives, the layoffs, discrimination, pensions, health and safety, etc. We called for special meetings to deal with the concerns of unorganized women and the added discrimination faced by national minority women.

We made elections annual and gave every union two representatives. We called for a newsletter to keep the membership informed and to aid in recruiting new members. We called for an education committee that would help new members learn about model contracts and their rights as women and as workers on the job. Basically, we tried to build a structure for action -- not for a paper organization!

**QUESTION:** Did this proposal meet with any amount of success?

**ANSWER:** No. We were defeated in this attempt and elections were held in February without an adopted structure. In other words, we were forced to vote for representatives and officers before we discussed and agreed upon their duties. When the rank and file opposed this, we were shouted down and called divisive!

The PFT led faction mobilized its forces for the election meeting. They obviously had contacted union leadership throughout the city and told them to get people out. There were dozens of women attending a CLUW event for the first time. Not only did these women -- with no real knowledge of the issues and the struggle that had been going down -- vote. But many of them ran and won election as officers! The final insult was the case of one woman who had opposed CLUW in her own union who ran and won. The bureaucratic group simply packed the meeting and ramrodded through their slate.

Now we have elected officers, and they have recently drafted a structure that calls for four meetings a year. Agendas are set by the Executive Board (officers) and there are no provisions for new business from the floor. Any suggested agenda items must be sent to the Executive Board three weeks in advance, in order for them to be raised to the membership. The agenda is not approved or disapproved at the beginning of the meeting.

The Executive Board has the right to "Executive Sessions" which are not open to the membership. Committee meetings are also only four times a year, and notice doesn't have to be sent out to the members. The Executive Board has a two-year term of office. Committee chairpersons are appointed, not elected, and are not even required to be members of the committee!

The Coordinating Committee, made up of representatives of the unions, has no power in the organization, and every union is not even allowed representation.

Needless to say, we now have a paper organization! Amendments to the constitution require two-thirds membership vote, but in order to even be raised at a meeting they need approval as an agenda item by the Executive Board.

**QUESTION:** Given all this, what is the perspective of the rank and file for building CLUW into the kind of organization we need in the future?

**ANSWER:** It's hard to say exactly where the rank and file members of CLUW will go from here. The one thing that we're definitely going to do is formally appeal the undemocratic elections and structure that are now in effect on the national level.

In a long range way, we're facing a situation that is much more similar to our own unions than it was earlier. To make CLUW the kind of organization we want it to be, we're just going to have to start building from the bottom up again. We have learned a lot from what's happened already and have a solid group of rank and filers that will have to work hard to bring more women into CLUW and finally turn it back around again.

Meanwhile, there's a national Coordinating Committee meeting at the end of May and hopefully we'll get a better sense of the situation nationally and come away from that with some broader strategy for the future of CLUW.

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## CLUW Rank & File in Action



## Top CLUW Leaderships' Inaction



...chatting with George Meany



# 60,000 MARCH IN D.C.

In a display of militancy and strength over 60,000 workers came to Washington, Saturday, April 26th to protest unemployment and demand "Jobs Now," in the largest demonstration for jobs held since the massive rallies and marches of the 1930's.

The April 26th Rally was organized by the Industrial Union Department (IUD) of the AFL-CIO. Rank and file pressure for mass action was largely responsible for forcing union leaders to push for the Washington protest. However, only a few of the union bureaucracies made more than a token effort to mobilize their 6 million members.

And it is little wonder that these labor "leaders" were reluctant to tap the power of growing rank and file discontent. They have consistently made the running of "their" unions a private affair. They have sold out both the economic and political interests of the workers they have sworn to represent.

## STADIUM RALLY NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT

The leadership of the IUD believed that a contained rally inside RFK Stadium would eliminate the possibility of any disruption or independent demonstration of militancy by the rank and file.

Hoping to confine April 26th to a "pep rally" for the labor bureaucrats and the Democratic Party, the leadership of the IUD was to be sorely disappointed.

As Walter Burke of the United Steelworkers Union was reading a prepared speech for I.W. Abel who was unable to attend the rally, two workers ran onto the field holding signs for more jobs. They were cheered by onlookers. Security guards were booed as they roughly escorted first a man, then a woman off the field.

As Hubert Humphrey, next on the schedule of speakers began his speech, more and more people streamed onto the field, eventually surrounding the front of the speakers platform. Humphrey's attempt to calm the people on the field was a total failure. After trying to pick up and lead their chant of "We Want Jobs," he was reduced to saying to the angry and frustrated crowd of workers, "God Bless You!"



Local 906 in N.J. said he was on the field with a group of 40 or so other Local members because, "We are tired of the promises and speeches of politicians and union leaders."

Two young, Black hospital workers from New York said they were "fed up with speeches." "What we need is to have our voices heard."

A laid-off worker from New Jersey captured much of the spirit of the protesters when he said, "How are we gonna let them know just how bad things are by sittin' back and just listenin' to a lot of garbage."

Many workers, after venting their pent-up frustration and anger at the speakers' podium then left the field. But as some left, others arrived. The leadership of the rally was either unable or unwilling to continue over the presence of the hundreds of angry protesters on the field. The microphone was turned off and the labor bureaucrats and politicians filed off the platform. April 26th ended in disorganized confusion. The participants slowly left the stadium for their buses, trains and cars.

The reaction to the rally and its chaotic ending was mixed. Many felt that the hard times workers face was the major reason why people went onto the field. Others were disappointed that the speeches could not be continued. Most labor officials, predictably, blamed "the radicals" for disrupting "their" rally.



The composition of this demonstration against the official leadership of the rally was extremely mixed. Left political groups and rank and file caucuses made up about a third of the participants. The other two thirds were employed and unemployed workers from a variety of unions -- it was ridiculous to make the charge that this spontaneous demonstration of almost 2,000 workers was an organized radical plot or "Watergate Trick" to disrupt the rally.

In fact, a lack of leadership from the Left and from rank and file trade unionists in opposition to the collaboration of the IUD bureaucracy, was a great shortcoming of April 26th.

Workers interviewed by the ORGANIZER best summed up the reasons for the spontaneous outburst. A middle-aged autoworker from May -- July, 1975, page 10

## LESSONS OF APRIL 26TH

The April 26th rally in Washington clearly demonstrated the inability of the labor bureaucracy to direct and organize a truly representative protest of rank and file workers. Political action for jobs for so many union leaders has been confined to "lobbying" in the halls of Congress and State legislatures.

Times demand the mobilization of their membership, but the union bureaucrats fear this, for the rank and file, once set in motion is likely to begin by shouting down and removing those very same bureaucrats and their Democratic Party "friends."

The April 26th action, as timid a conception as it was, was still too strong a medicine for the likes of George Meany and the right wing

of the AFL-CIO brass. Now Meany will be telling the IUD sponsors "I told you so",

Undoubtedly the militancy of the rank and file and the visible strength of the left wing, will give the IUD leaders pause before they call another action. But it's doubtful that the rank and file will give these leaders any excuse of inaction.

## TASK FOR THE LEFT

For the left wing of the workers movement, the class struggle oriented rank and file forces including the new Communist organizations, the April 26th demonstration was an indication of the growth of influence and strength.

Class struggle slogans (for a shorter work week with no loss in pay, an end to racism, militarism, and aid to reactionary puppet regimes abroad, for union democracy) were in evidence throughout the stadium and contrasted sharply with the timid half measures and vague slogans put forward by the rallies sponsors.

Yet the rally remained too fragmented and politically immature to mount an effective challenge to the Labor bureaucracy. The collapse of the rally before the militancy of the ranks created a vacuum that the organized left forces were unable to fill. Out of the chaos on the field, no clear credible voice emerged that was able to rally the rank and file forces and stamp a real political direction on the spontaneous demonstration.

The task for Communists and class struggle forces in the workers movement is to fill the vacuum in the coming period and wrest away leadership of the struggle for jobs from the discredited labor bureaucracy. This will require unity of action around a clear set of demands to end the crisis capable of winning the support of broad masses of working people (for the PWOC's program see p. 6).

We must step up our work in the unions, among the unorganized, and among the unemployed to bring masses of workers into the struggle for these demands. And we must break down the fragmentation of the movement by building strong local, regional, and national coalitions capable of building mass mobilizations around the question of jobs.



## Abel Warns Congress of New Militancy

I.W. Abel (President of the United Steel Workers) undoubtedly ruffled himself by the anger of rank and file workers at the April 26 IUD jobs demonstration, got a quick warning off to Congress:

In his letter Abel wrote:

"You read also that we could not complete the program we had arranged for the rally. We could not finish our prepared agenda because a number of rally participants in their anger and frustration gave noisy vent to their bitterness and hopelessness.

"Ninety-nine percent or more of the vast audience was made up of decent hardworking Americans coming from virtually all the basic industries in the country. They were completely representative in every respect of the nation's workforce.

"We read into the events of the rally on Saturday a warning to all of us, in and out of government -- a warning that unemployed and underemployed workers will not quietly or supinely accept high unemployment as a way of life. We must not expect that workers will act as passively as they did in the Great Depression. Times have changed, the world has changed. Our rally made that point crystal clear."



# LABOR ROUND-UP

## 2,000 HOSPITAL WORKERS GET SICK

On June 12 in the middle of negotiations for a new contract, 2,000 workers from eight area hospitals all called in sick. The workers are sick all right -- sick of low wages and poor working conditions. The sick-out was effective and in all eight hospitals the bosses had to take over the work normally performed by orderlies, housekeepers, dietary workers, nurses aides, ward clerks and transportation workers.

At St. Lukes for example, management reported that 90 to 95% of hospital personnel was out. Henry Nicholas, president of 1199C Hospital and Health Workers Union, said the sick-out was not authorized by the union and that he had no advanced knowledge of the action. The Union is seeking a thirty dollar a week wage hike as well as improved fringe benefits.

## POSTAL WORKERS PICKET AS DEADLINE APPROACHES

On May 19th area postal workers put up picket lines at the 30th St and 8th and Market post offices. The picket lines were in conjunction with contract negotiations now going on in Washington. The agreement which expires in July covers 700,000 postal workers

The pickets called attention to the major issues in the negotiations -- mechanization, speed-up, harassment at the bulk mail centers, holiday work requirements and full-fledged regular status for some 50,000 workers with "flexible hours" as well as wage and health insurance demands.

## TEAMSTERS SAY: "SCHMIDT'S DIDN'T TAKE IT EASY ON US."

Schmidt's may be the "Easy Beer" but it's no easy boss. On June 2nd, twenty rank and file teamsters of Local 830 which hauls beer for the local brewery, picketed the Girard Ave. plant to protest the loss of their jobs. The company announced that all 62 drivers for the Brewery were being let go and the trucking will now be handled by a private contract.

The drivers, many with more than 20 years service, were protesting not only the loss of their jobs but the failure of the company to fork over severance and vacation pay owed the workers.

## AT WESTINGHOUSE AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

That was the old slogan of the revolutionary Industrial Workers of the World, an organization to which the workers at the Lester Westinghouse plant once belonged.

While the old IWW may be long gone its spirit lives on among the members of United Electrical Workers Local 107.

On May 29 the company suspended one worker for clocking in five or six minutes late. All 4,100 members of the Westinghouse local walked out and shut the big turbine plant down for three days, the length of the worker's suspension. While Local 107 could not legally sanction the strike, it made no effort to get the workers back on the job.

Nicholas Onfaro, President of the Local, defended the action saying that the suspended worker was a victim of harassment by the company. He said the dispute is related to worker dissatisfaction with a new company disciplinary code which arbitrarily punishes workers.

"A guy who's late to work because he stopped to have a beer is disciplined the same way as a man who had a legitimate reason," Onfaro complained.

# Is the Sun Setting on U.S. Empire?

continued from page 2

Japan, a major imperialist power in its own right, recognizes the decline of US power in Asia and seeks to exploit it for its own ends. It is no longer willing to be a subordinate junior partner with the US. Postwar cooperation between US and Japanese imperialism is now increasingly going to take the form of rivalry.

On the Indian sub-continent, US influence has declined drastically. India has moved closer to the USSR and away from the US. Pakistan, US imperialism's only ally, is much weakened by the loss of Bangladesh and the defeat in the war with India.

## THE MIDDLE EAST

Here too imperialism has received some of its sharpest defeats. Israel, long the most dependable prop of US interests in the region, has emerged from the most recent war seriously weakened. The growing strength of the Liberation movement and the insistence of the Arab nations on the recognition of the PLO and Palestine's national interests is one factor here. The other is the success of the oil weapon as a lever against US and Zionist domination of the Middle East. Here as in Asia, even reactionary governments like Saudi Arabia have made clear that they are no longer willing to act as mere instruments of US policy.

Imperialism is far from dead however in the Middle East. In Iran, the US has a powerful ally on the Persian gulf that can be expected to oppose anti-imperialist forces in that region. Egypt has moved to the right and is more amenable to US influence. But the dominant fact in the Middle East remains the emergence of the Arab nations as an increasingly independent force with the consequence of the waning of US ability to control events there.

## EUROPE

Europe is ultimately the most decisive arena in the world for US imperialism. The majority of US foreign investment is in this enormously wealthy region. It is the junior imperialist powers in Europe, most centrally Great Britain, France, and West Germany, that are the key to the whole anti-Soviet design of US foreign policy. Today, the most important development in Europe is the coming apart of NATO at the seams.

Turkey, angered over US actions during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and influenced by the general decline of US power in the Mediterranean is reconsidering NATO membership. Greece, embittered by US support for the now overthrown junta is also pulling back. France has pursued an independent policy since the DeGaul years when NATO forces were thrown out. But most serious is Portugal, long a key member of NATO because of its Azores bases, staunch anti-communist policy and its role as colonial policeman in Africa. The revolutionary government now in Lisbon is hostile to the whole political design of NATO as an anti-communist alliance.



*Portuguese Celebrate overthrow of their fascist government*

The unravelling of NATO is occurring at a time when the class struggle in Europe is intensifying. The question is much more serious than a temporary rearrangement of the alliance. The spectre of socialist revolution in Europe means the danger of the collapse of capitalism itself and the complete liquidation of US influence and interests. Portugal is on the way to being the first socialist state in Western Europe. In both France and Italy the situation is volatile and the strength of the left is growing although genuinely revolutionary leadership is lacking.

In the British Isles the Irish Liberation Struggle has intensified while militant action by the British workers haunts the bosses at home. While the political collapse of European capitalism is unlikely in the immediate future, the economic crisis and the upsurge in the class struggle mean that the European imperialists are increasingly impotent as an instrument of US world policy.

As this brief survey indicates, the US position in every region of the globe has sharply deteriorated. On top of this the monopolists face increased popular opposition at home which has restricted their options abroad. As a result of strong anti-war sentiment Congress was forced to pass a bill against US troops being re-introduced into Southeast Asia.

But far more important than any legislative hobbles on the ruling class is the strength of opposition to the continued role of the US abroad. While the masses of the US people do not have an explicitly anti-imperialist understanding, they nevertheless through their opposition to further adventures abroad objectively act to restrict the imperialists' room to maneuver.

The factor of domestic opposition to imperialist foreign policy takes on added significance in this period of growing economic crisis and intensifying class struggle. With ten million workers out of work and real wages falling, the monopolists will have an increasingly difficult time rallying the US people for "sacrifices" to save one or another corrupt regime abroad.

## OPPOSE IMPERIALISM WITH INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Naturally, the imperialists, who are obviously aware of their own world-wide position, seek to convince the US people that its reserves abroad are reserves for all of us. They raise the spectre of advancing communism gobbling up the world through aggression and eventually "conquering" the US itself. Any examination of the actual historical record shows this world view to be absolutely false. Communism develops through socialist revolution not through military conquest. The Vietnamese Liberation forces were never guilty of aggression. They fought to liberate their own nation and have no interest in conquering other peoples. Revolution will come to the nations of the world because its people demand a better life and socialism is the only road forward to get it.

If socialism comes to the US it will not arrive on Soviet or Chinese bayonets. It will occur because the people of the US, like peoples elsewhere will take up the cause of socialist revolution.

The defeats suffered by US imperialism throughout the world are victories for the world's people including the people of the US. We have no stake in aiding the imperialists exploit the peoples of the world. We have every interest in opposing imperialist oppression abroad and uniting with the world's people to defeat it. The exploitation of the oppressed nations by the monopolists, while it brings some benefits to the most privileged strata of the working masses, leads to the intensification of the oppression of the US masses as a whole.

It is we who bear the costs of empire and it is our exploiters who reap its fruits. Finally, because the rule of US monopoly capitalist class is the source of our own oppression, the world's peoples who are fighting it are our allies. Proletarian internationalism, solidarity with workers and oppressed peoples throughout the world, must be the watchword of the revolutionary workers' movement in the US.

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# U.S. IMPERIALISM LOSES

**MYTH:** Millions of refugees fled the communist advance to escape the long-feared "bloodbath" the US has always predicted would happen if the Saigon government fell.

**FACT:** The retreating ARVN (Thieu's army) soldiers created chaos and panic throughout Vietnam. In the Highlands Thieu ordered the army and the civilian population to evacuate the area. As they fled, the ARVN looted and burned the cities behind them, leaving people homeless and terrified. These civilians served as a human shield for the retreating forces. Many refugees were killed during the retreat as ARVN bulldozers prodded them along.

Of course, the soldiers and their families account for many of the refugees, as do the wealthy and the collaborators (Ford calls them "our friends") who fled for political reasons. Also, many people remember what happened last time the cities were liberated -- the US-Saigon forces tried to bomb the life out of them. In a NY Times account, one woman refugee said, "Many people stayed back at Quang Tri last time. There was bombing and shelling all the time, many killed. It's better to go to the Saigon side because the communists have no airplanes."

Another refugee said, "To tell the truth, if I thought the VC would take over in a clean sweep I would have stayed. What concerns me . . . is the period of disorder when there is no government." And no wonder. The Times also reports that throughout the streets of Da Nang and Na Trang ARVN deserters stalk the streets raping, looting and killing.

The war in Vietnam has created millions of refugees in the past years. It was US military policy to drive the peasants from their homelands by defoliating and napalming their crops and burning down their villages. This was done in an attempt to defeat the NLF by abolishing its base of support, the peasants, of the countryside.

These refugees have been starving in over-crowded disease-ridden camps for years. In fact, it was never the communists, but the Saigon and US armies who created the "refugee problem" long ago, and now that the NLF is in a position to restore peace to Vietnam, perhaps these people can return and rebuild their homes at last.

**MYTH:** The poor orphans of Vietnam are lucky that the US is kind enough to bring them here rather than leave them to the mercy of the communists where they would have no hope for the future.

**FACT:** US Ambassador Graham Martin has stated that "Operation Babylift" might well turn US public opinion in favor of the Saigon Regime. While most of the adopting parents are well-meaning people, this publicity stunt is in reality the kidnapping of children and removing them from their homeland in violation of international law.

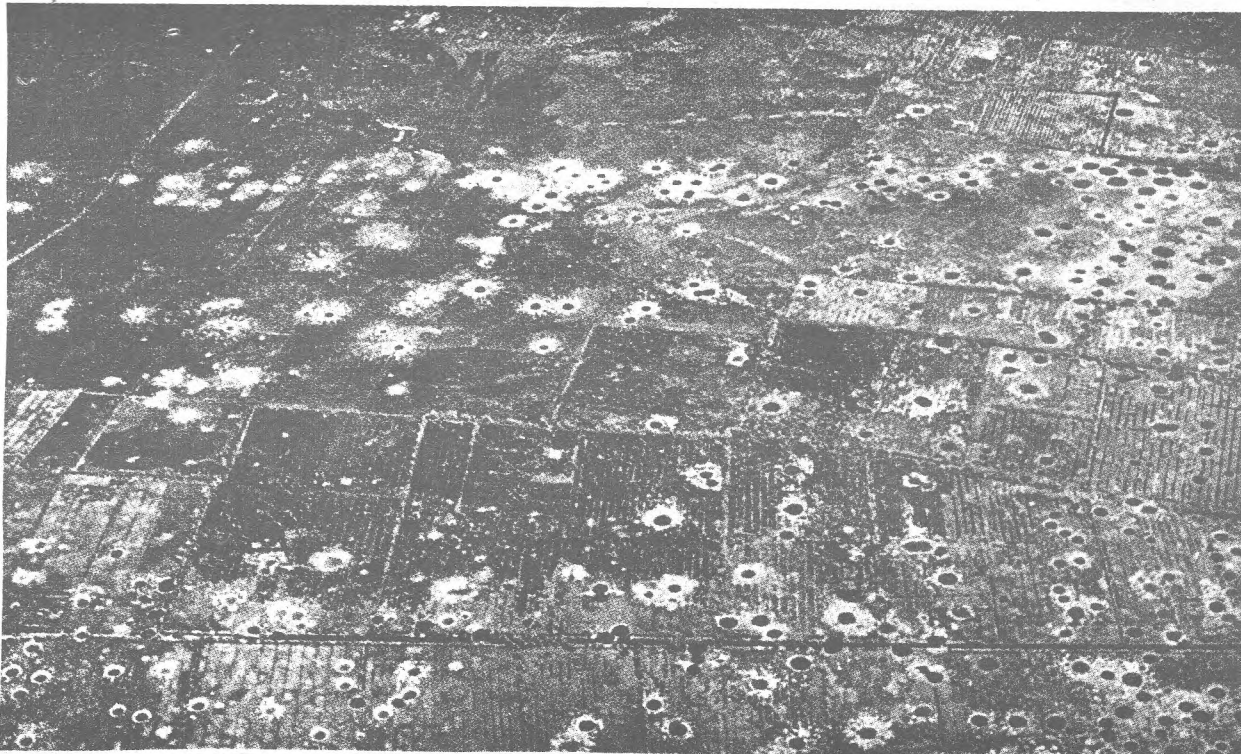
The hypocrisy of the US government is enough to make you cry. Orphans of the war, Saigon children fathered by US servicemen, children separated from their families in the chaos created by the retreating armies, children placed in orphanages temporarily by mothers who could no longer feed them (the price of rice has gone up 20% in recent weeks), children of the hundreds of thousands of prisoners who opposed the Thieu Regime: all these children are victims of the US sponsored war, and now the government is trying to pretend they want only the best for them -- hot dogs and apple pie and stars and stripes forever.

We must note too the hypocrisy of racism which says that children of Black servicemen have "no chance" in Vietnam. In fact, racism is illegal in socialist countries. And most of the Black-Vietnamese children brought over here have been placed with white middle-class families. Since when did racism disappear from our white suburbs? And since when did race discrimination against Asian-Americans disappear from this country?

As Don Luce of the Concerned Clergy and Laymen, who spent 14 years in Vietnam, said in a recent NBC interview, there are no orphanages in North Vietnam or in the Liberated Zones of the South. There, homeless children -- and there are many as a result of the war -- are placed with relatives or in foster homes.

Education is a priority, as is health care, in these areas. Already in the liberated zone of Quang Tri Province a clinic system has been built in each village, along with 6 70-bed regional hospitals and a 150-bed provincial hospital. While under Saigon rule, health care for the children here consisted of a 150-bed hospital, 100 of whose beds were reserved for soldiers.

In reality, the children of Vietnam have a glorious future to look forward to in working to build socialism out of the ashes.



Scientific American Photo

## YEARS OF RECONSTRUCTION LIE AHEAD FOR VIETNAM:

### Cities & Farmlands Destroyed by Endless US Bombing Raids

#### *A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF VIETNAM'S FARMLAND.*

*Pockmarked by bomb craters from B-52 raids, averaging 20 feet across and 15 feet deep. Peasants are killed daily trying to clear the land of unexploded mines. Although it will take years and years of socialist construction to rebuild this ravaged economy, the humanitarian US government has vowed that not one penny of "humanitarian aid" will go to the new Vietnamese government.*

*The cruelest myth of all is still being spread by the US media: in an interview on NBC the day of the cease-fire, Sgt. Lewis Larry who served four tours of duty in Vietnam stated that it was "our high moral standards" which kept Americans from harming the civilian population, and if we had been as "immoral as the communists" we could have won. The US exploded 13 million tons of munitions in Vietnam, the equivalent of 450 Hiroshima atom bombs. People are still killed every day as they detonate unexploded anti-personnel bombs in the process of reconstructing their cities.*



DRV photo

*Finding bricks in the rubble in order to start again.*

**MYTH:** The "fall" of Vietnam to the communists has greatly endangered US National Security.

**FACT:** In fact, in many ways this is not a myth. A blow against imperialism anywhere in the world -- no matter how small -- is a threat to the US economic and political system. And while North Vietnamese soldiers will never land on the coast of California, the resounding victory of the Vietnamese people is a very real blow to the powers that be. But a defeat for the US ruling class is a victory for the US working class. The war has brought us nothing but the loss of our sons and brothers and the ruin of our economy. As

many US servicemen discovered in Vietnam, we have much in common with the workers and peasants of that country. And we have little in common with either the corrupt and repressive Saigon dictatorship or the US ruling class who used us as cannon fodder in their tragic misadventure.

The PRG has thanked the people of the US who helped put an end to the war. In our own struggles against the capitalist class, we must never forget our brothers and sisters fighting all over the world against the same enemy. And we must keep the pressure on the US government to see that "Vietnam" never happens again.



the story Woodcock doesn't tell

# Toledo, 1934: Autoworkers Battle National Guard for First Union Shop

To hear the bigwigs of the UAW talk today you would think that the union descended from the skies, a gift bestowed upon we chosen workers. You would think that the union is the property of Leonard Woodcock and friends, existing apart from the dues paying membership. "We gave you this and we gave you that and you ought to be grateful for it" -- this is the message we get from the international down to its local lieutenants.

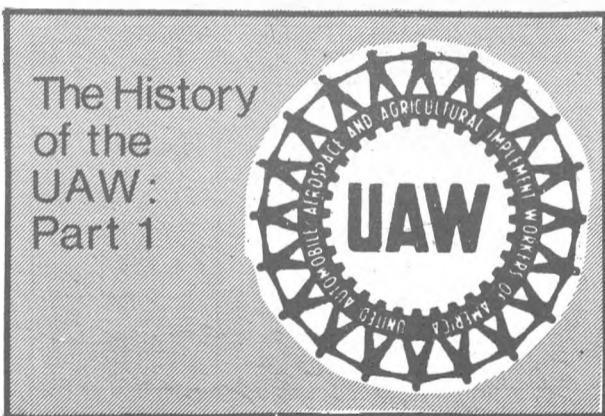
The real history of the UAW teaches us otherwise. The UAW was born out of the struggles of the auto workers themselves and the gains it has brought them have been paid in full with the sacrifices made by thousands of rank and file workers.

Beginning with this article, the ORGANIZER is going to retell that story. It is an important story not only to auto workers but to all workers. The history of the UAW has been the history of two different philosophies of unionism that have contended for control of our unions throughout the history of the labor movement.

One outlook, class struggle unionism, bases itself on the idea that "the working class and the owning class have nothing in common," that the workers can only gain at the expense of the employers and vice-versa.

The other school of thought, which is the dominant one today and in most periods in the past, contends that the workers and the bosses must cooperate to advance their "mutual interests."

The UAW, perhaps better than any other union, illustrates in its history what both these philosophies mean in practice. It is our hope that this look at the past will help the rank and file movement to understand where and how our unions have gone wrong and point towards what kind of measures are necessary to transform them into genuine fighting organizations for the whole working class.



The History  
of the  
UAW:  
Part 1

## UAW -- CHILD OF THE DEPRESSION

The UAW was born in the depression years as part of a larger movement in which millions of unskilled, industrial workers organized themselves into powerful unions, the broadest, most militant movement in the history of American labor. In many respects, it was the auto workers who stood at the head of this movement, spearheading the great strike struggles of the thirties and opening the way for the triumph of the CIO.

Going into the great depression, the mass of auto workers, like most other industrial workers, were unorganized. The big monopolies had shown they would go to any length to keep unions out of their plants. In the auto industry, the employers developed an elaborate system of company spies to ferret out any union sympathizers who were immediately fired and blacklisted. Whenever any union organization gained any footing it was ruthlessly suppressed.

In common with their fellow monopolists, the auto barons met any strike with a hired army of gun thugs and Pinkerton agents to smash picket lines. They rapidly replaced the strikers with scabs. They had the full support of the courts which issued injunctions against the strike and the police who joined in with company goon squads to beat up the strikers who resisted.

## AFL AND THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER

But the deepseated hostility of the monopolists was not the only reason for the lack of organization among US industrial workers. An even bigger reason was the abandonment of the semi-skilled and unskilled worker by the "official" labor movement, the AFL. The AFL membership was predominantly skilled workers organized into unions along craft lines.

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The narrow, craft-minded leadership of the AFL believed only skilled workers could be successfully organized and regarded the unskilled workers with a uniform contempt. Daniel Tobin, president of the Teamsters at the time, expressed the general attitude of the craft union leaders when he said in speaking of the unorganized: "We have an international union of 135,000 members and they are not the rubbish that have lately come into other organizations. . . we do not want to charter the riffraff or good for nothings . . . We do not want the men today if they are going on strike tomorrow."

Consistent with this attitude, the AFL for the most part ignored the unorganized. In the case of Black workers the AFL unions, with few exceptions, not only did not organize them, but excluded them from union membership.

When the workers themselves organized, the AFL sabotaged their efforts by insisting on their division among the various craft unions which had little interest in their welfare and consigned them to second class status within the international union. Efforts by unions outside the AFL, notably the revolutionary Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the Communist led Trade Union Unity League (TUUL), both of which believed in militant industrial unionism, won the enduring hostility of the AFL which scabbed on their strikes and collaborated with the employers to wreck organizing drives.

## ON THE JOB

Neglected by organized labor, the auto workers were exploited viciously by the auto monopolies. Wages were low and hours long. The most common grievance of the auto worker was the problem of speed-up. A Buick worker reported: "You have to run to the toilet and run back. If you had to take a crap . . . you had to run away and tie the line up and you got hell for it."

One workers' wife gave a picture of what speed-up was doing to her husband: "You should see him come home at night, him and the rest of the men in the buses. So tired like they was dead, and irritable. My John's not like that. He's a good kind man. But the children don't dare go near him, he's so nervous and his temper's bad. And then at night in bed he shakes, his whole body, he shakes." Another worker summed it up, "Where you used to be a man . . . now you are less than their cheapest tool."

There was no job security in the auto plants and workers could be fired at any time. The company controlled the whole life of the worker while he was in the plant. Because Henry Ford did not smoke, smoking was banned at all Ford facilities. Workers at the Ford plants were not allowed to speak during lunch and could be fired for doing so. This led the workers to talk out of the side of their mouths like convicts, a practice that was known as the "Ford Whisper."

The most humiliating example of the company's total control and their assault on the dignity of their workers was given by a retired Ford worker, "You know what they done at Ford's? And this is the goddamned truth. They had the servicemen follow you into the restrooms and you're sitting in there, and he made you get up and lift the toilet seat to see if you were doing something. And if you wasn't, you was fired."

## THE NRA AND LABOR ORGANIZATION

In June of 1933 the Roosevelt Administration had passed the National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA). The NRA was supposed to lead to recovery by restoring "industrial stability" through a complex system of codes governing wages, hours, working conditions and other facets of industrial life. Even an historian friendly to the New Deal admitted: "Perhaps the Blue Eagle (symbol of the NRA, known as the Blue Buzzard by many working people) was part fraud, and under its frowsy wings too many business chiselers raised wages 10 percent while marking up wholesale prices as much as 50 or 100 percent and scheming to curb production."



An Auto-Lite worker killed by the National Guard.

The auto code also included a "merit clause," which gave the company the right "to select, retain, or advance individual employees regardless of their membership or non-membership in any organization." This clause was included to protect the open shop in the auto industry.

The NRA also included in its famous section 7a the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. While the government, through its National Labor Board, was to interpret this clause in ways that favored business, it nevertheless did strengthen labor's legal hand.

The early depression years had seen a rapid decline and almost a complete collapse of the AFL trade unions. Thousands of union members were put out of work. Others left the unions in droves as the creaking, bureaucratic AFL proved unable to stem the tide of layoffs, wage cuts and speed up. But in 1933, a slight upturn in the economy saw fed-up and angry workers take the offensive in a series of strikes.

Workers began to flock into the old line AFL organizations. Under the pressure of events, the AFL agreed to charter federal locals for unorganized workers in basic industry. The federal local had a long history as a stepchild of the AFL. These locals were not affiliated to any international union. Moreover, they were temporary organizations. Federal local membership was supposed to be divided up among the various craft unions according to their jurisdiction.

Historically, the combination of second class status, isolation, and neglect by the craft chieftains had generally meant short life for most federal locals. While the craft unions wrangled about jurisdiction and who was to get the dues money, the membership melted away.

In 1933, it looked like history was going to repeat itself. The newly organized workers struck only to be defeated by the combination of AFL treachery, employer violence, and the pro-business rulings of the newly created NLB.

William Green head of the AFL, while consenting to the creation of federal locals, made it clear that the opposition to industrial unionism, long the bedrock of AFL policy, would continue and that the new members would be divided up among the craft unions. It looked like the new wave of worker militancy was going to spend itself without achieving its aims. But the auto workers were to score a breakthrough that would lead the whole movement forward.

## THE FIRST SHOTS OF UNIONISM IN AUTO

The auto workers at the beginning of the depression decade had been virtually without organization. The AFL had a handful of skilled trades members in the industry and the IWW and TUUL had pockets of strength here and there, but nowhere was a union recognized as bargaining agent. In 1933 numerous federal locals were organized as auto workers began flocking into the AFL.

The rank and file auto workers were not ready to passively watch their efforts at organization be scuttled by the craft leaders. They had an able group of leaders steeled in the unemployment struggles and the years of fighting to build a union in auto. Foremost among these rank and file leaders were the left wing, particularly members of the Communist Party.

In 1934 the TUUL, which the Communists had tried to build as an independent industrial union, dissolved its auto section and instructed all its members to join the AFL federal locals. It was these TUUL militants, along with other socialists and radicals, who were to lead the great upsurge in auto.

## TOLEDO AUTO LITE STRIKE -- THE TURNING POINT

The turning point came in Toledo, Ohio, an industrial city of nearly 300,000 people and a large auto parts center. In February 1934, Federal local 18384 struck the plant of the Toledo Auto Lite company, a parts manufacturer. The AFL leadership immediately ordered the workers back on



the job and sought settlement of the issue of union recognition through the regional labor board.

The labor board had a very bad track record in its first eight months of existence. In almost every case where union recognition had been an issue the labor board had called elections and awarded recognition according to a formula of proportional representation.

Under this system instead of the union that received a majority of votes representing the workers, all unions or organizations including company employee plans jointly represented the workers according to the percentage of the vote they received. This system made effective union representation and collective bargaining nearly impossible and greatly strengthened the company's hand.

Knowing this, the Auto lite workers were naturally suspicious. After a month of inaction on the part of the labor board, the workers went back out on strike on April 3rd, ignoring the counsels of their AFL "leaders."

#### ENTER: THE UNEMPLOYED

The company quickly obtained an injunction against mass picketing from a friendly judge. At this time in Toledo over 1 out of 3 workers were unemployed. The company rapidly hired 1800 scabs. The union obeyed the court injunction against picketing and the scabs marched into the auto-lite plant and took their jobs. The strike seemed lost.

The workers then went to the Lucas County Unemployment League for help. This group, which was led by the American Workers Party, a radical socialist organization, had been leading the struggle of unemployed workers for jobs and relief in the Toledo area.

Part of its program was the need for solidarity between the unemployed and the employed workers. The League responded rapidly to the call for their support. They replaced the Auto-lite workers on the picketlines at the gates of the factory. The company quickly obtained another injunction prohibiting them too from picketing. But this time the workers ignored the injunction. By May 23, there were over 10,000 workers on the picket line.

A newspaper man at the time reacted to this display of working class solidarity by writing: "It's nothing new to see organized unemployed appear in the streets, fight police, and raise hell in general. But usually they do this for their own ends, to protest against unemployment or relief conditions. At Toledo, they appeared on the picket lines to help striking employees win a strike, though you would expect their interest would lie the other way -- that is, in going down and getting the job the other men had laid down."

#### AUTO BOSSES PULL OUT THE STOPS

The company now responded with violence. County deputies shot tear gas from the plant roof. Police out front began roughing up pickets and then attempted to escort scabs through the line. The workers fought back. They stood their ground before the tear gas and then improvised slingshots from old rubber tubes to send bricks through the plant windows. In a short time, the workers had put out all the lights in the factory. The scabs cowered in the darkness and the workers maintained the picket line. Only 15 hours later when 900 national guardsmen

arrived were the scabs finally able to leave the plant.

What followed was a six day pitched battle with the national guard. The workers not only harrassed the guard from rooftops, behind billboards and in the city's alleys. They sought to educate them as well with organizers standing on soap boxes in front of the troops explaining to them why they should not act as strikebreakers. Some guardsmen upped and quit while many others came to voice sympathy with the strike.

There were casualties on both sides. On May 24 guardsmen fired point blank into the strikers ranks, killing two and wounding twenty-five. That evening the workers came out 6,000 strong and battled the guard with rocks and bricks, picking up the tear and vomit gas shells and hurling them back on the guard, many of whom had to be hospitalized.

#### LABOR SOLIDARITY WINS VICTORY

During this period, other unions rapidly rallied to the support of the strikers. In spite of the timidity and in some cases out right opposition of the AFL leadership, 98 out of 99 AFL locals passed resolutions calling for a general strike in support of the Auto-lite workers. 40,000 workers rallied at the Lucas County courthouse in a massive display of solidarity with the strike.

With the guard badly demoralized, the strike movement growing in numbers and militancy, the company had had enough. On May 31st the bosses agreed to keep the plant closed and the Guard was withdrawn. Four days later they signed a contract with Local 18384 recognizing the union as sole bargaining agent and granting a 5% wage increase. The Toledo Auto workers quickly followed up on this victory by organizing 19 more auto plants within the next year and leading the first successful strike against GM at the Cherry transmission plant.

#### TOLEDO OPENS THE ROAD FORWARD

The Toledo Auto Lite strike was important not only for the auto workers but for the whole movement for industrial unionism. The auto workers had thrown off the hobles imposed by the NRA and the conservative minded AFL hierarchy. They had become the first union to be recognized as the sole bargaining agent for the workers in opposition to the proportional representation formula of the labor board. This was to be an important precedent.

In the near future, the labor board was forced to abandon its proportional representation formula in favor of recognizing the organization that received a majority of the vote. The auto workers had shown that victory comes not from reliance on the so-called neutral government machinery, but from reliance on their own strength and militancy.

The Toledo strike had shown that the most powerful allies of the workers were not politicians and labor bigwigs but were other workers, both employed and unemployed. The strike had shown the solidarity of the capitalist class -- the bosses, their gun thugs, spies, cops and courts -- could be roundly trounced by the solidarity of the working class.

The strike had shown the way not only for the rest of the auto workers but for workers in other industries. Before the year was out, the longshoremen and sailors of San Francisco and the teamsters of Minneapolis were to apply these lessons in militant and successful mass strikes.

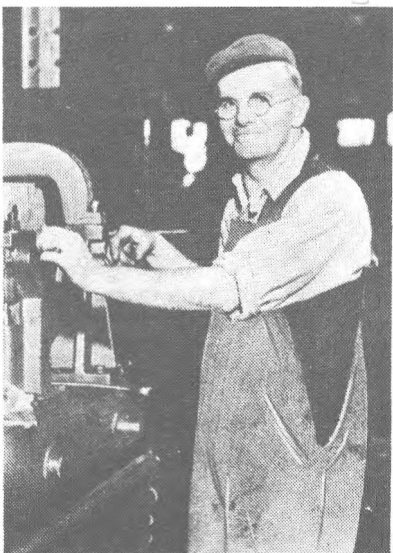
For the auto workers the strike was an enormous step forward. It strengthened the hand of the left wing rank and file forces at the expense of the bureaucratic fossils in the AFL and spurred organizing throughout the industry. The militant class struggle spirit of the Toledo workers was to be felt in the first auto workers convention which met the following year. (To be continued.)

FEBRUARY 1957



William Sandeman

## WORKERS' VOICES



Wyndham Mortimer at work at the White Motor Co. 1923.

Wyndham Mortimer was a left wing leader of the auto workers and a pioneer in bringing unionism to the auto industry. He was one of the organizers of the Flint sit-down strike that cracked the open shop in Auto and later became a vice-president of the UAW. In the 1940's Mortimer was driven out of the union as part of the right wing anti-red drive.

In the early 1930's Mortimer worked at the White Motors plant in Cleveland. As in Toledo and other auto centers the early forms of union activity centered around building federal locals affiliated with the AFL. The following account, from Mortimer's autobiography, ORGANIZE, tells of the difficulties in working within the AFL metal trades department:

There was now the beginning of real unity in the plant. A deep and healthy distrust of the AFL existed among the workers, but they were convinced of the correctness of our course. I knew the time would soon come when the craft-minded Central Labor Council and the Metal Trades Council would attempt to raid the federal union, so the minds of the workers were prepared.

They were instructed on a course of action. They were told, and it was strongly stressed, that should they receive a letter of any kind from the Central Trades or the Metal Trades, they must bring the letter either to me or to Bill Dieter or Dick Reisinger.

The signing of federal union applications was resumed. Organizational meetings were held in the Metal Trades Hall on Walnut Avenue. Application for a federal charter was sent to the Executive Council of the AFL. The charter was granted, and federal union 18463 came into existence.

As I had predicted, a number of workers, especially those in the more skilled categories, began to receive letters from the various craft unions claiming jurisdiction in the industry. Among them were Blacksmiths, Plumbers and Pipefitters, Carpenters, and others. The workers brought the letters to us and we paid a visit to the Metal Trades Council.

We left no doubt in their minds that this maneuver on the part of the craft unions would not succeed. We had no intention whatever of permitting our federal union to be weakened or broken up.

I pointed out to Bill McWheeny, another AFL leader, that the craft unions now claiming jurisdiction had made no moves to exercise their so-called rights since the auto industry was born. But now they put forward a phony claim to the right to collect dues from the workers they had neglected and shunned for the past thirty years. We were not bothered again and we continued to build the federal union.

The Metal Trades Council of the AFL was under the national leadership of John P. Frey, a typical bureaucrat who had learned nothing and forgotten nothing in the past fifty years of his life. To hide his all-too-apparent ignorance he would quote Shakespeare.

He boasted of his close relationship with J. Edgar Hoover, and never failed to remind us that the real enemy of the laboring man was Communism. He represented monopoly capitalism inside the labor movement. He repeatedly told us that labor and capital were "partners" and that the interests of labor and capital were identical.

The two local representatives of the Metal Trades Council were James McWheeny and George McKinnon. Neither of them had the slightest knowledge or understanding of how mass production operated, nor could they be made to understand the futility of talking craft unionism to us.

They were accustomed to presiding at meetings where not more than a dozen men were in attendance. The great gatherings of mass production workers (many of them boisterous and highly vocal) which they were soon to experience actually horrified them.

It quickly became clear to me that these were not the men who could be trusted to build an industrial union in the auto industry. Their background, traditions, and sympathies were craft-oriented, and they believed that the idea of building a mass movement of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers was "Communist." Their sole weapon in fighting such a union was Red-baiting.



# U.S. GOVERNMENT UPTIGHT AS SUPPORT GROWS FOR IRISH FREEDOM STRUGGLE

## Irish National Caucus Formed

For over 150 years, the Irish in the United States have raised money for and supported the independence struggles in Ireland. The IRA -- Irish Republican Army -- founded in 1916, has always relied heavily on military and financial support from Irish-American organizations.

In the past, the US Government rarely interfered with the fund-raising and would often shut their eyes to the gun-running. But times have changed. In 1920, most Irish-Republicans were fighting for the same kind of independence fought for by the 13 American colonies in 1776. Today, Irish Republicans are fighting for much more.

Both the Official and Provisional IRA say their goal is a united, independent, Socialist Ireland (Although the Provisionals are using the word "socialist" less and less and their actions are not always in keeping with socialist politics.)

Both IRA's want an end to foreign domination of their country by all the multi-national corporations that come to Ireland in search of cheap labor and huge profits. Many of these corporations are North American --ITT, American Tobacco, DuPont, GoodYear, Standard Press Steel. Obviously, the US Government cannot support this struggle because a victory would rob US capitalists of their investors' paradise.

### SUPPORT GROUPS IN US

As the struggle in Ireland has changed so have the support groups in the United States.

Irish Northern Aid, a support group for the Provisionals, is the largest, best organized, and biggest money raiser. Up until recently, the Provisionals were waging a military and bombing campaign to push the British out of northern Ireland.

The other main support group in the US are the Irish Republican Clubs who back the Official Republican Movement. The Officials are presently waging a social, political, and economic struggle against British domination of their country.

Neither of these groups -- Northern Aid or the Republican Clubs -- make the US Government very happy -- but for very different reasons. The Republican Clubs raise money for Ireland, agitate for socialism in the US as well as Ireland, and loudly attack the role of US imperialism in Ireland.

Irish Northern Aid is a thorn in the government's side not because they speak out for socialism (once in awhile for Ireland but never for the US) but because they raise hundreds of thousands of dollars which fueled the Provisional IRA's military campaign.

### IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM, JOIN 'EM

Not being able to beat these obstinate Irish, the government seems to have decided to "join" them -- on their terms, of course. What would be a better solution than trying to squash Northern Aid and the Republican Clubs?

Set up another organization that is not a threat politically, and is "safe" -- meaning that the government controls it and any money that is raised. This new organization is called the Irish National Caucus. Its activities and some of its leading members are very suspicious.

The Caucus was formed in 1974 and is a coalition of over 30 Irish-American organizations, receives backing from the AFL-CIO executive council and local and national politicians. The Caucus says that it will "ignite our elected representatives to bring moral pressure upon Britain to withdraw from Ireland. . . . The whole thrust of their activities is to lobby, influence elections, and get support for Irish freedom from US politicians.

May -- July, 1975, page 16



DEMONSTRATION AT BOAC OFFICES IN NEW YORK BY IRISH AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS TO PROTEST THE MURDER OF 13 IN DERRY, NORTHERN IRELAND

### TIES WITH GOVERNMENT

The leaders of the Irish National Caucus are well aware of this -- some of them even work for the Government!

The Information Director of the Caucus is Fred Burns O'Brien, a "lawyer" for the US Bureau of Customs. It's not a coincidence that the Customs Bureau is responsible for enforcing the laws regulating the export of arms and ammunition from the US. Could you think of a better way for the Government to track down illegal weapons being sent to Ireland?

If the Caucus is successful in drawing a majority of Irish-Americans into this kind of activity, they will effectively destroy any real support the Irish Republican Movement receives from the United States. US politicians cannot truly support the Irish struggle because the US Government has a very big interest in keeping Ireland as it is -- a poor and divided country ripe for exploitation by US corporations.

Another shady character is Sean Walsh, the executive director of the Irish National Caucus. His not so honorable history includes being in the Special Forces (Green Berets), elite US army counter-insurgency unit.

He claims to have worked for a US Senator but was fired for his involvement in Irish activities. The Senator made a deal with him and kept the firing out of the papers. Not a bad cover story.

Walsh says he will prevent the Irish National Caucus from being infiltrated by Marxists and Communists. He should be well qualified in this area, given his experience as Project Director of the Subcommittee on Central Intelligence of the Armed Services Committee of the US Senate.

All of this makes it very clear that the Irish National Caucus is not the group to support if you are concerned about Irish freedom. A strong case can be made that it is an organization deliberately set up by the Government to weaken other Irish support groups, get people involved in harmless activity that won't be embarrassing to the Government or further the struggle in Ireland.

Irish freedom can only be achieved through socialism and this group is openly against socialism. Don't be fooled by fancy phrases and what looks like an organization with a lot of support. Just look at the people who support it. The Irish people are struggling for freedom and independence through socialism; we can't afford to let them down.

## EATON LAY-OFFS HIT 50%

The first five months of 1975 have been ones of definite hardship for workers at Eaton Corporation (Yale and Towne). About 50% of the workers have been laid off -- these layoffs have affected minority and young workers the hardest.

As one worker told the ORGANIZER, "before the layoffs there weren't many Black workers there, and most were on the night shift. Now there's just about no night shift, and as I look around, about 80% are gone."

The fact is that all over the country, including at Eaton, the minorities, youth and women are being forced to carry the heaviest burden of unemployment. Because of the crisis in overproduction -- which the workers had no hand in creating -- Eaton has cut back its production and begun to unload its inventories to cut costs and maintain its profits. But the first cutback is without fail the workers, the same workers who produced record sales and profits in 1974.

At the present time there is no way of telling when the workers will be called back, and it is very possible that hundreds may not be recalled at all. One of the chief shop stewards remarked at a union meeting that he didn't think that employment at Eaton would return to its former strength of over 1400, but would stay around 1000. And fifteen years ago, there were over 2200.

Also, the Memorial Day Holiday will see the beginning of three-week months of work for Eaton workers, with at least six weeks of shut-downs throughout the rest of 1975, all coming around the holidays, with the possibility of workers losing their holiday pay.

The response of the union leadership has been practically no response at all. Their lack of foresight in contract negotiations in trying to win safeguards against these problems, coupled by construction of factories in the South by Eaton, all lend to the defeatist attitude they have adopted in not fighting the layoffs.

Meanwhile, the company continues its practice of subcontracting work while the workers are starving for jobs. One worker at a recent union meeting protested that the company was bringing in work from one of its plants in the South while people are being laid off from lack of work, and he urged the union to take some action against these abuses. Yet nothing has been done to stop it.

The lack of concern for the problems facing the rank and file is clearly illustrated by the attitude toward the AFL-CIO rally called in Washington April 26 (called because of rank and file demands for action, not out of any concern for the high-salaried union bureaucrats). The local leadership didn't lift one finger to mobilize the membership (employed or unemployed) for the demonstration. As rank and file workers throughout the US mobilized for the rally, the IAM -- with 12,000 members in the Delaware Valley, -- could only manage to fill one bus with 35 workers. This is a disgrace to the IAM and a slap in the face to the rank and file and their problems, whether they are working or laid off.

Rank and file workers at Eaton, like their brothers and sisters across the country, are looking for and demanding solutions to their problems. These problems come directly from the capitalists' drive for profits, and the failure of the trade union leadership to defend the workers against the crisis and the bosses has only worsened the situation.

It is time for the rank and file to realize that this policy of "labor peace" and class collaboration by its leadership will not provide jobs and put food on the table. Only by organizing ourselves and taking steps to reclaim our unions from these misleaders, can a real struggle to put this crisis back in the laps of those responsible for it be carried out.

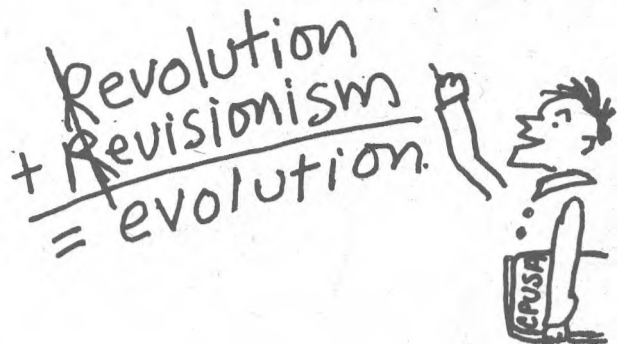
We have to remember that the working class has never gotten anywhere without a real struggle!



# THE WORKERS' PARTY - part 3

# MODERN REVISIONISM

## Marxism Revised: A Theory of Revolution With the "REVOLUTION" Revised Right Out Of It!



...and here, comrades, is the crux of the matter...

To many working people today, the word "communism" means the same thing as "the Communist Party." But to the new communist movement being born in the factories and working-class communities across the country, the two are very different. Simply put, we in the PWOC and in the new communist movement as a whole feel that the "Communist Party of the United States of America" (CPUSA), as it is officially known, is no longer a truly revolutionary party, no longer a truly communist party capable of leading the working class of this country to socialism.

The modern-day CPUSA, along with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the various other "official" Communist Parties throughout the world that follow the leadership of the Soviet Party, have revised the basic lessons of the historical experience of the working class in order to rob those lessons of their revolutionary content -- this is why they are known among the new communist movement, both here and abroad, as "revisionists."

While these "Communists" still talk a great deal about socialism and revolution, this talk merely serves to conceal their actual service to the capitalist class as a force for misleading and taming the revolutionary movement. Revisionism as a political theory and practice has many aspects and expressions but the guiding idea at the root of this outlook is the denial of the necessity of revolution.

In its stead the revisionists have developed a number of theories that basically project a peaceful evolution of world society from capitalism to socialism. In the international arena the revisionists hold that through the practice of detente, imperialism will peacefully whimper off into oblivion. In the US, as in other advanced capitalist countries, the revisionists, represented by the CPUSA, believe that the working class will come to power and establish socialism without overthrowing the capitalist state.

### THE PEACEFUL, PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

This is the strategy of the peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism. The CPUSA believes that the working class and its allies can elect a popular "anti-monopoly" government to power and that this government will then take steps to "overhaul" the capitalist state in order to make it a fitting vehicle for working class power. It will carry out measures aimed at weakening the capitalist controlled courts, armies and bureaucracies while simultaneously carrying out a program of radical social and economic reforms that will undercut the economic and political power of the monopolies. All this will be done within the framework of the constitution and capitalist legality. This period of anti-monopoly government will serve as a transition to socialism.

This strategy stands in stark contradiction to the fundamental principles of revolutionary Marxism and flies in the face of the historical experience of the working class movement. Marxists have always held that the state is not a neutral institution to be freely employed by whatever forces gain hold over it for whatever purposes. The state is rather seen as an instrument of class rule. Its whole form and character is tailored to the needs of the ruling class, in our case the monopoly capitalist class.

The Constitution, the legal and political foundation of the US government, provides for a body of law and a web of institutions that facilitate the rule of the capitalist class. For example, the rights of private property, without which capitalism could not exist, are guaranteed in the constitution and have always been held to be above mere human rights.

### US CONSTITUTION: INSTRUMENT FOR CAPITALIST RULE

The US government is deliberately structured in such a way as to thwart the popular will of the majority and defuse mass movements for change. The doctrine of the separation of powers, which divides the government into executive (the President and his administration), legislative (the two houses of Congress), and judicial (the Supreme Court) branches is a good example.

The founding fathers, wise old capitalists that they were, set up this system as a means of checks and balances against us. And it works very effectively. We all remember from our civic lessons how torturous a path a bill must take to become law. Of course, the constitution's defenders will point out that the constitution can be amended. But an amendment is a long drawn out process. This process gives the capitalists maximum time to mobilize their considerable resources into squashing or diverting the movement for change -- just look at what's happened with the Equal Rights Amendment. By the time that passes, the women who first pushed for it may be so old they won't be able to take advantage of it.

But aside from the problems posed by the structure of the government (which theoretically could be made more formally democratic) there is a far greater obstacle. The US government does not just exist on paper. The people that command the control of the courts, the military and the state bureaucracy are tied by a thousand threads to the capitalist class. They are schooled in its values, and its methods. They are handsomely rewarded for their loyalty in the form of high position, huge salaries, and opportunities for greater profit and influence.

The whole well constructed facade of formal democracy makes the actual workings of the government more difficult to see. 95% of the important discussions and decisions that go into shaping the government's policy are held away from public view. The real center of power in the US government is the executive branch which includes not only the president and his cabinet but the huge administrative machine made up of the different government departments and agencies. Here's where the action is -- not on the floor of Congress where the politicians put on a daily show for our viewing.

The exposures of "dirty tricks" in government, symbolized by Watergate, in recent years is really only the tip of the iceberg. The monopoly corporations do not simply "interfere" in government to buy influence or manipulate decisions. The ordinary day to day workings of the government are shaped, both directly and indirectly, by this no longer so invisible hand.

To put it simply the big bureaucrats in the government agencies, the pentagon generals and the judges on the high courts along with the bulk of their underlings in the middle ranks of the state machinery know where their bread is buttered. As long as this state machinery exists there is the everpresent danger of counter-revolution -- of the resources of the state being employed to repress and destroy the working class movement. To successfully establish its rule and build socialism, the working class must dismantle the old state and to do so it must be armed and organized.

The root of the disagreement between Marxist-Leninists and revisionism over the strategy of revolution is not violence vs. peaceful methods of change, although that is often how the question is treated by the bourgeois mass media. Marxist-Leninists hold no special brief for violence and we do not make a principle out of it. We believe a peaceful transition to socialism is a possibility but only if the working class is armed and well-enough organized so that the capitalist class realizes that if they unleash civil war they will be decisively defeated.

Given the clearly demonstrated fact that the capitalist class will cling desperately to its rule and will not hesitate to unleash its military machine against the masses, it is unlikely that the transition to socialism will be peaceful. But the point is that it is the capitalist class that is the perpetrator of violence and civil war. This position on the possibility of a peaceful transition is in contrast to the revisionists who make no preparations to organize and arm the working class and instead rely on the capitalist state machinery to effect the transition.

### WORKING CLASS MUST BUILD ITS OWN STATE

In the face of this reality the revolutionary working class movement has always held that the working class must break up this state machinery and replace it with a state based on its own institutions. It cannot lay a hold of (to use the words of Marx) the old state and use it for its own purposes. The capitalist state has a mind and a purpose of its own and it does not do the bidding of any master except the monopoly capitalists.

### REVISIONISM IN PRACTICE: CHILE

The most clear cut and dramatic example of how the revisionist strategy works in practice is the case of Chile. Here a popular government representing the working class and the broad masses of the Chilean people was elected to power. The Popular Unity Government, headed by Salvador Allende, was committed to democratic reforms and a policy of struggle against the imperialists and their allies among the Chilean capitalists and big landowners.

The Popular Unity government saw this struggle leading to the eventual emergence of a Socialist Chile. The revisionist Chilean Communist Party was a leading force in the Popular Unity government and sought to develop the struggle in Chile along the lines of its peaceful, parliamentary strategy.

It was certainly not wrong for the Popular Unity coalition to seek to get elected and utilize the positions it won to further the interests of the masses. The major mistake that the Popular Unity made was that it relied on the sup-





# Supermarkets Profit as UNIONS SHORT CHANGE PART TIME CASHIERS

With the cost of living and the high unemployment rate, part time work has become a necessity for many people. A large percentage are women who are working to support themselves or to supplement their husbands' paycheck -- if he is lucky enough to have a job. Often, part time workers hold down a regular job and are "moonlighting" to make ends meet. What was once an area dominated by school kids has become an older, more permanent group of workers.

## SECOND CLASS STATUS

What is not obvious is that the companies are using part-time workers to drastically cut costs and to weaken the unions. Supermarkets provide a good example of this trend.

In recent years, almost all full time cashiers have been phased out and replaced by part timers. Supermarket management claims that this was necessary to give them a "flexible" work force since they operate seven days and five nights a week and have busy and slow periods. Part time cashiers are more flexible ONLY because they are cheaper, easier to take advantage of and exploit. The unions that represent cashier-clerks have not only allowed this to happen without so much as a fight but they also discriminate against their part time workers who are treated like second class union members.

## UNIONS: FOR FULL TIMERS ONLY?

Part time cashiers who work in area supermarkets such as Great Scot, Holiday, Thriftway and Shopping Cart do not even receive the same hourly pay as full timers, both doing the same job!

They are members of the Amalgamated Food Employees Union Local 196 (AMC-BWM-NA). Local 196 charges them all \$8.50 a month in dues, but takes no stand against such obvious discrimination as unequal pay for equal work!

In health and welfare, the part time cashiers receive coverage only for themselves and not for their dependents. The difference in cost to the company is \$50 a month. This means that a supermarket could employ two part time cashiers each working 24 hours a week at a cost

of \$60 in health and welfare. By using part timers, the company gets 8 extra work hours per week and still saves \$20 a month -- not to mention what they save in pension money!

Employers must contribute \$58.75 per month to Local 196's pension fund for every full time cashier. Part time cashiers get NO PENSION. Money is saved in numerous other ways. The companies avoid paying shift differentials and overtime, because part time workers can be scheduled for 12 hour days at straight time. Local 196 protects its full members by requiring the companies to pay time and a half if a cashier works more than one night a week. Part timers can be worked five nights a week at the regular rate.

The Retail Clerks Union Local 1357 has recently begun to take some small steps to fight such out and out discrimination. They won overtime pay for hours worked over 29, some maternity benefits, and prescription cards for dependents for their part timers. However, none of the unions representing cashier-clerks have done anything to halt the phasing out of full time positions. No supermarkets are limited to a certain percentage of part timers.

There are no provisions for part timers to move into full time jobs, even though many cashiers want and need 40 hours. Local 196's contract states, "... Where possible [part time workers should] be offered full time employment in accordance with seniority." The reality is that no full time jobs for cashiers are created; as volume increases, the companies just hire on new part timers.

## PATTERN IN OTHER INDUSTRIES TOO

The increasing use of part time workers as a source of cheap labor is not isolated in the retail food industry. Yellow Cab recently mounted a big campaign on local campuses to recruit part time drivers. Why? Because Teamster Local 156 allows part timers to work and receive no union benefits.

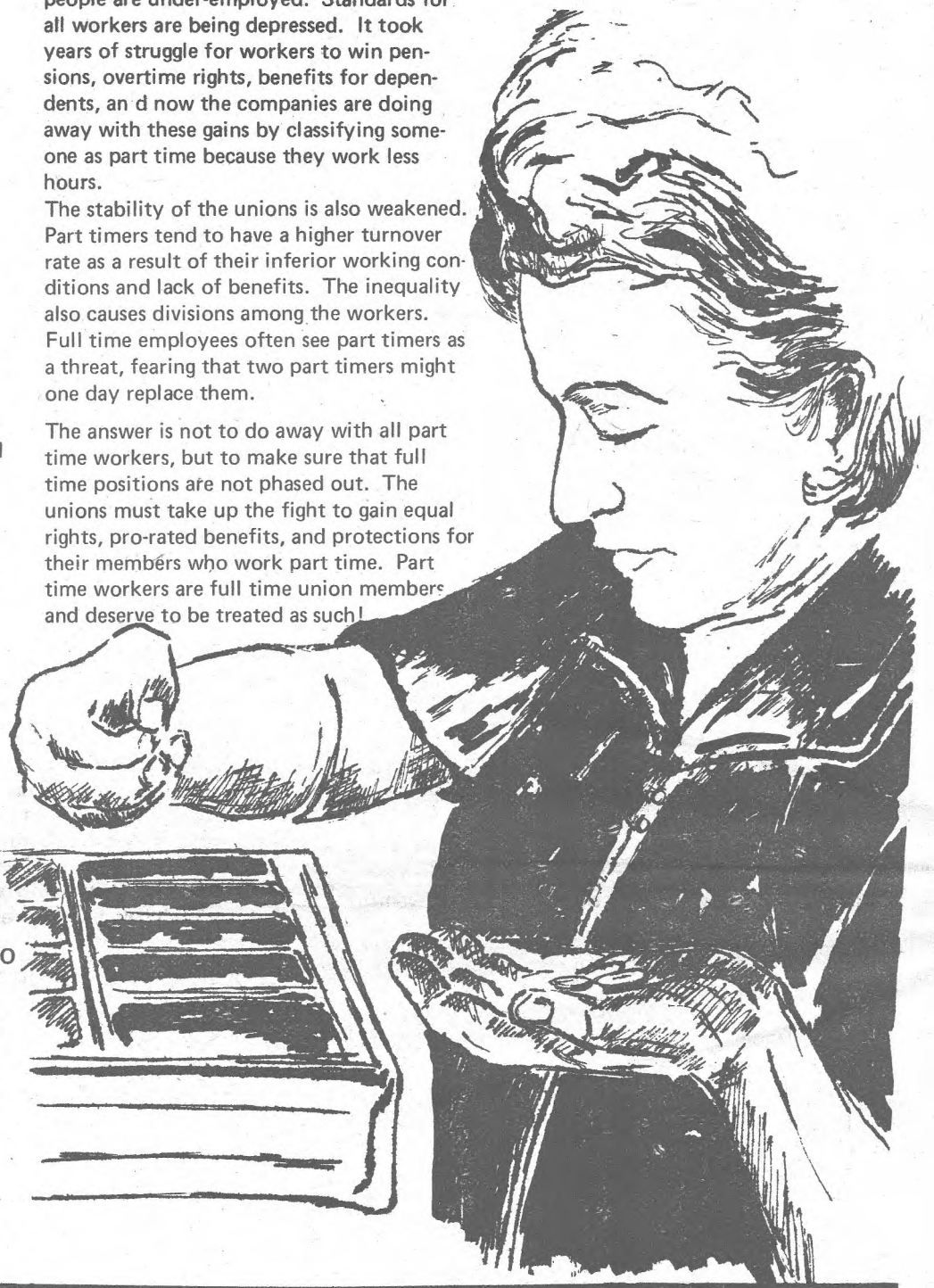
Childrens' Hospital may now have as many or more part time lab technicians as full time. The hospital saves on over-

time shift differentials, and benefits. To be classified as a full timer you have to work over 37 hours a week!

The result of this is that there are less full time jobs available and more and more people are under-employed. Standards for all workers are being depressed. It took years of struggle for workers to win pensions, overtime rights, benefits for dependents, and now the companies are doing away with these gains by classifying someone as part time because they work less hours.

The stability of the unions is also weakened. Part timers tend to have a higher turnover rate as a result of their inferior working conditions and lack of benefits. The inequality also causes divisions among the workers. Full time employees often see part timers as a threat, fearing that two part timers might one day replace them.

The answer is not to do away with all part time workers, but to make sure that full time positions are not phased out. The unions must take up the fight to gain equal rights, pro-rated benefits, and protections for their members who work part time. Part time workers are full time union members and deserve to be treated as such!



# CITY JOB DRAIN CONTINUES

## SECRET REPORT CONTRADICTS RIZZO'S CLAIMS

Frank Rizzo has claimed that his administration has stopped and reversed the exodus of manufacturing and with it jobs from the city. This has been one of his much balleyhooded selling points. But now an extensive report completed last August by the Rizzo administration itself but never released to the public shows that Rizzo has not succeeded in plugging the job dike.

The report, according to the Philadelphia Inquirer, made the following points:

\*\*\* Between 1969 and 1973 Philadelphia lost 50,100 manufacturing jobs. During the "boom" years of economic recovery, 1972 to 1974, there was a net loss of 17,469 jobs.

\*\*\* While other cities registered gains in employment during the recovery from the 1971 recession, Philadelphia, alone among major cities, failed to reduce its unemployment rate.

\*\*\* Black people in Philadelphia were especially hard-hit during these years. While the white unemployment rate declined, the rate for Black workers rose.

In 1973, shortly after his administration had received a gloomy report on the job picture from Jan Vagassky, a city economist, Rizzo said:

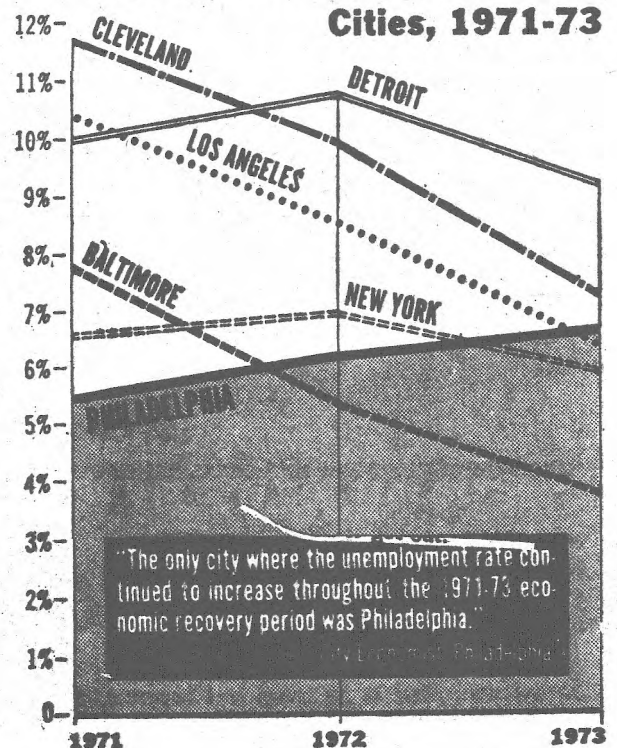
"This administration has turned things around in Philadelphia... Business is no longer leaving the city."

In 1975, after the secret report had been completed, Rizzo could still say in his budget message, "We have stopped the flight of industry."

As one of his economic specialists said off the record: "Either the mayor was shielded from the facts -- or he lied."

Guess which?

Unemployment Rates in Selected Cities, 1971-73





# Salt of the Earth

FILM  
REVIEW

The union meeting was tense, the air heavy with smoke. Bodies were packed closely together, miners in front, women in back, and the uncertainty and fear of defeat could be read on every face. The men argued back and forth, sweat pouring down their faces. Finally a woman in back stood up. "If we give up now . . . we are fools and cowards. There is only one way: fight on!" And fight on they did.

There was indeed no choice for these Mexican American miners. This was the early fifties, in the small town of "Zinc Town", New Mexico. The miners couldn't "go back where they came from" as the foreman suggested, because this small company town was where they came from. They had to dig in their heels and fight back. But fighting back and winning are two different things. And it was in the course of trying to win their strike that the miners and their families learned some lessons which not only changed their own lives, but will change the thinking of all those who watch their story.

*Salt of the Earth* is the story of a 19 month strike by Local 890 of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. It is a powerful movie in which almost all of the roles are played by the workers themselves instead of by professional actors and actresses. It is a gripping movie about the need for unity and equality between the men and women of this small town in order to be strong enough to win the strike. It is a movie so inspiring and so convincing that it shook up the conservative powers in Hollywood when it was produced in the early 1950's and the film was banned. The director, Herbert Biberman, was blacklisted and the lead actress (one of the few people in the film who actually was a professional actress) Rosaura Revueltas, was deported to Mexico.

## WHAT WAS HOLLYWOOD SCARED OF?

So what was the message so threatening to those leading the witch hunts of the McCarthy period? The lesson that the miners and their wives learned was very simple, and it was stated clearly by one of the women at that most important union meeting: "The bosses win now because there isn't unity between the men and their wives and their sisters." When the men first went out on strike they were protesting the unnecessarily dangerous conditions of the work -- conditions which meant injury or death at any time. The men were united and angry, but the women were worried.

Esperanza, wife of one of the union leaders, found it hard to understand how the strike could possibly help her when it first began. When she asked her husband Ramon to make better sanitation one of the demands, he told her she was selfish and always thinking of herself. And he went off to the meetings by himself, leaving her to care for their two children. He even forgot her birthday, he was so wrapped up in the "greater" concerns of the union. And she knew that it would not be easy to give birth to the child she was carrying if they had no money and no more credit with the company doctor. How would the children be fed? How long would the strike last?

Both Ramon and Esperanza were trapped in their own worlds -- he in the struggles of the mine, she in trying to keep their home together. Neither could understand the other, and even more important, neither could see the relationship between their two worlds. Esperanza looked to Ramon to bring home the needed money to feed and clothe the family and Ramon looked to Esperanza to care for him and the home. He protected her, and she answered to him as her master. But neither one could help the other because of the wall of tradition which separated their domains.

## BOTH MEN AND WOMEN CHANGED BY STRUGGLE

But then came the decision, proposed by one of the wives, that the women would picket in order to avoid the Taft-Hartley Injunction. The injunction forbade picketing by the miners. And the men had to stay home, and care for the children and the home. They had to stay back and watch as their wives were hauled off in truckloads to the jail. They had to watch as their wives were almost run down by the sheriff's car. And then they watched as the women struck back, beating and kicking the bosses' representatives until the big shots were forced to retreat.

They had to watch, and while they watched they learned something new about their wives: they learned that they were brave, and that they were as ready to stand up for their principles as any of the men. And at home they learned that the demands of the women for better sanitation weren't petty demands. They learned that the women faced the same kind of difficult conditions at home as the miners faced in the mines. They learned that caring for children in the company homes was no picnic.

And the women learned a great deal too. They had never had the chance to depend on themselves before, and this new experience was indeed an exhilarating one! They quickly learned how to be useful in the strike effort, and how important their participation was. They experienced for themselves the power that comes from many individu-



*"And so they came the women.... They came from Zinc Town and the hills beyond.... By sun-up there were a hundred on the line. And they kept coming--women who had never been seen before, women who had nothing to do with the strike. Some how they heard about a women's picket line -- and they came."*

als standing together as one, and they understood that it is worth sacrificing some individual comfort for this collective strength.

But how can you really describe the new shine that creeps into the eyes of Esperanza as she discovers her own independence? How do you describe the wonder and power in the faces of the miners as they watch carloads of men and women from every nearby town come to support them? Maybe it's hard to describe the birth of self-consciousness which changed the lives of those workers of "Zinc Town", but you can't help but experience it as you watch *Salt of the Earth*.

## TOGETHER WE CAN PUSH EVERYTHING UP

Of course, none of this came easy. A good part of the film is about one lead couple, Ramon and Esperanza and the struggles they went through as their familiar family roles were torn apart. Ramon did not take easy to the idea that women are equal and should be equal partners in the strike struggle. He did not like staying home and doing "women's work." He resented the meetings that his wife had with other women to plan the picketing, for such meetings threatened his idea of his home as his kingdom. His wife was gaining far too much independence, and he was afraid.



JUAN CHACON

But even Ramon's fear was to be put to rest -- or at least he was to come to understand that it was wrong. Ramon was a fighter for the right of Mexican-Americans to be treated as equal with Anglos. How then could his wife's question fail to haunt him: "Do you think you can have dignity when I have none?"

That is the lesson which the anti-labor red-baitors of the fifties were so afraid we might learn if the film were released. They were afraid we might understand what the Woman Question (which most of us call the question of women's liberation) is really all about. Because the movie shows us that the fight for the equality of women is a part of the fight for the freedom of the working class. We can't put off the liberation of women until another time and another place because unless we are all fighting together and as equals we can never win. The liberation of the women of "Zinc Town" and the militant strike by the miners were both parts of the same struggle -- the struggle of a united working class against the ruling class. As Esperanza said, "Together we can push everything up with us as we go . . . and so we had won something; and they (the children), the salt of the earth, will inherit it."

## LOCAL 890 -- THEN AND NOW

We all have a tendency to wonder, after the lights of the movie house go back on, did they really live happily ever after? What happened afterwards? Those questions are particularly strong after we see *Salt of the Earth* because we know that the strike really happened and that those same miners really did go back into the mines while their wives continued to struggle with the same run-down conditions of the company homes. So what happened after the strike?

Well, Local 890 is still a militant and powerful local, only now it's part of the Steelworkers' International. And today, like the rest of us, those miners working for the Kennecott Santa Rita Mine in Bayard, N.M., face a double task. They are fighting to regain rank and file control of their union and they are fighting for better working conditions from Kennecott.

The miners have taken a giant step toward regaining control of their union by cleaning out their own local and restoring its real leadership. After the merger of the mine and mill union with the Steelworkers, Local 890 went through a grim period, during which the new leadership became less and less responsive to the rank and file. But about two years ago, Juan Chacon, who played the lead miner Ramon in "Salt of the Earth" (and who was in fact one of the leaders of the 1950-1952 strike) was elected president of the local.

It didn't take long for the new leadership to face its first challenge, either. Last year, on June 30, the industry-wide contract expired. Local 890 was particularly concerned that the contract solve some pressing local problems, including stricter safety standards.

When the Steelworkers' International Leadership, led by I.W. Abel, pushed through a fourteen day extension of the contract without consulting the local, the miners of Santa Rita shut the mine down. The company and the International union put out a press release condemning the strike as illegal!

The miners of local 890 defied an injunction for two weeks before they were finally forced back to work. As an outgrowth of the strike, Juan Chacon and Israel Romero, local financial secretary, were fired. The case has been taken to arbitration, and a support movement has been growing among other Steelworker locals in the area and in unions across the country.

So the struggle didn't end with the last frame of the movie "Salt of the Earth." The unity which developed out of the strike of 1950 has continued to grow and spread. Now the members of local 890 are playing a leadership role in the new rank and file upsurge going on across the country.

Perhaps the struggle is taking longer than the people of "Zinc Town" expected. Overwhelmed by the heady feeling of victory in 1952, it may have seemed to many that the rest would be simple. Now new obstacles have come up, new problems to understand and solve. But what was true for 1950 is all the more true for 1975. "If we give up now . . . we're fools and cowards. There is only one way: fight on." And as the ranks swell with workers who have learned the lessons of the struggle, there can be but one outcome: victory.





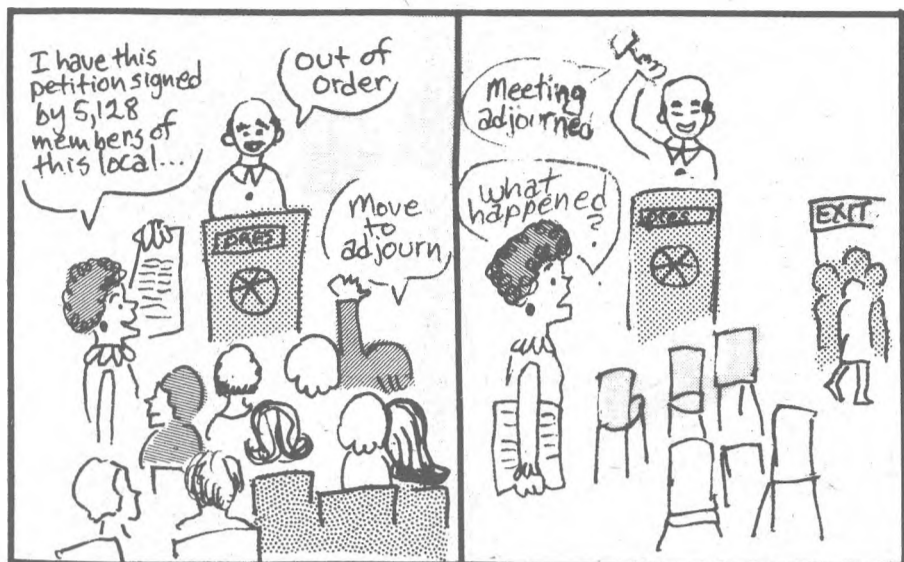


# NUTS & BOLTS

Nuts and Bolts will be a regular feature in the *Organizer*. Its purpose will be to arm rank and file organizers with information and analysis that can be of practical value in the struggle on the shop floor and in the unions. Basic labor law, parliamentary procedure, and health and safety information are some of the technical areas we will cover

in future columns. Also, we want to deal with problems in building rank and file caucuses, starting an organizing drive and other practical concerns that face workers in their struggles with the employers. If you have a problem or a question that we can help answer, write Nuts and Bolts, c/o The Organizer.

## Roberts Rules: A Two-Edged Sword



You're at your union meeting -- The president of the union, who is chairing the meeting, is only calling on people who see things his way . . . Your Business Agent is giving a report and you know something he said was not true . . . A new contract is being ratified by hand vote and the union leadership announces it passed when it looks like most people voted to reject it. . . You want to raise an important issue from the floor, but your chairman tells you to sit down because you're out of order.

In all these situations, a knowledge of Roberts Rules of Order -- the basic parliamentary procedures by which most union meetings are run -- is important. You need to know the basics if you are going to be able to insure your right to speak up. You need this knowledge especially if a union leadership is out to railroad something through over the heads of the rank and file.

While many union meetings are run loosely without strict adherence to Roberts Rules, once the rank and file begins demanding things the union leadership doesn't want, nine times out of ten the meetings will be run by rigid parliamentary procedures in order to hamstring and intimidate the membership.

Roberts Rules of Order are like a double edged sword. It's true they can be used to stifle discussion and questions. But, if the

rank and file is familiar with these procedures they can also be used to prevent the union leadership from pulling a fast one on us.

These rules aren't the mystery they've been made out to be. Here are the basics you need to know in order to speak up at any union meeting.

### THE AGENDA AND REPORTS

Each meeting should begin with the reading of a tentative agenda. It's the right of the membership to accept, reject or change the order of business at this time. Each agenda should have room for old and new business. This gives us the opportunity to raise unfinished as well as the newer more immediate problems that have come up since the last meeting. If you're not sure where a certain problem fits in on the agenda, ask the chairperson. It's their job to explain these things.

Don't let the chair sidetrack you or talk around your question. If you don't get a straight answer, ask again. In many cases the chair will be vague and act like you're thick-headed in order to embarrass you and shut you up!

Once the agenda has been adopted, the meeting will move on to the first order of business. Reports are usually made and quickly adopted at this time. Although these reports are usually pretty boring, some really important business is also included in them.

Listen carefully, even take notes, and ask any questions you have. This might be the only chance you have to question the local president's pay raise!

To ask a question, you rise and say, "Point of Information." This takes precedence and can interrupt another speaker. If when you get your answer you disagree with the proposal, you can rise to speak against it. Or -- if no formal motion has been made, for example "to raise President So and So's salary -- then you can initiate a motion. For example, "I move that the President's salary be lowered to . . ."

The purpose of these motions is to insure that only one thing is discussed at a time. Motions can be changed or amended at any time after the original motion has been seconded and before a vote is called. A second is required for all motions and amendments to make sure that more than one person wants to discuss a particular point.

### DEBATE AND VOTING

Once a motion has been made and seconded, discussion or debate is in order. Speakers should alternate for and against so that all

### THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR

It is important to keep in mind that the chair is to be impartial, and should never enter into debate. If you feel the chair has violated the rules, there are a number of ways to challenge them.

First you can rise to a "point of order" and criticize the chair as being out of order, and if the chair rejects this you can appeal or challenge this ruling by placing it before the membership. Discussion is in order on any question of appeal.

If the chair has decided that a member is out of order and there is disagreement, you can ask the parliamentarian -- the expert on the rules -- to make a ruling by rising to a "point of parliamentary inquiry." This, like a question, needs no second and is not debatable. Points of order and parliamentary inquiry can also be used to challenge fellow members.



sides of an argument are equally heard. When a member feels that there has been enough discussion, he or she can call for the end of discussion by "calling the question." If there is disagreement over whether or not to limit or end discussion, then a two-thirds vote will be needed to close debate. This means that if a minority of at least one-third plus one still needs more time for discussion, their right will be upheld.

When there is agreement to end debate, the original motion or amendment should be stated again. A vote should then be called. Usually a voice vote is sufficient. But if there is any question about the outcome, you can call for a "division" -- which means an exact counting of a hand vote (this doesn't need a second).

If at any time a point of business is being decided which might put pressure on members to vote one way or another, you can call for a secret ballot vote; a simple majority can decide which way to proceed. The secret ballot was a hard won gain for our trade union forerunners, and we should never underestimate its value!

### CHANGING THE AGENDA

At some point we may find a meeting running longer than we expected, and because of this we may want to change the agenda and move up an important item to make sure it gets dealt with. To do this we move to "suspend the rules." This needs a second, is not debatable, and needs a two-thirds vote to pass. If the motion to suspend the rules passes, then a motion to move an item up on the agenda is in order.

A motion to adjourn is needed to end a meeting. This is in order at any time that a vote is not in the works, it needs a second, cannot be amended or debated, and needs a simple majority to pass.

These are your basic rights at union meetings and they should be upheld. When you call for enforcement of the rules, you'll probably be criticized for delaying the meeting and wasting time. But don't be fooled by these charges! The only thing you'll be delaying is the dirty tricks that are coming down!

**DON'T BUY  
GRAPES  
OR GALLO  
WINE**



**The  
Farmworkers  
Need You Now**

El Malcriado/cpf



# VIETNAM (cont.)

Continuo de pagina 23

La guerra de Vietnam produjo millones de refugiados en los últimos años. Fue la política militar norteamericana que destruyó las cosechas y quemó las aldeas echando de este modo a los campesinos de sus hogares. Y todo esto fue hecho en un intento de derrotar al FLN eliminando su mayor apoyo: los campesinos.

Estos refugiados se han estado muriendo de hambre hacinados en campos de emergencia azotados por enfermedades y epidemias. De hecho fueron los ejércitos de USA y Saigón que crearon el "problema de los refugiados" hace mucho tiempo, y no los comunistas como se pretende hacer creer. Ahora que el FLN está en condiciones de devolver la paz a Vietnam, esta gente quizás pueda regresar y reconstruir por fin sus hogares.

**MITO:** Los huérfanos indigentes de Vietnam pueden ser considerados afortunados por ser traídos bondadosamente y humanamente a USA, en vez de ser abandonados a los comunistas, ya que en ese caso no tendrían ninguna esperanza para el futuro.

**HECHO:** El embajador norteamericano Graham Martin declaró que la "operación rescate de niños" podría servir para lograr una opinión favorable del pueblo norteamericano hacia el régimen de Saigón. Mientras que la mayoría de los padres adoptivos son gente de bien, esta acrobacia publicitaria en realidad refleja el rapto de niños sacándolos de su patria en abierta violación a las leyes internacionales.

La hipocresía del gobierno norteamericano es suficiente para hacernos llorar. Huérfanos de la guerra, niños de Saigón prohijados por soldados norteamericanos, niños separados de sus familias debido al caos originado por las tropas que se batían en retirada, niños llevados a orfanatos por sus madres que ya no podían seguir alimentándolos (el precio del arroz subió en un 20% en las últimas semanas), hijos de cientos de miles de prisioneros

que se oponían al régimen de Thieu: todos estos niños son víctimas de una guerra patrocinada por los USA, y ahora el gobierno está empeñado en convencer al pueblo norteamericano y al mundo entero que sólo desea lo mejor para ellos -- hotdogs, pastel de manzanas y estrellas y franjas para siempre.

También debemos mencionar la hipocresía del racismo que sostiene que los hijos de soldados negros "no tienen chance" en Vietnam. De hecho, el racismo es ilegal en países socialistas. La mayoría de los niños vietnamita-negros traídos a USA, han sido acomodados con familias blancas de clase media. Desde cuándo que el racismo ha desaparecido de nuestros barrios blancos? Y desde cuándo ha desaparecido la discriminación contra americanos-asiáticos de nuestro país?

Tal como fuera manifestado por Don Luce, perteneciente a un grupo de religiosos y laicos que permaneció 14 años en Vietnam, en una entrevista con NBC, en Vietnam del Norte y en las zonas liberadas del sur no hay orfanatos. Allí, los niños sin hogar -- y hay muchos como resultado de la guerra -- son ubicados con parientes o en hogares adoptivos.

Tanto la educación como la salud constituyen prioridades en estas áreas. En la provincia liberada Quang Tri una clínica ha sido construida en cada aldea junto con hospitales regionales (670 camas) y un hospital provincial (150 camas). Durante el régimen de Saigón, la capacidad de atención hospitalaria infantil alcanzaba a un hospital con 150 camas; 100 de las cuales estaban reservadas para soldados. En realidad, a los niños de Vietnam les espera un futuro glorioso al construir el socialismo desde las cenizas.

**MITO:** La "pérdida" de Vietnam a los comunistas significa un severo peligro para la seguridad nacional de USA.

**HECHO:** En muchos sentidos esto no es un mito. Cualquier golpe, por muy pequeño que sea, recibido por el



LA VICTORIA POR FIN -- UN TIEMPO DE ALEGRIA PARA EL EJERCITO DEL PUEBLO.

imperialismo en cualquier parte del mundo, significa una amenaza al sistema económico y político de USA. Aunque está claro que los soldados vietnamitas jamás invadirán las costas de California, la resonante victoria del pueblo vietnamita es un golpe bien real a los poderes yanquis.

Pero una derrota para la clase gobernante norteamericana es a la vez una victoria para la clase trabajadora de USA. La guerra sólo nos ha traído la pérdida de nuestros hijos y hermanos, y la ruina de nuestra economía. Tal como lo descubrieron muchos soldados en Vietnam, tenemos mucho en común con los trabajadores y campesinos de ese país, mientras que hay pocos puntos en común con el gobierno corrupto y represivo de Saigón o con la clase gobernante de USA que sólo nos usó como forraje de cañón en su trágica desgracia.

El PRG ha agradecido al pueblo norteamericano que ayudó finalizar esta guerra. En nuestra lucha contra el capitalismo jamás debemos olvidar nuestros hermanos y hermanas que en todo el mundo luchan contra el mismo enemigo. Y también debemos seguir presionando al gobierno norteamericano para que jamás vuelva a ocurrir otro "Vietnam".

## Philly Medical Committee for Human Rights Makes Comeback



"I challenge the speaker's charge that we have one health care system for the rich and another for the poor. To us, there are no poor!"

Hospital workers, still largely unorganized, are among the lowest paid in the country and increasingly are feeling the crunch of the current economic crisis. Already understaffed hospitals are resorting to more and more job freezes and layoffs. The resulting speedup leads to exhausted, overworked staff and poorer patient care -- that often can actually be life-threatening.

### MCHR: HEALTH CARE IS A RIGHT NOT A PRIVILEGE

Health workers and consumers are fighting back, however. Strikes of hospital workers (including nurses) are becoming more and more common. And people are turning more and more to organizations like the Medical Committee for Human Rights (MCHR).

MCHR is a national organization based on the idea that health care is a right, not a privilege. It is composed of health workers, professionals and students, and consumers, and has some 30 chapters throughout the country.

Poor and working people do not need to read the newspapers or magazines to know we face a growing crisis in health care in this country. All we need to do is try to pay our medical expenses out of depression-hit incomes.

Anyone who has waited hours in an emergency room or who has been asked to pay in advance at a clinic or doctor's office knows there is something drastically wrong with our health care system.

What is wrong can be summed up in one word: Capitalism. Health care in the US is a 100 billion dollar industry (the second largest in the US in terms of numbers of people employed) and like all other industry under capitalism, profits, not people, are the priority.

Doctors in the US average \$40,000 per year. The medical equipment companies and drug companies continue to reap huge profits. They get richer, while we get poorer... and sicker!

MCHR was born in the midst of the civil rights struggles of the 60's, its members giving medical aid at demonstrations both north and south. MCHR nationally was an active participant in the anti-war movement.

More recently, MCHR chapters have supported the liberation struggles in Indochina and southern Africa by raising funds and sending medical supplies. Various chapters have been involved in struggles around minority admissions to medical and nursing schools, prison health, occupational health and safety, and women's health.

MCHR members have fought along side of community groups in demanding better health care for their communities, and they have actively supported striking hospital workers all over the country.

A major thrust in many chapters now is developing programs to fight cutbacks in health services and job layoffs and freezes of health workers.

### PHILLY MCHR REORGANIZED

After a four-year absence, the Philadelphia MCHR chapter was reborn in January 1975. The local chapter united around the following principles:

- 1) The problems of health care are not isolated from the other problems of US society. A health care system based on profits is incompatible with good health care delivery.
- 2) All people are entitled to health care that is humane, comprehensive, preventive, continuous and accessible.
- 3) Health services and institutions should be controlled by the people who use them and work in them.

4) Good health care requires an end to racism, sexism, ageism, class discrimination, and professionalism in the health care system.

The Philadelphia MCHR chapter is committed to the active support of health workers and consumers struggling to change the present health care system. Membership is open to anyone who agrees with the principles of the organization.

Although still a very young group in Philadelphia, several ongoing task forces are already beginning to function.

The task force on job freezes, cutbacks and layoffs has been involved in the fight to save Graduate Hospital, and is currently an active member of the Citizens' Coalition for Philadelphia General Hospital.

The Occupational health and safety task force is working with a group of oil refinery workers and plans to develop a specific project around the health and safety hazards hospital workers face, as well as more general educational programs for rank and file workers in other industries.

Other task forces are developing around patients' rights, free clinics, and support for the national health insurance bill being sponsored by Congressman Ron Dellums.

### HEALTH STRUGGLES MUST BE LINKED WITH ANTI-CAPITALISM

The PWOC supports the new Philadelphia MCHR chapter. We are committed to building a strong, democratic organization that will develop ongoing programs involving as many health workers and consumers as possible. We intend to link our struggles in health to the broader anti-capitalist struggles of working people and their progressive allies among students and professionals.