

Workers' Power

formerly International Socialist

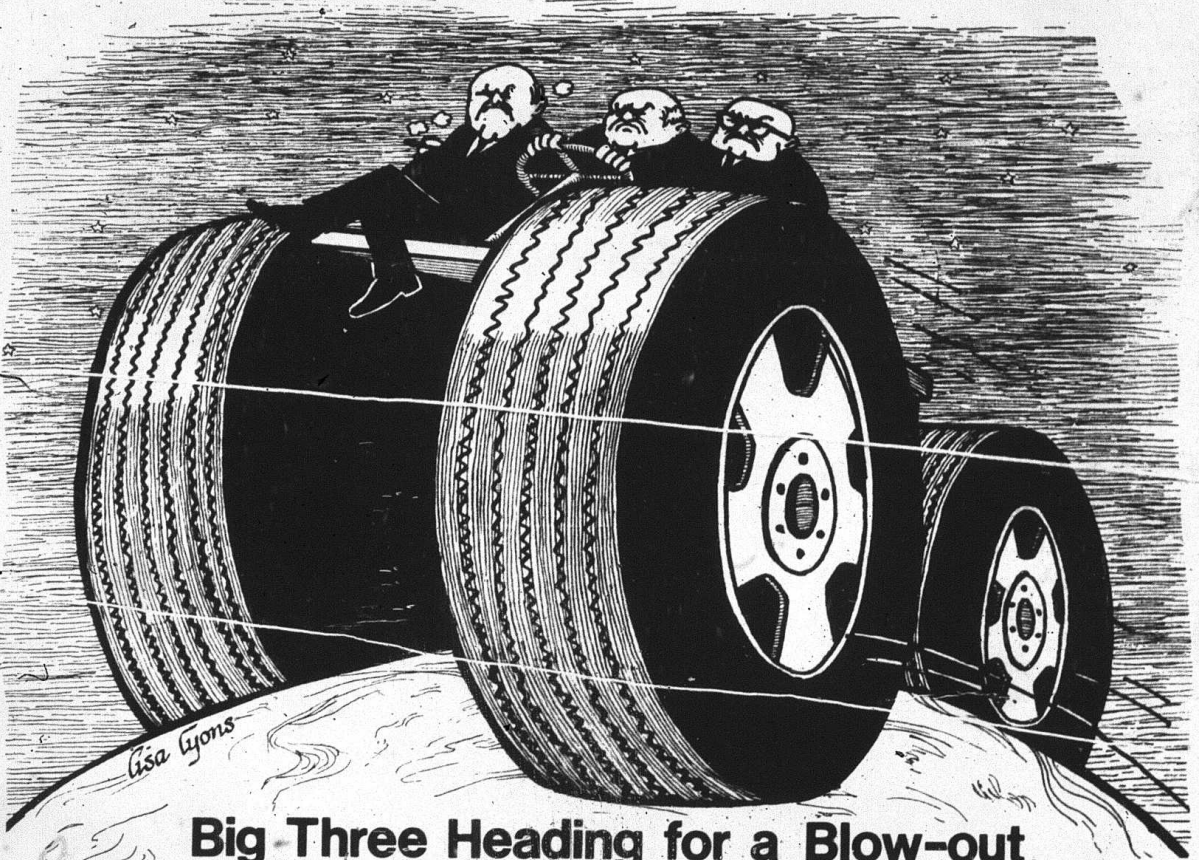
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Auto Strike 1970



Big Three Heading for a Blow-out

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Life on the Line · Lettuce · AFT

The Russian

There've Been Some Changes Made

As long-time readers of the *International Socialist (I.S.)* will have noticed, a number of changes have been made, beginning with this issue. The growth of the International Socialists national organization over the past year has made possible a considerable shift of emphasis designed to increase the relevance and usefulness of the publication.

Both the national office of the International Socialists and the editorial office of the newspaper have been shifted to the Detroit area (from New York and Berkeley, respectively). We will be publishing more than twice as frequently, on a bi-weekly instead of a monthly basis, and the size of each issue has been correspondingly trimmed to 16 pages. The name has been changed, from *I.S.* to *Workers' Power*, and the monthly supplements we had been publishing under the latter name have thus been discontinued. And finally, thanks to the *Fifth Estate*, Detroit's major underground newspaper, we have been able to set the text in a much more attractive and readable

typeface, which we have laid out in four columns instead of three.

The sale price will remain the same, 20¢ a copy retail, 14¢ a copy to retail outlets, 10¢ a copy to wholesale distributors. However, the cost of a year's subscription has been raised to \$3.50. Supporting subscriptions are still \$5.00; introductory, three-month subscriptions will be \$1.00. All present subscriptions will be honored on a pro-rated basis, that is, every regular subscriber will receive a total of ten issues, counting from whenever the subscription began. Supporting subscriptions, since the price has not changed, will of course be good for a full year.

As always, we encourage contributions, comments and criticisms from readers. We plan to go to press every other Thursday, and the deadline for any one issue is Tuesday of the preceding week. All correspondence, exchange subscriptions, etc., should be forwarded to the new address: 14131 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, Michigan 48203.

Workers' Power

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"There is," he said, "little to do on a quiet day, and so we make up our own divertimento.

We sometimes sit on the bank of a wide river, if one is handy, in the shade, if there are trees, waiting for sampans to come floating down. Sometimes we even bet whether there will be one gook or a whole litter on board.

"When ones comes on, we wait till it reaches a point in front of us, easy as we sit, or a point out of the blinding light that sometimes ricochets on the water. Then we shoot a rocket at it, taking turns, of course, usually flipping a coin to see who gets the first shot.

"Once," he said, with that tone of successful American expertise and know-how, "I got a whole family with one shot, aunts and uncles, grandparents and children flying and arcing like spray into the slow-moving water.

"On really dull days there may be nothing but water buffalo to shoot in the rice paddies."

Off the Record

Richard Lyons

No. 21

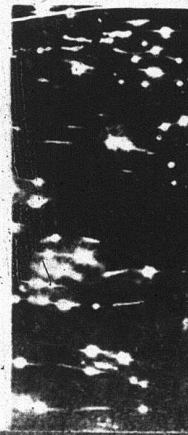
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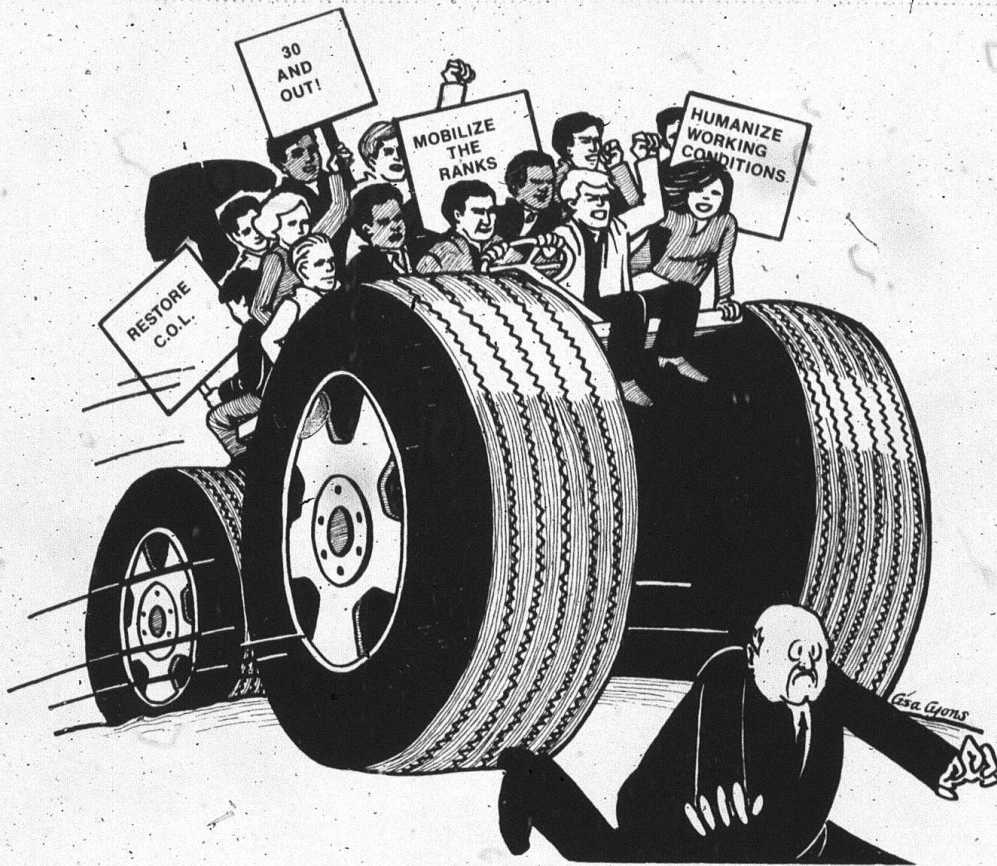
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Auto Strike 1970

Karl Fischer James Coleman

On September 14 at midnight, the contract between the United Auto Workers and the auto industry's Big Three — GM, Ford, and Chrysler — will expire. Almost certainly, workers at one of these companies will walk off the job nationwide. The betting is that GM will be struck. Leonard Woodcock, the new UAW president, would probably prefer Ford — it's a weaker opponent, and since it employs fewer workers, the strike fund would last longer. But GM as the largest company calls the shots for all three, and Ford has been ruled out.

GM has not been struck since 1946 — at each contract, GM continues to produce and lets one of the other companies fight its battles for it, because the UAW leadership has lacked the confidence to take on GM. The rank and file workers know this, and this year, GM workers around the country are demanding that GM be the target; the Region 1E Subcouncil in Pontiac, Michigan, where there are five large GM plants, passed a formal resolution to that effect.

For his part, Woodcock feels he has to "prove himself" as Walter Reuther's successor — as he told a Detroit newspaper, "I don't merely have to show GM that I've got the guts to take them on; I have to prove to the membership that I've got the guts." Woodcock is running scared, trying to keep ahead of rank and file militancy. He will no doubt lead the UAW

into a strike against GM. But all the signs are that he will prove a reluctant general, just as Reuther did before him.

Two issues have dominated the contract talks this year — wages and working conditions. The take-home pay of auto workers, in spite of raises gained in the last contract in 1967, has actually fallen in real terms, because of inflation. UAW workers are supposed to be protected against inflation by a cost-of-living clause which automatically raises their pay as prices go up. But in 1967, the UAW bargained away this protection in turn for minor improvements in unemployment benefits. They agreed to a "cap" — a maximum — on the amount paid for cost-of-living.

The results have been a disaster. According to official UAW statistics, a straight cost-of-living rise would have given workers an average of 42 cents an hour over the last three years; with the cap, they got an average of only 16 cents. In other words, every auto worker lost 26 cents an hour, or over \$1000, in cost-of-living protection since 1967 — and the companies saved a cool \$700 million or more. Real wages in auto, according to government figures, are 17 cents an hour lower than in 1966.

Demands have come from the

ranks over the last three years for a restoration of the full cost-of-living clause. As a result, the UAW leadership embraced this demand at the special convention held last April. They also endorsed another demand which had come from the ranks — "30 and out," the demand for retirement after 30 years of service at \$500 a month pension. But so far they have shown no sign of fighting for either demand. Instead, they talk about a "substantial" wage increase, and refuse to pin down this vague slogan in dollars and cents terms.

Working conditions are also on the bargaining table — but the companies have raised this issue, not the union. For years, Reuther refused to deal with working conditions in national contract talks. He left this for the local negotiations that follow the national contract agreement, in which the locals are split up and disunited. But the companies, plagued by absenteeism and other discipline problems, have made working conditions a national issue.

They have demanded reducing steward representation from one steward for every 200 workers to something even more inadequate. They have demanded binding arbitration on all working conditions issues, ending any right to strike on these issues.

They want to cut the time seniority employees can be absent without losing their jobs. Ford has demanded that a company doctor examine workers after they've been on sick leave for two days.

The UAW has responded only weakly to all this — on the last demand, the answer was just that this would hurt "good" workers as well as "bad". Far from protecting workers against the invasion of their privacy and worsening working conditions, the UAW seems ready to agree to help the companies tighten discipline.

No Trade-Off

In the past, the UAW has bargained for a "trade-off" — they have won an increase in the workers' standard of living in return for promising the companies a free hand in enforcing speed-up and increasing productivity. Basically this is why Reuther always left working conditions to the local negotiations where nothing much could be won. The trade-off has always been a bad deal — it means that wage gains are taken back in speed-up and tighter discipline. But this year, it's unlikely that the UAW bargainers can make an overall economic gain to offset the concessions they are certain to make on working conditions.

The auto companies have just finished their worst business year in a decade. Profit margins went down for all three companies — GM's earnings fell 30 percent from September 1969 to June 1970, while Chrysler actually lost money in the first quarter of this year. We should not weep for the giants — even Chrysler is turning a profit now, and though GM made less than in other years, its profits were still in the hundreds of millions. But the fall in sales has made the giants determined to pass the burden onto their workers.

At the same time, James Roche, GM Chairman of the Board, stated in March that absenteeism, individual and collective sabotage and vandalism, wildcats and work stoppages were even more important than the fall in sales in reducing profits. So the companies are determined at least to hold the line on economic issues — and certainly to keep the "cap" — and to launch a frontal assault on the working conditions of their workers.

This means that auto workers must be prepared to fight a long and bitter strike to win any real gains this year. The indications are that most rank-and-filers are ready for such a strike. In the last few years, auto workers have waged frequent strikes and wildcats, usually over speed-up and working conditions. GM's Fisher Body plant in Flint, Michigan, was struck for over six months last year. Wildcats have hit GM Fleetwood, Dodge Main, Eldon Gear & Axle and Sterling Stamping in Detroit; Ford Mahwah in New Jersey; and many others. The rise in absenteeism, sabotage, and local work stoppages shows a rebellion — not yet organized — against the tightening work discipline in the shops.

But the ability of the UAW international bureaucracy to wage a real fight is another question. In recent years, the union bureaucrats have done everything possible to dampen the militancy of the ranks, including placing locals in receivership to break wildcats. In 1967, taking over the Mansfield Ohio local to end a wildcat, an international rep told the strikers, "There is one vote in this local, and I have it. Get back in the plant tomorrow morning!"

The bureaucracy prefers "business unionism" — peaceful compromise at the bargaining table, backed up by a strike the leadership controls and can stop when it wishes. "Business unionism" means not keeping the members informed — no mass meetings are called, members hear strike news over radio and TV instead of from their representatives. It means that the leadership decides when a contract offer should be accepted, and then rams the contract down the members' throats — in 1967, when the "cap" was negotiated, Walter Reuther told Ford workers to ratify the contract or plan to strike for six months.

But this year, these methods are not likely to get results. The 30-and-out demand may be won — all sides recognize that it won't cost much. (The UAW, however, is asking for retirement after 30 credit years — time lost in layoffs and sick leave will not count.) The companies have offered 26 cents, the union is asking for slightly more, plus restoration of the 26 cents lost over the last contract because of the "cap". But whether wages stay ahead of inflation will depend on whether the "cap" stays or goes, and the companies will fight tooth and nail to keep it. At most they may agree to lift the ceiling a few cents. Also, the issues of shop-floor discipline and absenteeism are essential priorities for the companies — unless forced by a long and bitter strike, they will sign no contract that doesn't grant them real concessions in this area, cutting away the worker's rights and making life on the shop floor even more intolerable than it is now.

Even with 30-and-out, a contract like this would be a major defeat for the workers. But all past experience indicates that if the companies dig in their heels, the UAW will not dare to really fight for more. The companies have weapons in reserve. The unstruck companies may well aid the one being struck — GM proposed this in 1968. In addition, according to the *Detroit Free Press* (August 28), a Chicago law firm is studying whether a nationwide lock-out of workers at the unstruck companies would be legal. (When asked about this, Woodcock only protested feebly that this was illegal — putting his trust not in the strength of the ranks, but in

the courts, which are well known for pro-labor sentiments!) A lockout is unlikely at the start — but if the ranks vote down a contract, it would be a real possibility. Government intervention would also be likely.

To fight back against such tactics, Woodcock would have to mobilize and organize the ranks, hold mass meetings of each local, keep the workers informed, encourage them to raise new demands, pledge not to order a return to work until all local strikes were settled. He would have to go to other unions, and to the student and black movements for financial and moral aid.

Moreover, Woodcock would also have to repudiate the Democratic Party "friends of labor" who, when push comes to shove, always act as friends of business. (In the recent railroad strike, both parties, almost unanimously, passed into law the exact contract the railroad workers had just voted down. In the postal strike, not a single one of these "friends of labor" spoke for granting the just demands of the postal workers.)

On the basis of the UAW bureaucracy's past performance, is any of this likely? On the contrary, experience indicates that the bureaucracy is likely to take whatever it can wrangle out of the companies after several weeks, and try to ram it down the workers' throats as in 1967.

If more is to be gained, the ranks will have to do everything Woodcock is afraid to do. The ranks must organize to prevent a sellout. They must demand **NO COMPROMISE** on the basic contract issues: **restoration of full cost-of-living and the 26 cents lost since 1967; retirement after 30 calendar (not credit) years with full cost-of-living protection; no negotiating away seniority protection and sick benefits; refusal by the union to take the job of disciplining the work force.**

At the same time, to protect their standard of living and basic rights, the ranks must confront the issues the bureaucracy has not dared to raise. Inflation has not only meant falling real wages. Because the companies' sales are off, they have laid off thousands of workers — above and beyond those who are always laid off seasonally, as for model changeover. Over 150,000

auto workers, one fifth of the total work force, have been out of work sometime during the last year. Many did not have the necessary seniority to qualify for the Supplemental Unemployment Benefit plan, which the companies get around by laying off non-seniority employees.

To combat layoffs, the demand for a **30 hour work week at 40 hours' pay with no compulsory overtime** is critical: this would spread the work evenly among all workers and over the entire year; the company could no longer work people 55 hours a week for three months, then lay thousands off. The demand that **all workers be eligible for S.U.B. payments** should be raised.

Any gains will be cancelled if the companies are allowed to raise their prices, setting off an inflationary price spiral. In fact, the companies (and the government) always claim that "excessive" wages cause inflation. On the contrary, we think that excessive profits, together with giant expenditures for the military, the space program, etc., cause inflation. By cutting down their giant profits, the companies could grant workers' demands without raising prices. But they won't do this unless forced. The ranks, to show they are serious about fighting inflation, should demand a **pledge not to raise auto prices, written into the contract.** (This demand was made in the 1945-46 strike against GM, but never since.)

The ranks must also fight back against the attack on working conditions. It's not enough to defeat the demands the companies are making right now. Working conditions are *already* intolerable. In order to fight effectively, workers need the **free right to strike during the life of the contract.** In addition, **line speed and production standards must be negotiated** by the companies, and workers must have the right to vote on all changes in these areas. These are rights auto workers had until the late 1940's, when Reuther bargained them away (as he did with so many rights).

In order to fight back on the shop floor, steward representation is also critical. Right now, every time a worker looks over his shoulder he sees a foreman, but when a steward is needed there's none to be found. Workers should demand a **steward for every fore-**



G.M. WORKERS PICKETING BUICK PLANT

man; innocent until proven guilty when charged with an offense by management.

A workers' movement can gain strength only through unity. But black workers — and increasingly, women workers — are already struggling against the discrimination they face on the job and in society. We can unify only on the basis of the commitment to Blacks, Chicanos, and women, that we will all stand together in fighting against the special firms of oppression that these groups have always faced.

A large minority of assembly line workers in auto are black; but management keeps the higher grades and the skilled trades mainly white by hiring off the street. The ranks must demand **promotion and access to skilled trades through seniority, with special provision for recruiting non-whites and women where necessary to overcome inequality.** Women, forced into the role of "homemakers," must be free to work as they please; **free child care centers for women workers must be provided at company expense.**

Finally, the tactic of striking one company while the others run without a contract must be ended. Whatever the advantages of this tactic originally, the fact that the unstruck companies can and will contribute to support the struck firm means that a nationwide, industry-wide strike must be fought this fall. The auto companies bargain as a "united front"; auto workers must make their power felt to the maximum by shutting down the whole industry. **Strike all three companies at the same time; no contract, no work.** Anything less than this will let the companies, united, take on the workers separately.

This is the kind of program the ranks will have to fight for in order not only to defeat the attack being made by the companies on their living standards and working conditions, but to counter-attack and win what labor needs. *But even more important than program is organization* — this program is just nice slogans without the organization to fight for it. Simply to prevent a repetition of 1967 will take more organization than exists now.

Since the last contract, numerous rank and file groupings have sprung up. The most important have been the black caucuses — the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit, the Black Panther Caucus in Fremont, California, United Black Brothers at Ford Mahwah. The emergence of these caucuses is the most important event in the fight of black workers against racism since World War II. But these caucuses are few and in any case, as caucuses to fight against the special oppression of blacks, they cannot and should not be open to the ranks as a whole.

The other major rank and file grouping has been the United National Caucus, formed after the last contract. Based mainly in the skilled trades, it has devel-

Unemployment — 5.2% and rising; Inflation — 6% and steady.

The above score is the result of a game plan devised by the nation's number one sports fan, Richard Nixon, better known as Tricky Dick for the way he fools the opposition. Unfortunately, Nixon's game plan for the national economy has the same effect as playing sports with Agnew: You end up getting hit in the head.

Lest anyone should think that this is only a mistake, or a bad play, the following is a brief outline of the Nixon plan. It starts off with one major rule, that there must be a trade-off between employment and inflation. The plan is supposed to work in the following way (as reported in *Fortune* magazine): "Monetary and fiscal policy would be used to slow or halt the economy's growth for awhile: the Federal Reserve would tighten the money supply while the Treasury aimed for a budget surplus. As the economy's growth ground to a halt, sales would be harder to make and costs would increase; business would be unable to raise prices at will, and would even be forced to reduce them. Profits would be squeezed, and unemployment would rise.

The combination would force business to reduce costs and resist labor's inflationary wage demands. Once the rate of price increases began to fall, monetary and fiscal policy could be eased."

What this means essentially is that the government is attempting to make the wage earner pay for the inflation that it caused. It urges the companies to cut costs in order to maintain their current rate of profit. There are three main ways they can do this: First of all, by firing or laying off workers; Secondly, by fighting to keep wages as low as possible, since if they pay out less they make more money; And lastly, by trying to increase productivity, that is, output per man hour. This can be done through speed-up on the assembly line, introduction of new automated devices, or further regimentation and disciplining of the work force. No matter which device they use, we lose.

Nixon, on assuming the presidency, vowed to do something for the forgotten American. He has. He has reduced our standard of living, made our working conditions more abominable than they were before, and often eliminated our jobs altogether. It is only fair that we do the same to him in return.

Play Ball Michael Urquhart

oped no program to deal with working conditions or racism, and so has been unable to reach out to production workers. In recent months it has hardly functioned. Several new groups have sprung up in Detroit in the last weeks, but these have not yet put down roots.

In order to fight for the contract demands and against a sellout — much less for other critical demands — it will be necessary to form Strike Committees of rank and file workers in every plant to mobilize the ranks as Woodcock should be doing — to organize picketing and keep workers informed of developments, to discuss and react to the progress of negotiations, to keep pressure on the UAW bureaucracy, to ask for support from community, student, and black organizations. Whenever possible, these committees should form city-wide and regional coalitions to better organize the fight. Above all, through these committees, workers must fight for rank and file control over the strike, to avoid a repetition of 1967, when Reuther forced a bad contract on an unorganized membership.

Struggle Organizations

In order to go beyond immediate demands and make possible long-term struggle by the ranks, these Strike Committees must become permanent rank and file organizations of struggle. They must be prepared to struggle and strike over immediate issues, with or without the say-so of Solidarity House; they must also stand for election in local unions on the basis of a full program.

Not only shop-floor struggle, but political struggle is needed — the most militant strike cannot, by itself, rebuild our poisoned cities, win decent education for our children, end the oppression of blacks and women in society as a whole, stop the Vietnam war and prevent future imperialist wars, or convert industry from inflationary arms and space production to production of the goods and services needed for a decent life. To accomplish this, working people must withdraw their support from the Democratic Party, which like the Republican Party, is controlled by business and serves the needs of business. Instead, rank and file organizations must raise the demand for independent political action of the working class to serve workers' own needs, and eventually for a Workers' Party, controlled by the ranks.

Workers should begin to shape a long range program — but the need for rank and file organizations is not only a long range need — the need is now, in September, as the auto strike begins, not when it is about to end. All the facts point to the conclusion that this will be no ordinary strike — because of the profit squeeze, and because the growing restlessness of the ranks is reaching a danger point, management must attack on two fronts, the economic front and the "productivity" front. Only by a bitter struggle — not by ordinary "business unionism" such as the UAW bureaucracy is still using — can such an attack be turned back.

Only if coherent organizations develop to lead the ranks can such a bitter strike be won. If they fail to develop, the UAW bureaucracy will wait until the ranks are tired and discouraged, then submit whatever contract management finds acceptable and say, "That's all we could get, boys, if you don't like it you can stay out till next Christmas." If organizations of the rank and file do not develop, a major defeat will be in the offing for the nation's 750,000 auto workers; if they do emerge, the ranks will once again begin to build the future with their own hands.

Wayne Pierce

Racism in Auto

For the first time in 20 years the auto industry is being forced to confront the question of racism as a result of a sharp struggle on the part of black workers.

Blacks first entered the auto industry during World War II. At that time, they tended to be rigidly segregated into specific plants, specific departments, etc. Black caucuses first arose in auto in the early '40's. The Trade Union Leadership Council (TULC) was formed in this period. In the early post-war period the UAW was successful in integrating the leadership of these caucuses into the structure of the union bureaucracy. By the 1950's these caucuses had ceased to exist as real organizations of the rank and file.

However, migration of blacks from the rural South to the industrial East and Mid-west continued and accelerated. The Middle sixties saw a sharp increase in this movement when rapid mechanization combined with boom times in Northern auto plants.

As a result, blacks now constitute a far larger percentage of the work force than ever before. In many plants they are the majority, especially in the inner city.

Black Stay Back

Racial discrimination is rampant in the plants and takes a number of forms. Blacks usually hold the hardest, dirtiest, and most oppressive jobs. Often the "on the line" production classifications will be almost entirely black, while the more desirable classifications (inspection, hi-lo driver, etc.) will be almost entirely white. In every plant blacks hold far more than their share of the least desirable jobs. The skilled trades have traditionally been all white, with a handful of token blacks.

Blacks are almost never assigned to openings in classifications such as inspection; young whites are regularly assigned to these jobs. In plants where there are a large number of older white workers, the seniority system can work to prevent the

younger blacks from getting into better jobs. Apprentices are admitted into the skilled trades on the basis of their score on an entrance examination. These tests give a decided advantage to whites, both because whites usually receive a better education and because the tests are culturally geared to things familiar to whites.

Supervisors are more often than not racist in their attitudes towards blacks, subjecting them to the severest discipline, assigning them to the worst jobs, even openly referring to them as "niggers."

Black Caucuses

These conditions, together with the general deterioration of working conditions in auto and the national growth of militant black consciousness, have led to the re-emergence of rank and file black workers organizations.

Groups have sprung up in the majority of plants where there is a significant number of black workers. They are often taking the leading role, not only in the struggle against racism, but in the general struggle against the miserable conditions in the plants. Most have seen the need both to struggle within the union and to lead struggles on the shop floor outside the confines of the union structure.

While their purpose is primarily to organize black workers and to struggle against racism, as well as engage in the general shop floor struggle, many have sought the support of white workers. Notably, the United Black Brothers at the Ford Mahwah plant were able to win the support of whites without compromising any of their demands. Other groups have taken a similar approach.

An important exception has been the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit, an organization linking several groups, the most active of which is the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) at the Dodge Main assembly plant. The League has at times taken the position that white workers are the

enemy. They often refer to white workers at Dodge Main as "Polish pigs."

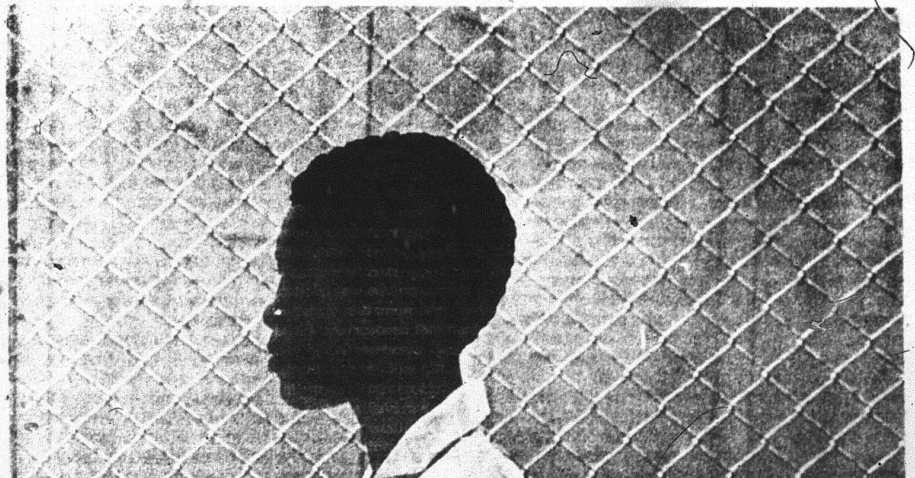
The problem here is not that white workers might be offended. White workers will no doubt be offended by any serious struggle against racism. Rather, the danger lies in assuming that white workers are incapable of struggle, and beyond that, in abandoning the concept of class struggle — the idea that the real enemy is the company, profiting by racial divisions among the workers — in favor of an attitude of race struggle, with the company an impersonal and innocent bystander.

However, though the concept of a purely racial struggle poses dangers for black workers, the fact of racism poses an even more serious danger for white workers. For the whites the question is one of two choices: either clinging to racism and remaining at the mercy of the corporations or abandoning their racism and being able to fight together with blacks against the companies. Auto workers must be united against the common enemy, and this can only come about if white workers begin to support the demands of blacks for an end to discrimination; black workers cannot, will not, and should not give up these demands.

Militant Example

Black workers have taken the lead and set an example of militant and uncompromising struggle. White workers must begin to follow that example. The coming period should see an increasingly militant struggle on the part of all workers. The need for real unity and a common effort against the racism in the industry will become both clearer and more pressing.

End racism in the auto industry... Open the skilled trades to blacks and other minorities... Upgrading through seniority only... Special seniority provisions where necessary to overcome years of racial imbalance... Right to strike over racial grievances.



Sly and the Social Crisis

Abbie Blake

On July 27, 1970, thousands battled police in Grant Park and downtown Chicago when a concert scheduled by Mayor Daley's office failed to come off. 126 police were injured and 30 hospitalized. Over \$10,000 worth of police equipment was damaged or destroyed, and more than \$100,000 worth of damage done to downtown stores on Michigan, Wabash, and State. 150 people were arrested and 36 hospitalized, three with gunshot wounds.

Chicago newspapers carried articles on the riot for a week afterwards. Big-wigs made mournful condemnations of the state of the nation's youth. Legislators proposed laws to make licensing and regulation mandatory for all rock concerts, and to legalize police entry into any concerts held on private property.

The office of the mayor called for a full-scale investigation of the incident. That was hardly necessary, however, for what caused the uprising, and what will continue to cause uprisings like it, should be obvious to anyone with his or her eyes open. It certainly was clear to the young people who participated.

The Sly and the Family Stone concert scheduled that day was part of Mayor Daley's Bread and Circuses program for alienated youth called "Reach-out." Five more rock concerts had been planned, and an office opened which offered tea and sympathy to young people

who couldn't find jobs.

Chicago is hot in the summer, and most people don't have air conditioners. There are few public swimming pools, and the beaches along the lake are jammed when they aren't covered with dead fish. Movies are at least \$2 a head. One can read the Bible cover to cover while waiting in line at the state employment office.

The city has been making an all-out attack on "hang-outs," including not only those few bars where people under 21 can sometimes drink, but also parks and corners where people park or stop and talk. There are curfews for those under 18 in most working-class neighborhoods, and the police enforce them at their discretion. On the pretext of checking ID's for a curfew violation, police often stop young women on the streets to get their phone numbers or just to bother them. An "uncooperative" woman can get slapped with a warning notice and her name sent down to the local police station.

There is not much to do with little money, and nothing to do with no money at all.

The people who attended the concert in general, and especially those who participated in the uprising, were primarily young blacks, working class hippies, and "greasers." These are the young people most affected by the present cri-

sis in the cities — and most harassed by the police. The Chicago newspapers recognized the bi-racial nature of the incident, but said nothing about its class composition.

The role played by the suburban, middle class hippies and the "peace freaks" was one of open opposition to the young black and white working class kids, who were on the offensive for the first time. The more middle class kids stood near the police, frantically giving peace signs to everyone. At times, they even joined arms to form a line between the police and the rebels, or went through the park collecting and smashing bottles so they couldn't be used as weapons.

Precisely what touched off the battle is not known. Sly and the Family Stone had stood up Chicago audiences in the past, and it looked like they were going to do it again. Most of the audience was restless, but remained quiet. There were a few incidents near the stage. For some reason, cops began gassing the crowd — and there is just about nowhere for 50,000 people to go when they're being gassed in Grant Park, except into the Loop (downtown Chicago).

As people poured out of Grant Park in the middle of Chicago's rush hour, the police were virtually helpless. The streets were jammed: Spectators stood by and laughed. Police had tantrums

right in the middle of the street. The crowd took the offensive and kept it up for hours.

The power structure of Chicago and its press spent the rest of the week trying to repair the damage to its highly-publicized "Reachout" program. Mayor Daley and Daniel Shannon of the Park Board tried to convince the public that the whole blow-up had been planned — but who could have planned it (except perhaps the police)? Daley and his gang would have liked to lay the blame on the famous Mindless Masses — driven by primal urges and controlled by a foreign power. But more and more people are coming to understand that it is the social system itself, and the people who represent it, who are to blame for the social crisis.

The blacks, the greasers and the working class freaks knew what they were doing. Theirs was a spontaneous demonstration of resistance to the misery of life in a society based on exploitation and oppression. The July uprising in Chicago was a collective, mass revolt.

Senator Percy declared in tones of outrage and disgust that, "the city had attempted to build a bridge to young people, but the young people sabotaged it." That's right. We don't need your bridges, they said to the ruling class, in the streets of Chicago. We're building bridges to a new society, and they're going to run right over you.



Bodies by CHRYSLER

A few weeks ago at an auto assembly plant in Detroit, a worker climbed up to a point where the line makes a bridge, fifteen feet above the floor. The partly-assembled bodies are held in place on the line by chains attached front and back. Out of sight of the foreman, this worker waited until a car had reached the top of the bridge, then pulled the pins attaching the chains. The half-assembled body ran down the bridge, smashed into the cars ahead, knocked four off the line, and ripped out a good length of chain.

In a minute every worker in the area had assembled; work stopped, everyone was laughing and cheering. White collars swarmed everywhere: who was responsible? No one had seen anything. Fuming, management sent for repairmen. Twenty minutes went by before anyone was back at work.

Sabotage like this — though not so

spectacular — happens every day in the plants; Forced to work faster and faster, in conditions of filth, prevented from striking over working conditions, saddled with a grievance procedure that takes months to produce results — and with line speed and production quotas conceded by the UAW in the late '40s to be management's prerogative — workers take this method of fighting speedup and getting back at the company.

Murder, on the other hand, doesn't happen every day. On a hot afternoon in mid-July this year, two foremen and a jobsetter lay dead in Chrysler's Eldon Avenue Gear and Axle plant in Detroit. James Johnson, a conveyor loader, laid down a M-1, saying "I'm satisfied," and walked to the company guard shack where Detroit police arrived to take him into custody.

The background — though not the finish — of James Johnson's story is simply the bitter daily struggle of workers in any large plant to defend themselves against intolerable working conditions and abuse by management. The abuse is worse when management is white and production workers are black — as are a high percentage of Eldon Ave. workers, including Johnson. In this struggle the higher levels of the UAW bureaucracy never show up except to bail the company out of trouble.

At Eldon Ave. the ventilation system hardly operates. The jitney trucks have defective brakes, horns or lights. Aisleways are blocked. In one department there is an inch and a half of oil covering the floor, slopping over the soles of the workers' shoes.

In mid-April the second shift at Eldon Ave. wildcatted over the firing of a black worker who argued with his foreman. After two days UAW Local

961 ordered the workers back on the job, but two weeks later a second strike broke out when fourteen stewards were fired for organizing the first wildcat. Chrysler went to court for an injunction; a UAW lawyer protested mildly to the judge, but confided to him, "I only vaguely represent Local 961." Local 961 officers, backed up by international officials, ordered the workers back on the job; the fourteen stewards remained fired.

About the same time, James Johnson was involved in a major car accident. His doctors told him to stay home, the company doctor told him to report for work. He was without representation — his department's steward was one of the fourteen who were fired. He went back to work. A month later, coming back from his summer vacation, Johnson was told he was fired with no vacation pay. Two days later management took him back.

On July 15 Chrysler bumped Johnson from his job as a conveyor loader, replacing him with a worker hired two weeks before. Johnson was shifted to working the brake oven — an operation which takes place in 120-degree heat. Storming down to the labor relations office with his steward, Johnson was told by the general foreman, "We're going to give you a few days off to stay home and cool off."

"No you won't," Johnson answered. "I'm going to come back here and kill you." Johnson left the plant and came back with his M-1. He asked his fellow workers to stay back because he did not mean to hurt them. The general foreman was nowhere to be seen. Johnson encountered his foreman and the foreman of an adjacent department, and shot them both. A jobsetter tried to

disarm him, and Johnson shot him too, and then walked down to surrender.

This was not the form which the class struggle should take; with a rank and file controlled union, workers would have been able to fight back against the firing in April, the firing of the stewards, the abuse of Johnson, the safety conditions in the plant. However, individual action is the form the class struggle necessarily takes when workers are stripped of every organized defense and when the stewards, the workers' defense on the shop floor, are coldly sacrificed by a Local and International union leadership working side by side with management. ELRUM - Eldon Revolutionary Union Movement, a division of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers — leafleted the plant the next day approving of Johnson's action.

The *Inner City Voice*, the official organ of the League, referring to the fact that the three dead men included a Southern white, a Pole, and a black, stated that Johnson rang "the bell of justice" for a "representative of every reactionary element within the plant: 'A HILLBILLY,' 'A POLLOCK' AND 'A UNCLE TOM NEE-GROW!'" (July 15, 1970) This approach is mistaken. The enemy is Chrysler — and not the foremen; but the general management (aided by the International leadership of the IAW, which can only protect its own position as labor's "honest broker" if it keeps the membership disciplined). While we defend Johnson's desperate act of resistance, we do not point to it as the road forward — the road forward is the creation of rank and file organizations of struggle which can fight on the shop floor, within the union, and politically, to bring Chrysler and its colleagues to their knees.

The Silent Majority and the War

President Nixon likes to claim the "silent majority" supports him on the war issue. We are all familiar with the spectacle of the President, the morning after announcing some escalation, pulling opinion polls out of his pocket which show large majorities supporting him. In fact, many people in the anti-war movement — remembering the pro-war demonstrations of construction workers in New York — think of "hard hats" and the working class in general as supporters of the war and escalation.

A closer look at opinion polls tells a different story, according to a study conducted by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan (see Philip E. Converse and Howard Schuman, " 'Silent Majorities' and the Vietnam War War," *Scientific American*, June 1970). After studying polls made from 1965 to 1970, the authors report that majorities *do* support the President in escalating moves. But this is because there is a large group of people whose minds are not made up, and who support the President in *any* initiative which looks as if it might end the Vietnam stalemate. This "soft" opinion is just as likely to support *dé-escalation*.

What about people who *have* made up their minds? The polls show that more and more people each year regard the US intervention in Vietnam as a mistake. The percentage rose from about 23 in 1965 to nearly 60 percent in late 1968. What to do about it? In late 1964 about 13 percent were for immediate withdrawal, nearly 50 percent for "a stronger stand," and the rest for "staying

but trying for peace." By the end of 1968 the percentage for immediate withdrawal had gone up to about 23 percent, those wanting a "stronger stand" had declined to about 37 percent, and about 40 percent, roughly the same as before, were for "staying but trying for peace."

Which groups favor withdrawal and which favor escalation? Contrary to the image of hard-hat hawks and anti-war students, neither workers nor students are solidly for or against the war — both groups are split.

But in every year since 1964, the less-educated have been *more* opposed to the war than the better educated. The militant protests at a small number of "quality" universities have given us our image of the opposition to the war. But if we look beyond this small number of universities and consider the college-educated population as a whole, the picture changes.

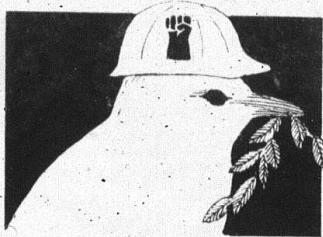
In 1968, the authors report, among whites, "college-educated people in their twenties were more likely than older people of grade school education both to justify the war and to favor an intensification of it." (Another myth exploded by a careful look at the polls is the myth of the "generation gap" — older people oppose the war about as much as younger people.) The graduates of smaller colleges and state universities — roughly speaking, white-collar employees and professionals — have "served as the backbone of popular support for the war." Those who never went to college — roughly speaking, the working class — have been more opposed.

Both black people and women "have shown more disenchantment with involvement in Vietnam than white males over the entire period" from 1964 to 1969, according to the writers. For example, women educated at the "quality" universities were "already quite negative about the war" as early as 1964, while even at these most anti-war universities, the males generally remained "thoroughly hawkish" until 1966.

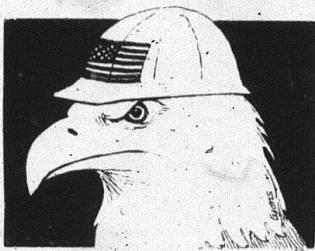
The writers conclude that there are two groups opposing the war. One, the intellectuals and students, is much in the news and opposes the war mainly for moral reasons; the other, "much less politically visible" but many times larger, opposes the war because it cannot be won and because the costs are loaded onto their shoulders.

In this group as among the population as a whole, immediate withdrawal is still a minority position — the majority is for "staying but trying for peace", which means that these people still believe there can be a way to satisfy both the interests of US imperialism and the interests of Vietnamese nationalism. That is, they are not yet convinced that the war is imperialist — that, from the Vietnamese side, it is a struggle for national liberation.

But the polls show that the image of hard-hat hawks is a myth — that the ordinary black and white working men and women of America, while uncertain about the war, are more opposed to it than the better-educated middle and upper classes in whom elitists tell us to put our faith.



James Coleman



At Nekoma, North Dakota, on May 16, 1970, an estimated 1,000 citizens of remarkably old-fashioned faith, a faith that it is still possible not to accept the unacceptable, met together to give public witness that they were opposed to the installation of the military's ABM equipment, already under construction. There were buildings underway, mere skeletons of wood. There were piles of dirt turned mud in the recent rains surrounding the buildings and the tentative excavation in which the eventual silo would house the eventual expensive theory of instant destruction, still, so far, theory, still to be proved on human hardware.

Our faith, the faith of those assembled there, was the old faith in American ingenuity, the faith that however inept modern technology had become it could, by sheer blind persistence and an unquenchable death-wish arising out of life styles so sterile as to hold no ultimate meaning for all the expended energy of their conditioned years, at last get it off, get it to work. It will blow eventually, most likely in its hole. The faith was a faith to act upon the act of its blowing.

To look at the sight on that day was to reveal nothing sinister in all the ordinary builder's equipment, tool sheds, ripped sod and muddy tracks, portable Johns, and bulldozers, except that it was all surrounded by a low single chain from which signs depended and warned trespassers to keep off government property. Whose government? Even so, it had all the familiar impedimenta of construction. And we had faith they would bring it off. So unwilling in most cases to believe the government in what it says it will do, we believed it when it said what it intended to do here. Still we

have faith. Still we believe they mean to create death.

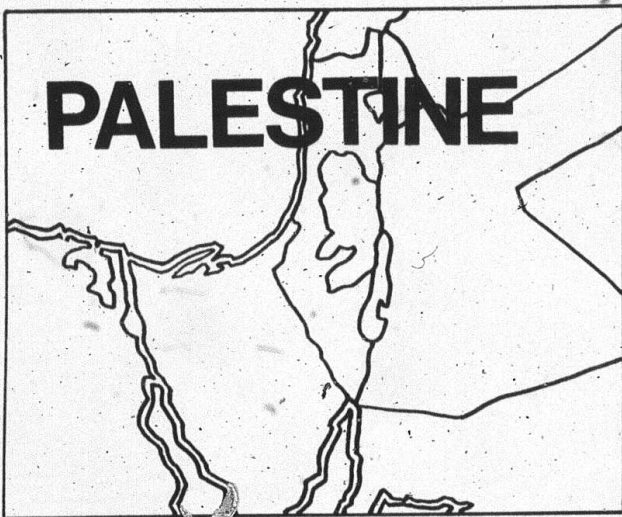
And so, for that reason, sadly, we no longer believe them when they say they aim for peace. These missiles seem aimed at peace, not for it. They can bring down any peace in the wind, any bird flying naturally, any lost wing in the winter mind. We must have faith that they will work, believe that they can overkill, overdeath us all, grow glutted with destruction. It is the way of machines, of five-sided minds, and pumps for hearts.

The state police patrolled us, blocked the road leading off state route 1 to Nekoma, the small town hoping to grow fat on the kill, but on Saturday boarded up and barricaded against the possibilities of peace. It cost, one announced estimate revealed since then, \$58,000 to hold the National Guard (out of sight) in readiness in case one of us threw a rock (it was all mud and soil on the farmland slope where we gathered). Helicopters circled through the kites flying in the blue air, colored paper like threats to the Pentagon.

The olive-green helicopter protected the hole in the ground and the timber walls camouflaged like a barn raising, protected the site too from flying frizbees and the stinging missals of rock music, the fragmentation pellets of poems and wheat seeds hurled offensively into the aggressive farmland. Our arms were paper, words, music, and trees — small trees planted like ritual virgins in the concave altar of death — inept, little, mere life. We stood in a quiet cluster, pleading against the coming of the rape, the military missile-hardon plunged in ever increasing frustration in the torn belly of Mother Earth.

NEKOMA AND THE A.B.M.





Time Bomb in the Middle East

Moshe Avneri

Palestine is a time bomb beneath all the ruling classes in the Middle East. Why is this so? Will Palestine be the Vietnam of the 1970s?

The Middle East is kept poor and made poorer by imperialism, by the foreign companies, especially the oil companies, which siphon off the natural wealth of the region which could give its people a decent life.

Instead, oil is shipped off to Europe to boost the profits of the same bosses who attack wages and conditions at home.

In return, the oil monopolies and the Western governments back up the local ruling classes, giving the oil sheiks and the army colonels enough of the profits to keep them happy with Cadillac or modern weaponry, according to taste.

The most basic improvements in the conditions of the workers and peasants cannot be won without breaking this stranglehold. And as all the privileged classes are more or less tied to imperialism, this means that the people can only really improve their lives by acting independently, for themselves, without relying on regular army officers, bureaucrats or princes to do it for them.

That is why every cry for real independence and a decent life in the region carries the threat of socialist revolution. And that is why all the governments in the region are forced to make nationalist noises for fear of their skins.

Zionism

This is where Zionism and the state of Israel come in. Zionism aimed to solve the problem of persecution of the Jews with the help of imperialism and at the expense of the Arabs of Palestine, who were to be "moved out" to make room for a racially "pure" community of Jewish settlers.

So the local Arab ruling classes also had to oppose Zionism in words, to satisfy their own people. They did this the easy way, by appealing to racial and religious bigotry, instead of attacking the real enemy: imperialism, which was their own paymaster.

This made it all the easier for Zionism leaders to ask the Israeli workers to support them as the Arabs wanted to "massacre them or drive them into the sea".

The conservative, feudal kingdom of Jordan was the clearest example of this. In 1948, the rulers moved

their British-officered army into Palestine "to protect the Arabs" while at the same time they signed a pact with the Zionists dividing Palestine between them. And for 18 years the struggle of the Arab people against Zionism seemed the same as the struggle of the Arab governments against Israel, while a million refugees rotted helplessly in camps.

The 1967 war changed all that, and put the guerrillas at the center of the picture. The efforts of the exiled Palestinians to carry on the struggle themselves threatened the Jordan government, most of whose people were Palestinians who hated the king.

The war showed that none of the Arab ruling classes can beat Israel. They have backed the UN call for a "peaceful settlement" which would leave the Palestinians without a country, and which is also supported by America and Russia, who want to preserve "stability" (that is, exploitation) in the region.

King Hussein has been forced to share power with the guerrillas. They have paraded armed in the streets,

and his law does not hold in the refugee camps.

But at all costs he must stop them taking over. That would force the Israelis to intervene, it would lose him his kingdom, and worst of all it would stop the question being settled over the heads of the Palestinians. So he tolerates the guerrillas as far as he must, while preparing repressions against the "extremists".

He is helped in this by the leaders of the major guerrilla force, El Fatah. They hold that the struggle against Zionism is separate from the struggle against the landlords, the bosses and the oil companies in the Arab countries themselves. They rely for money and arms on the Arab governments.

But in fact Zionism can only be beaten by hitting at the landlords and the oil companies, by giving the Arab workers and peasants something to fight for — a socialist middle east where all national minorities, including the Jews of Israel, would have full equal rights. No existing Arab government would back these demands which hit at

their imperialist paymaster.

This socialist programme is backed by the two groups to the left of Fatah involved in the recent fighting, the Popular Front and the Democratic Front. The DF criticizes the PF for relying too much on individual terror without involving its members sufficiently in the struggles of the masses in the Arab countries, and also with relying too much on the Arab governments for assistance.

The more Israel hits at the Arab countries the more the Arab workers and peasants come to see that only revolutionary struggle can get them anywhere, and the more the Arab governments turn against the guerrillas: They do this, like ruling classes everywhere, by calling for "national unity" and attacking "disrupters" and "extremists".

The so-called "progressive" Arab governments in Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Sudan and Iraq rest on army colonels and civil servants instead of on landlords and merchants. In the past they have talked "left", but now they lead the attack on the guerrilla left.

In February, when the DF helped 1500 workers in Jordan on strike in a cement factory owned by the King's uncle, the "left wing" Arab governments supported the guerrillas. Today Nasser, Ghadafi and the rest form a common front with Hussein and Arafat against the "adventurists" of the revolutionary left, while Moscow adds to the chorus of reaction.

One thing is clear: the struggle will continue, exposing in turn each false pretender to the leadership of the developing Arab revolution. A dispossessed and angry people is trying out and testing in turn each of the false alternatives which the past has left it and turns more and more to the road of socialist revolution.

As even in Israel realisation grows of what the dead-end of Zionism means, as the powers that be through throughout the world gang up on the people of the Middle East and their struggle, socialists must prepare for active solidarity with a people fighting the same enemy as us. Their victories and defeats are ours, as well,

[Excerpted from SOCIALIST WORKER, an English International Socialist weekly, July 4, 1970.]





Will South Africa Cut Its Own Throat?

Michael Stanson

South Africa's policy of apartheid has at last proved its inability to operate the economy of the country. The Nationalist government's designs to maintain "white civilization" and stability from the "threat" of the African majority, are proving themselves the downfall of any possible stability which this, the most industrialized country in Africa, could possess.

This month saw the release of figures which confirmed the raging rise in the cost of living for South Africa's white population. An inflationary rise of 5.8 percent during the year as an average for the country was itself surpassed in the major industrial and mining belt around Johannesburg.

The South African government may refuse to seek solutions but it cannot ignore the existence of a problem. In his budget speech this month, the Minister of Finance, Dr. Diederichs — famed for his habit of quoting from another famous tyrant, King Solomon — recognized the central nature of the inflationary problem and made an attempt to combat it by raising taxation and reducing spending power. Unfortunately the wisdom of Solomon seems to have deserted the Minister.

For, as a leader of South Africa's industrialists observed, the roots of the country's economic problems in price control lie not in simple excess demand or random wage increases. They lie in the situation of too many jobs chasing too few workers. South Africa faces an acute shortage of skilled and semi-skilled labor.

To combat this, it has used immense efforts to attract immigrants from Europe and elsewhere (whites only, of course). They have had to face an increasing barrage of opposition from trade unionists in Britain, Holland, Scandinavia and other countries, who are urging their colleagues not to fill the gaps in apartheid's poisonous shell.

As a result, the majority of immigrants to South Africa are those out for easy money in a short time, and the comfort of an African or two to carry out menial domestic tasks for a pittance. This type of immigrant is unlikely to have any long term loyalty to a South Africa unable to provide such goodies, and stable continuing production. There is widespread hostility to the immigrants among the Afrikaans-speaking South Africans who form the government's supporters. One minister even went so far as to suggest that Portuguese and other such immi-

grants should be reclassified as Colored — no light insult in this race-torn land.

The real basis of South Africa's manpower problems is simple to find: it lies in the ideology of apartheid. For South Africa has within its borders the willing and available manpower to solve its problems. The African population, as well as the Indians and other victims of apartheid, have the skilled workers to fill all vacancies, even despite the meagre government expenditure on Bantu and Colored Education. But the cornerstone of the government's policy in gaining its support — the bulk of which, like the majority of its MPs, comes from agricultural areas — is to achieve as much separation of the races as possible.

Partly this is to be carried out by the vicious practice of moving populations of non-whites to special reservations (usually on poor land and with settlements grouped together as an easy target in case of trouble). But within the urban areas themselves the policy is one of restriction to squalid townships and specified suburbs by night, employment under tight "job reservation" by day.

This "job reservation" aims to keep non-whites, according to race, within specified upper limits above which they cannot be employed. Thus when all the economic pointers for stabilizing South African capitalism point the other way, the Nationalist government has recently published its plans to remove skilled Africans from those posts in shops, offices and factories where they would come into contact with white members of the public.

The first to explode at the foolishness of the government's line have been

the businessmen themselves, deprived of cheap labor (in fact, deprived of any labor at all). The Federated Chamber of Commerce, a leading employers' association, described as "completely unacceptable" the government's intention to halt the employment of Africans in administrative posts. In secret they have recommended at least a 10 percent increase in the number of Africans allowed to work in urban areas.

The Trade Unions too are coming out strongly against the government's job reservation scheme. Traditionally, South Africa's recognized Trade Unions, which do not permit African members, have maintained a very ambiguous position on job reservation, often accepting the apparent short-term advantages such a scheme may offer white workers. But now the Trade Unions are increasingly realizing that a collapsing economy is worse than the supplying of African labor into skilled work. The Union of Distributive Workers has called the government's policy "extremely shortsighted and ill-advised."

In reality there are two images. Industrialists, trade unionists and opposition parties are attacking the official policies of full-blown apartheid. The total scheme, as lunatic in concept as it is evil and cruel in execution, is to remove most Africans eventually into "Bantustans", with a nominal amount of self-government but under a central government veto — and of course in a situation where the African political parties are banned. Industries would then move to the borders of these Bantustans, and would be able to exploit labor from within them.

These workers would be unable to seek employment elsewhere except on

their meagre land, and would be forbidden by law to strike or organize for better conditions. This "ideal" form of oppression could only emerge from a wild dream; populations are not so simply dealt with, nor are industrialists anxious to fall in with policies with so little basis in reality and so little long-term security.

In actual fact the numbers of Africans working in urban areas has increased over the last year, as shown by the release of shock statistics. And in major industries, despite official policy, more Africans are employed than ever before. The restrictions which keep Africans down to the lowest grades are repeatedly transgressed by firms — a registered tea-boy may be working as an accountant, a "general laborer" as a skilled or semi-skilled engineer, away from the official gaze; they will be paid more than their registered grade, but much less than a white person doing the same job.

The Steel and Engineering Industry is negotiating emergency reservation exemptions for Africans which it claims will be temporary, just to avert the acute shortage here; and even the Minister of Transport, Mr. Schoemann, was forced to admit that Africans were being employed on the Railways with more laxity as to the jobs they could take.

Bitter End

One cannot say, however, that objective economic pressures must inevitably force the Nationalist government to back down from its oppressive and irrational apartheid policies. The Nationalist party was brought to power on the basis of its irrational and hysterical ideas, against the desires of western-owned industry. It has maintained its electoral support by intensifying and weaving a mystic thread around these ideas. If its structural hold on sections of society is strong enough it may, despite all the forces of opposition, be able to push ahead with its plans to transform its irrational beliefs into irrational action, and facing each crisis with another leap forward instead of a step back from apartheid.

Rather than gradual collapse and retreat, South Africa's advocates of apartheid and apostles of hate may choose to cut their throats in public with full pride, glory, and fortitude, in the spirit of the old Boer trekkers' stubborn resistance to all that stood in their way.



Salinas: Heads of Lettuce Roll

Kevin Bradley



The Delano grape strike is over; the Salinas lettuce strike is on. Organized by the Farm Workers Union of Cesar Chavez, lettuce and strawberry workers in the Salinas Valley struck suddenly and unanimously on August 24. Two months earlier, as the Farm Workers approached victory in the grape fields, Teamsters stopped the nation's supply of lettuce with a strike of truck drivers who carry the lettuce to market. With one eye on the grape strike, lettuce growers and Teamster officials negotiated a five year "sweetheart" contract for field workers. Unconsoled and undercut, the workers answered by striking.

The only people left in the fields are the foremen and the ranchers. Each ranch has a ranch committee, whose elected leader meets with the representatives of the other ranches. Strike spokesmen have been speaking at massive farm worker rallies. The ranch leaders include women workers who labor in the fields with their families nine hours a day to make a meager living. Almost all the workers are Chicanos, many of whom don't speak English since they have just arrived from Texas or Mexico. Some of the younger workers wear the

brown beret of radical chicano youth.

The lettuce strike is being waged against some of the biggest corporations in the country. The ranchers involved are not simply individual families hiring a few workers for the harvest, but are part of what is called "Agribusiness" — the merger of farming with big business. The ranches that have been struck are all large-scale operations, each one including at least a packing house, and often a frozen food plant, a pre-coder, and a trucking fleet, as well as the fields.

Agribusiness

Two of the Salinas growers are household names: United Fruit Co, owner of Chiquita bananas, and Purex Corp. These companies together control about one-third of the lettuce production and other Salinas green vegetables. United Fruit Co. is well known for its imperialist domination of the Central American countries, where it exploits the workers who grow its bananas. It had half a billion dollars worth of sales last year, with \$30 million in profit. It also owns the large A & W Root beer and Baskin-Robbins ice cream chains.

Purex makes airplanes and industrial chemicals, besides its household chemicals, and also Brillo soap pads. It is an example of a conglomerate which has investments in many unrelated areas. The idea is that if it has a loss in one area it can keep going with its profits in other areas.

Even in lettuce both Purex and United have much more money behind them than the ordinary grower. They have vegetable farms all over California and Arizona, and even in Colorado and Texas, to supply the market all year round. (However, Purex has already found that this can be a danger as well as an advantage: its lettuce workers in Center, Colorado struck several months before the Salinas workers walked out). To these gigantic companies lettuce means very little in relation to their total sales. United Fruit Co., for example, may well decide it would rather put up with a union in lettuce than let Chiquita bananas be boycotted.

Another large company dominates the Salinas strawberry production, in this case a company owned by a Wall Street bank. S.S. Pierce also produces tobacco, and owns food stores in Boston, a whiskey distillery, potato chip and fruit juice companies, and other plants. It is controlled by Laird Incorporated, a stock brokerage company on the New York Stock Exchange and investment bankers.

These three companies — United Fruit, Purex and S.S. Pierce — are good examples of agribusiness. They unite national brands, food processing and chemicals with agriculture. Their frozen food plants, packing houses and pre-coolers are examples of factories in the fields. The fields too are run on a factory-like system, with thousands of workers employed by one company, living in company housing. The ways in which capitalism has transformed agriculture have made life intolerable for the farm worker and the current rebellion proves it.

Teamsters' Role

The growers thought they were getting a good deal from the Teamsters: the Teamster officials would supply the workers, keep peace in the fields and keep the Farm Workers Union out. What was in it for the Teamster officials? They have openly admitted that they feared the independent organization of field workers. They also say truck drivers and processing

workers who are covered by Teamster contracts will be thrown out of work by a farm worker strike.

Actually those workers already under Teamster contracts face rotten conditions and know it. Some of these dehydrator, cannery and frozen food workers have worked in the fields themselves. Some are saying they'd rather belong to the Farm Workers Union than the Teamsters. The truth is that the Teamster officials are afraid of militant, organized workers. Rank and file Teamster action could help the farmworker's union in getting Teamster officials out of the fields.

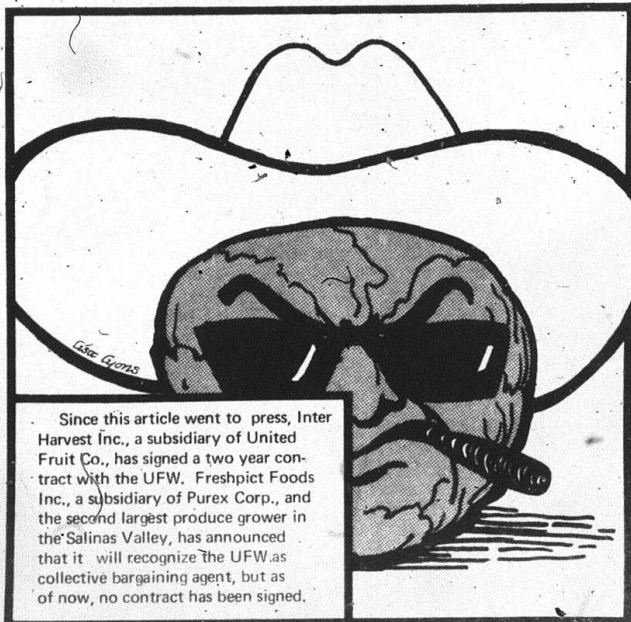
Already Teamsters members in the Los Angeles Produce Market and elsewhere have made it clear that they're against the sweetheart contracts. It is particularly important for rank and file Teamsters who took part in the last Teamster wildcat strike. Groups like the Teamster Improvement Program (TIP), a group which grew out of the Los Angeles wildcat, should begin to put the squeeze on Teamster headquarters.

Scabs

Now all the workers are out of the fields and production is stopped. Several things can happen. The growers can choose to give in and negotiate contracts. This is possible but unlikely. The growers have bitterly resisted unionization in the past, and for good reason from their point of view. Unionization is going to be very costly to them since they have paid such cheap wages for so long. Also, it challenges their social power over the workers, the rural communities and to some degree, through the connections of agribusiness with finance and industry, over society as a whole. They are not going to give up this social power without a bitter fight. So they are likely to bring in scabs, just as did the growers in Delano.

This presents tremendous problems. Most of the scabs will not have been told of the strike, though the union is now spreading the word through all the border towns of Mexico. The scabs will get their transportation paid and arrive in Salinas. The growers have started to get injunctions against picketing but the union has rightly said it will violate them. Then the attacks will start. (Already the union attorney has been beaten by Teamster goons and hospitalized). The growers' foremen brandish rifles and drive tractors into strikers cars.

The union has always made every effort to win over scabs to the side of the



Since this article went to press, Inter Harvest Inc., a subsidiary of United Fruit Co., has signed a two year contract with the UFW. Freshpict Foods Inc., a subsidiary of Purex Corp., and the second largest produce grower in the Salinas Valley, has announced that it will recognize the UFW as collective bargaining agent, but as of now, no contract has been signed.

strikers, to convince them that supporting the strike is in the best interests of every worker. However, when persuasion fails, the workers should not hesitate to use force to protect their jobs against the use of scabs, and to defend themselves against the cops and company goons.

There are of course risks involved in the use of force to stop scabs, and violence should never be provoked unnecessarily. It is the police and the growers who are eager to provoke violence in an effort to frighten the strikers and smear the strike. However, the union leadership, especially Cesar Chavez, have gone beyond caution and demonstrated their willingness to subordinate the interests of the strike to nonviolence.

Nonviolence and the Strike

Of course, Chavez would claim that his stance helps the strike because of the outside support it gains him. The principled stand on nonviolence which Chavez and others justify on religious and moral grounds fits conveniently into an attempt to curry favor with the liberal wing of the establishment in general, and Democratic Party politics in particular. This approach may win limited, short-term concessions, but can lead straight to disaster in the long run.

It is the independent strength and de-

termination of the farmworkers themselves which has been the real key to their success, and won them support all over the country. Liberals and conservatives alike fear steps toward independence on the part of anyone in U.S. society, and particularly of working people. In the long run, liberal politicians will lend "support" to the strike only to contain and absorb it. Reliance on help from on high will sooner or later undermine the morale of the strikers and dissipate the momentum of the strike.

Unruh and Tunney

The Salinas lettuce strike is likely to become a big political issue in California precisely because it challenges the social power of agribusiness. Jess Unruh, the Democratic candidate for governor, has refused to support either the Farm Workers Union or the Teamsters, saying he wants to be "neutral" in this fight. This means he really supports the Teamsters and the growers.

The Democratic Senatorial candidate Tunney openly supported the growers in the grape strike and comes from a grower district in Riverside County. Yet he is endorsed by the labor movement. Fortunately many farm workers have seen through Tunney, a candidate who allowed farm workers to be jailed for boeing him

at a speech he gave. Several farm worker offices have "Scheer for Senafe" stickers. Scheer is running on the Peace and Freedom ticket.

The farm workers have long range problems they are going to have to face as soon as they win the Salinas strike. Automation is taking away their jobs. University of California engineers at Davis have invented a Lettuce Harvesting Machine which can sense which heads are firm and selectively harvest them. With unemployment at its present high levels, which are practically three times as bad for Chicanos as for whites, a real program to guarantee jobs for all is essential.

To handle the problems of increased automation as well as to attack the social and political power of agribusiness, farm workers are going to have to build solidarity with labor as a whole and wage an effective political fight. Rank and file workers must support the farm workers in whatever way possible. Teamsters, in particular can help, but all those who handle produce on the docks, on ships, on trains, in warehouses and in stores must take an active role.

All of Labor will have to take part in farm worker boycotts. Furthermore, working class political action independent of the Democratic and Republican parties, which are both so closely tied to agribusiness, is a real necessity.



L.A.: Battle of the Barrio

Wendy Thompson

On Saturday August 29th, the National Chicano Moratorium held a mass march and rally in Los Angeles. It drew about 20,000 people, mostly Chicano, and mostly teen-agers. Many Chicano groups, both from California and from out of state had come to march, each behind

their banner. The groups lined up at Belvedere Park to march about five miles to Laguna Park.

No one, not even the police, felt that violence was on the agenda. People were excited, but the mood was festive. The march was much like a parade, with people from the community standing along the sidewalks watching. When the park was reached after the long hike, most people bought cool drinks at local stores and took them into the park, sitting on the grass to listen to the entertainment and speeches.

At about this time, the police got a call from the owner of a liquor store located across Whittier Blvd. from the park. The Los Angeles Times reported that "three hundred persons stormed inside and began looting the shelves." The store owner himself later openly denied this. The store was crowded, many were paying for drinks, some weren't. He had simply called the police to help him regulate the crowd and keep out those who were not paying. One person in the store claimed that many kids thought the stuff was being given away free, since other stores had.

Police cars converged on the store from all directions, drawing the attention of people still arriving at the park. Altogether about 20 officers arrived on the scene in their cars. Only a few could actually get in the store. Most stood outside. People gathered, irritated by the show of force. If the police had just left, trouble might have been avoided. People started tossing bottles. The police responded by attacking those nearby.

The crowd at the rally could tell that a small skirmish was occurring at the far end of the park, but most people paid no attention. As it continued, a few people drifted toward the activity, although most still stayed where they were. When additional police reinforcements arrived, the crowd around the liquor store was pushed into the park. The police herded these people toward the center of the rally, tossing tear gas canisters.

Those not previously involved panicked as they saw people running toward them, with police on their tails. It became clear they were after everyone, and people

frantically tried to get out of the park. Many were forced into a dead-end corner surrounded by an 8 foot cyclone fence. Others scrambled over each other to get through the small spaces between buses, cars, and trucks parked near the stage.

There was not enough time for everyone to get out before the tear gas canisters were thrown right in front of the buses. The wind was blowing toward the running people, so that even those who managed to get out had to breathe the gas. Everyone was forced to move up Whittier Blvd. choking and angry. Most of their cars were five miles away at Belvedere Park.

One after another, police cars sped up Whittier Blvd. toward Laguna Park. People fleeing the park were spread out for blocks along Whittier. One person threw a bottle, then another. Soon no police car got by without all its windows smashed. Barricades were set up in the street to stop the cars, but they still kept coming.

Fighting between the people in the street and the police continued. As the police brought greater force to bear on the area, window breaking, looting, and some selective arson began. But it was the police action that provoked the looting and arson, not the other way around, as the press has claimed.

At first, not even a hint of what had really happened came through in the press. It was just presented as a riot started by the Chicano Moratorium.

Normally, police reports are taken by the press to be the truth. Other points of view are dismissed as "irresponsible". The police have learned that they can get away with total falsification because there are no "responsible" opponents that will challenge them.

Ironically, the one victim of this police induced riot was a well-known person, "respected by everyone" (including President Nixon). The death of Rubin Salazar, a Los Angeles reporter on the Mexican-American community and a newscaster, has already brought in an attorney from the Justice Department. There's a demand for a federal investigation. Because a celebrity was killed by the Sheriff's office, suddenly people have refused to accept the pending investigation by this

same department.

Salazar was found on the floor of a bar with a bullet wound in his head. At first he was reported to have been shot by some stray rioter's bullet. Later it was disclosed that he was hit by a 10-inch long, 1 1/2 inch wide tear gas shell, which went in one side of his head and out the other.

Officers claim they had received reports of a man with a gun in the bar and ordered it evacuated. Getting no response they fired the tear gas shell through the open door. But a number of people were in the bar with Salazar and none heard the order to clear it. They insist they were warned not to leave when they attempted it. They also saw no one with a gun. Those that designed the high-velocity tear-gas shell that killed Salazar say that it was clearly not intended for use in crowd control. It can be used to penetrate a house or an object behind which a suspect is barricaded. The fact that it should be fired at a range of 15 feet, through an open door of a bar where the occupants heard no warning, will clearly be something the Sheriff's Department will have a hard time covering up.

Sheriff Peter Pitchess has proclaimed that neither the parade nor the rally was peaceful "at any time". "Known dissidents" had come to the demonstration with deliberate intentions to set off a major riot. He continues: "It is unfortunate that in emergencies of this nature many people without factual knowledge make statements which prejudice the thinking of otherwise objective individuals." In other words, he's upset that this time his credibility has been threatened by those newsmen, etc., who normally take his word as "objective" truth.

We hope that when it's all over, the police department will get more than a slap on the hand. We hope the press will remember that the police cannot be depended on for an unbiased and accurate interpretation of events. Angered by the police break-up of their rally, the Chicano Moratorium does not intend to let the police department intimidate it from holding other political demonstrations. Plans are being made for another demonstration in the middle of September.

AFT and the New Caucus

Richard Broadhead
Joel Jordan

The fifty-fourth annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers met in Pittsburgh during the third week in August. While there were no dramatic changes in policy or leadership, both the Progressive Caucus — which contains practically the entire national leadership — and the most important individual leaders of the union were challenged from several directions. Unfortunately the left liberal-radical opposition was not well prepared politically or organizationally and did not effectively counterpose itself to the current leadership.

The AFT is one of several public employee unions which, like the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), is rapidly growing. During the past year the AFT gained 35,000 members, up 20% from a year ago. Membership now stands at 200,000. Many locals won or retained the position of collective bargaining agent for all teachers in a district during the past year. Several locals had to go through strikes to win their demands. Prominent among these was the Newark, New Jersey, local where 200 teachers were arrested, including Carol Graves, Newark's black president and Dave Selden, AFT national president.

Because of both its rapid growth (ten years ago the membership was 65,000), and the considerable amount of rank and file activity which is necessary to build and maintain new unions (whose strikes are practically always ruled illegal), the AFT is hardly a crusty, highly bureaucratized union. While there is a "machine" the Progressive Caucus, and a king pin, Albert Shanker, Shanker does not rule the machine and the Progressive Caucus does not have an iron grip on the union. There is plenty of elbow room for a left wing to organize, and it has, in the form of the New Caucus.

Al Shanker

Al Shanker is the strongest single figure in the AFT. He is the president of the New York City local, the United Federation of Teachers. New York is a closed shop and the UFT has 65,000 members, about one-third of the total AFT membership.

Shanker is the leading spokesman for the conservative wing of the union. Two years ago Shanker led the UFT through a long racist strike (largely successful) against the movement in NYC for community control of the schools. He has tightened his bureaucratic control of the UFT during the past two years, especially during the aftermath of the 1968 strike. It is now quite difficult for a rank and file opposition to function in New York; the ease of access to the membership that existed only two years ago is gone.

Ever since Vietnam became an issue, Shanker has been a leading pro-war spokesman. In the AFT, he always pushed for the union to take a "no position" position, realizing even three years ago that he could not get the AFT membership to give open support to the war.

But times are changing, especially since the events of last May following the invasion of Cambodia. At the convention, leaders of the Progressive Caucus, including Dave Selden, a member of the Socialist Party who was reelected AFT President, for the first time came out against the war and for the AFT going on record against the war.

However, Shanker was still able to outmaneuver the left and succeeded in getting the war question put to a referendum vote of the entire AFT membership. The convention thus did not get a chance to vote on the war. Had it done so it is clear that an anti-war resolution would have passed.

Moreover, the resolution to be voted on in the referendum is very weak. It calls for withdrawal of all troops by June 1971, instead of for immediate withdrawal, and decries the divisions in our society created by the war. (As soon as the anti-war movement appeared in 1965 divisions were created. Those who decry

paid. This is hardly the way to fight for the right of public employees to strike.

The AFT national leadership isn't doing much better. Their strategy is to run a state by state campaign to make strikes by public employees legal. They haven't had much luck so far. Only Pennsylvania and Hawaii have passed relevant legislation and in both cases strikes are legal only "under certain circumstances." Fear of embarrassing their Democratic friends in Congress may keep them from launching a vigorous campaign to win this right at the national level.

No Alternative

Much of the attention of the convention was focused on the election of new officers. Selden, the incumbent, was opposed by Ken Miesen, a member of the national staff, but he offered no real alternative to Selden. Miesen ran a campaign which was characterized by its lack of issues and its abundance of election post-

the Progressive Caucus because of their opposition to the 1968 UFT strike. (Roth won, Parrish lost.)

Supporting independent candidates is not only not enough, it is a step in the wrong direction. The New Caucus will not be able to win over the membership and transform the AFT until it poses itself as a genuine alternative. In part, this means running its own candidates from its own ranks on its own platform. The AFT will not be put on a new track by trading in the present bureaucrats for some of their discarded functionaries.

Black Caucus

Approximately 15% of the convention delegates were black. They ranged from Shanker-Progressive flunkies to militants. Practically every black at the convention was in the Black Caucus which met several times during the convention. The only way the Caucus intervened in the convention was by supporting the previously mentioned black vice presidential candidate, Richard Parrish. Probably because of its political diversity, it did not come out in an organized way to fight for any of the resolutions which dealt with racism, although individuals from Detroit, Newark, Washington and other locals did so.

The fact that blacks spoke in favor of some resolutions was no doubt important in winning their passage. This was particularly true of a resolution condemning the current wave of repression, which mentioned Jackson State, Kent State, and Augusta as well as the numerous injunctions, jailings and fines which have been leveled against teachers during the past year. Black speakers also helped pass strong resolutions on rights for students and self-determination for Washington, D.C.

However, until a strong militant leadership emerges which is willing to make a thorough break with the present AFT leadership it is unlikely that blacks will play a genuinely independent role. When that break comes, a working coalition with the New Caucus should be possible. Such a uniting of forces will make for a powerful opposition.

Women's Rights

A women's caucus was formed at this convention. It held two meetings and had 20 to 30 women in attendance at each meeting. In addition to discussions of problems women face as teachers and in society, the caucus also took a look at the position of women in the AFT. When two resolutions on women's rights came to the convention floor many of the caucus members spoke and stood their ground despite an overtly chauvinist atmosphere. Many male delegates declared that paid maternity leave would increase the population explosion.

The resolutions on women's rights passed, but important items were deleted. Paid maternity leave was voted down, as was free dissemination of birth control information and contraceptives through the schools. Included in the resolutions were demands for free abortion, free day care centers, the extension of pro-

Crisis in the Schools

Teachers and the Community

IS Pamphlet
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devisiveness were opposed to the anti-war movement until very recently.) Still, passage of the referendum will put the AFT in opposition to George Meany and the AFL-CIO leadership and can be a step in the direction of a total break with the imperialist foreign policies of the Democrats and Republicans.

The Right to Strike

Nearly all teacher strikes are illegal. As with most public employees, a strike is immediately met with injunctions, fines, and jailings. The AFT leadership and Shanker in particular have done a noticeably poor job of fighting for the right of public employees to strike.

Following the UFT strike against community control in 1968, Shanker rammed through a motion in the Delegate Assembly giving UFT support for reelection to all legislators who supported the UFT endorsed decentralization bill passed in Albany. The list included 70 members who had also voted for the Taylor Act, a piece of legislation which makes strikes by public employees illegal and mandates heavy fines and jail sentences for violations.

Also, during the mayoral campaign in NYC Shanker got the UFT to give \$1000 to John Marchi, a conservative who supported the Taylor Act and who ran an openly racist, law and order cam-

ers featuring his picture and name.

The attitude various delegates took toward the candidates hinged primarily on the amount of contact their locals had had with them. The more contact the less support. The delegates from Newark where Selden was arrested in March were practically unanimous in their opposition to him. Most of the delegates from Boston, where Miesen had come to assist in a strike, came to the convention to vote against Miesen. In the end, Selden edged by Miesen with a 105-vote margin, 1,567 to 1,462. Some 150 ballots were cast with no vote for President.

The New Caucus did not run any candidates. This was a serious mistake. Two years ago the New Caucus ran Zeline Richard, a black woman from Detroit, for president, and several vice presidential candidates. These candidates gained 25% of the vote. In failing to run candidates at this convention, the New Caucus left a real vacuum. The 150 blank ballots were only a partial expression of the ire of many delegates for a serious alternative to the present leadership.

Other than issuing a leaflet denouncing Selden and Miesen, the totality of the New Caucus' electoral activity was to support two vice presidential candidates who were running independent campaigns. Both of these men, Richard Parrish, a black from the UFT, and Herrick Roth from Colorado, had been dumped from

protective legislation to men, support for the Equal Rights Amendment, equal pay for equal work, the inclusion of the history of the women's rights movement in the curriculum and similar issues. Most of the leaders of the Women's Caucus were also active in the New Caucus and helped prod the New Caucus into adopting a good plank on women's rights as part of its platform.

New Perspective

As one of the rapidly growing and increasingly powerful unions in this country which is relatively democratic in its internal affairs, the AFT could come to play a leading role in the fight to democratize and inject new life into the trade union movement in this country. Whether the union moves in this direction or digs deeper into the rut Shanker and company are shaping for it depends largely on whether the New Caucus can pull itself together and fight for that new direction in a serious way.

Winning the union to a new perspective means more than posing itself as an alternative leadership at conventions. More important, in fact, a prerequisite for convention activity, is work in each local. New Caucus members must take their program and perspective for the AFT to their locals and win the rank and file.

At this time the New Caucus lacks a well defined perspective. For some members this is a result of a confusion over how the issues and goals put forward by the caucus can be won. Some, however, particularly members and sympathizers of the Communist Party, consciously obscure the main issue — the need to build a genuinely independent caucus. It was the CPers who provided the major rationalizations for the New Caucus not running any candidates and only supporting Parrish and Roth. If the New Caucus becomes primarily a group which supports independents from outside the caucus it will wither and never succeed in remaking the AFT.

The task of building the New Caucus into a strong independent force is not an easy one. In many of the big city locals where the Progressive caucus is the dominant force — Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, New York and others — members of the New Caucus should establish a New Caucus within their local. The New Caucus platform should be expanded and concretized to deal with the specific situations facing each local, and used as a basis for organizing.

Action alliances to improve the schools should be sought with students and community groups, particularly with blacks, chicanos, Latinos and other minorities.

Revitalization of the labor movement must also be central to a working perspective. The key task is to begin a fight to break the labor movement from the Democratic Party and move toward independent class political action. None of the large social issues which have a direct effect on us and our work — poverty, inflation, racism, unemployment — can be seriously dealt with until that step is taken.

When real changes occur in the AFT or the trade union movement, or in society at large, they will not come because someone with a few good planks and some good rhetoric gets into office. Basic changes will come when the rank and file see that a complete reordering is necessary, and take the AFT, the trade union movement, and society as a whole into their own hands in order to solve its problems. The job of the New Caucus and all other militants is to win the ranks to that understanding.

Seattle: A Taste of the Thirties

Louise Mitchell

Two short years ago the national economy was booming. Much of that boom, as well as rising prices, was the result of military spending.

In Seattle, Boeing Aircraft, by far the largest employer in the area, saw both military and commercial orders increasing at the same time. Boeing ads could be found in every want-ad section in the country. Thousands of families moved to the Puget Sound region. Even white-collar employees at Boeing worked on a multi-shift basis.

Unemployment almost disappeared, except among black men and women workers. Housing and recreational facilities mushroomed. So did prices. Seattle had the highest rate of inflation in the country for some time.

cash is rarely seen. About one out of ten in King County (Seattle's county) is on welfare. But the crisis in the state budget caused by the rising unemployment may mean drastic welfare cuts later this year.

Federal statistics back up the impression that it has been blue-collar, production-line workers that have been hardest hit. Another impression which is confirmed by those figures is that young workers, women workers, and black workers have been even harder hit than the average.

Seattle humor hurts: "Question — What's an optimist? Answer — A Boeing worker who takes his lunch to work." There is little cause for laughter. The shipyards, too, are doing badly. Todd

government felt it had to do something was that our balance of payments was running into trouble (as our prices went up, less was bought here, and more was bought abroad), U.S. firms added to the problem by increasing investment overseas.

So, we got a planned "deflation," a cutting of the budget. Unemployment was deliberately fostered by government economic policies.

Seattle was hit the hardest. No one is sure when it will end. Some optimists say February 1971, but many government and private groups say 1972. Everyone agrees on one point: it will get worse before it gets better. The national economy may stay in the slump a lot longer than some are predicting. Investment plans are way down, and the problems behind the "recession" are deep ones. We won't be snapping back to the prosperity of the 1960's.

Boeing likes to keep its plans for the future secret. The Seattle First National Bank admitted this when they said, "Then came the disappointment of losing the B-1 bomber contract, and Boeing dropped another shoe: still another 14,000 would be laid off by the end of the year. No one expects this figure to prove correct, including Boeing management."

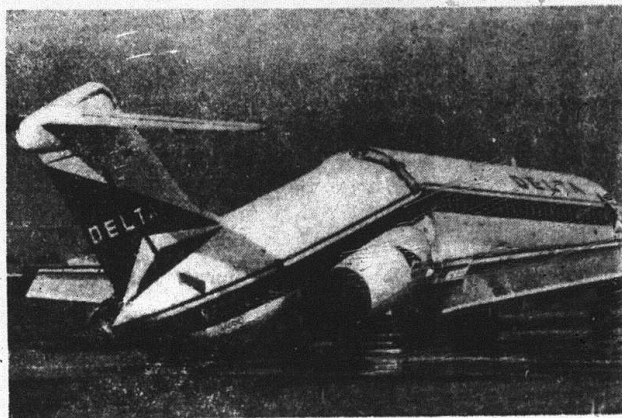
Mushroom Analogy

This habit of secrecy has led to another bit of Seattle humor: "Why are Boeing workers like mushrooms?" "Because they're kept in the dark, fed a lot of horse manure, and then canned." Unfortunately, this mushroom analogy applies more and more to all workers in this country; Our economy is built on the sand of the permanent arms economy. As it begins to crumble, individual workers are not sure where to run, where to hold on.

There are certain steps that can be taken now. There is talk in Seattle of forming unemployed councils, which had some success in the early '30's in linking up the struggles of employed and unemployed workers. Also, if Boeing workers had been more united they might have struck when the company refused their demands to spread the work.

There is a temptation to blame the recession on Nixon; But in fact, the plan to stop inflation by creating unemployment was drawn up by the Johnson Administration. While there may be differences between them, both the Democratic and the Republican parties are committed to the defense of the capitalist status quo. Workers need a workers' party, to fight for jobs for all and production which meets human needs.

The head of the Tacoma Chamber of Commerce was very honest about the workings of the war economy; "The current situation in the Seattle-Tacoma area was fortunate," he said, because it was "squeezing the excess water out of the labor market." But U.S. workers are more and more resistant to being treated like excess water, more and more unwilling to be squeezed this way and that to suit the profit makers.



BOEING ON ITS ASS

At its peak in 1968, Boeing employed over 10,000 workers in Washington State. Half the manufacturing in Seattle is in aerospace. Other "defense"-related work was also doing well: the shipyards and the docks prospered.

Boom to Bust

From that point on, things started to go downhill. At first the decline was slow. Then, as the national economy went into a real downturn, Seattle's aerospace-based economy collapsed. The city quickly went from boom town to depression area, eligible for special government funds. A whole generation in Seattle is getting a taste of the '30's. The taste is a bitter one.

In line with the government's program to "fight inflation," the military budget was trimmed. At the same time, as the "recession" proceeded nationally, commercial aircraft orders fell off as well. Unemployment has more than doubled in the past year. At least 13 per cent are unemployed in Seattle at the present time. Those who can still collect unemployment benefits form a steady stream into the state employment ment offices.

Food stamps have come into their own, and there are grocery stores where

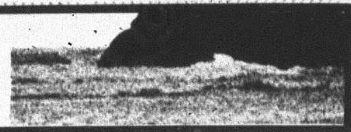
Shipyards, for example, which employed 2,800 at one time, now stands almost idle, with about 360 workers.

Teachers also find themselves unemployed. Over half the graduating class at the University of Washington's School of Education did not find jobs.

Of course, Seattle's problems are shared by other cities; Seattle is worse off because it's a more advanced case of a national disease. It has all the problems caused by the war economy, which gave us the boom that couldn't last.

American prosperity has been built on a permanent arms economy. Money is paid for in arms, which cannot be used by anyone. There's more money in the economy, but no more things on the market to be bought. Prices rise rapidly. The only thing besides inflation which can finance the arms spending is tax money, which is pretty much a way of taking our wages back. Moreover, the money for the best scientific research goes to the military, instead of to make work easier, lower costs, or improve production equipment.

An arms prosperity of this kind can't go on forever. It may provide profits and jobs for a while. But as inflation goes on, and as taxes go up, a limit is reached. One important reason why the



When Jonathan Jackson stepped into the courtroom in San Marin, California with a satchel full of guns, history took a leap. Jackson and the men he helped, served notice that American revolutionaries will now take hostages to free political prisoners. This was no suicidal adventure. It was a declaration of war. It said to the ruling class, "For centuries you have called us criminals. We are not criminals. We will not stay in your prisons. We are your enemies, and we now have the means to enforce this distinction."

The men who died in the attempted escape were typical prisoners of the American state. James McClain, 37, had spent most of the last sixteen years behind bars. He was inside San Quentin for assaulting an Oakland policeman. William Christmas, 27, had been in San Quentin for six years, and had spent most of the previous seven years in

jail. Christmas had never been convicted of a serious crime, but was kept inside as a "problem inmate." Ruchell Magee, 31, who was critically wounded, had spent five years in San Quentin, and several more in Louisiana prisons.

Jonathan Jackson was outside, but his soul was inside. Jackson's older brother had been sent to Soledad prison for a petty offense ten years ago, when Jackson himself was only seven. The brother, George Jackson, is still in prison, and is currently awaiting trial as one of the Soledad Three, accused of killing a guard last March. As the revolutionaries and their hostages left the San Marin courthouse, Jonathan Jackson told a news photographer, "We want the Soledad brothers released by 12:30 today."

The American system of justice will never free Jonathan Jackson's brother, not on its own. And it will never free

tens of thousands of other black prisoners, who circulate forever through the nation's prisons. These are political prisoners. The Black Panther Party recognized this, and so called for the release of all black prisoners. But first of all black prisoners themselves recognized this, and began to make America's prisons into schools for revolution.

In its ceaseless dragnet of black communities, in its unending quest for security, official America created one element of the revolution. Malcolm X and Eldridge Cleaver were both graduates of prison schools for revolution. So too were James McClain, William Christmas, Ruchell Magee and, in his own way, Jonathan Jackson.

In the nineteenth century, factories were among the first major gathering places for the working class, focal points for the development of solidarity and working class culture. In much the same

way, prisons have always provided centers for "criminal" subcultures, places where the techniques, values, and organizational skills of professional crime are developed and passed on. There was never anything inherently revolutionary or even political in this process, though anarchists traditionally found it attractive. Today, however, as prisoners, and most of all black prisoners, come to look upon themselves as victims of the ruling class, prison culture becomes revolutionary. And as more and more people are sentenced for manifestly political crimes, the whole process is speeded up.

Prisons are not factories, of course. They are more like company towns where nothing vital to the economy is produced, just postage scales and army blankets. Consequently, the immediate impact on society by what is done within a prison is severely limited. Yet the long-range impact of prison schools for revolution should never be underestimated. The "prison class" are not a substitute for the working class, but they are certainly part of the revolution today.

The funeral of Jonathan Jackson and William Christmas was held in Oakland, on August 15th. Two thousand people were there, including the Panthers, who served as honor guard. Two blocks from the funeral, an ordinary Ford, dark blue, sat parked in front of a hamburger stand. Three men, not so ordinary, were inside the car, two in the front, one in the back. The two in front were big men, with swollen beer bellies. They wore loud-colored summer suits, unbuttoned so their bellies could stick out. From time to time, one of them wrote some things down on a small pad. The man in back, who was tall and skinny and wore horn-rimmed glasses, held a camera with a telephoto lens. The lens was very long, and it had a peepsight above it. Whenever some person or group of persons came away from the funeral, the skinny man would shoot them - with his camera. The man and his partner were, of course, pigs.

Back at the police station they develop the pictures. Then they put the picture on a wall. Ten years ago there were maybe a dozen pictures. Now there are thousands. Ten years ago there were two cops on the Red Squad. Now the Red Squad is abolished, everyone is on it. The wall is getting too heavy, there are too many pictures. Soon it will come crashing down.

ROGER BOCKRATH

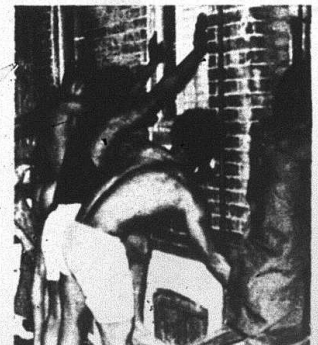
Fanatics and Psychopaths

On Monday, August 31, police in Philadelphia raided Panther headquarters. The pretext was allegedly a tip the police had received linking the Panthers with the death of a policeman the night before. The police stripped the Panthers naked, to "search for weapons" and herded them off to jail, taking along office furniture and refrigerators filled with food for good measure.

Bail was originally set at \$5,000 per person, but that didn't satisfy the DA. He went to a different Judge, named Weinrott, who calmly raised the bail to \$100,000 per person. The Detroit Free Press reported that Judge Weinrott

justified the high bails by saying that it was "preventive medicine" and "for the good of everyone concerned". Yet at the time the bail was set, the Panthers had not been charged with anything occurring before the police raids. Their only crime appears to have been to be living in the city where the Panthers were holding a national convention on the following weekend.

Rizzo, the chief of police, claims that "we are dealing with fanatics, with psychopaths." We are, and they are Rizzo, Weinrott, and all the other "law and order" politicians who are responsible for the daily brutalization of blacks, students and working people in this society.



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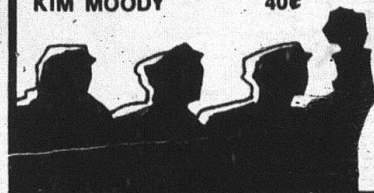
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The American Working Class in Transition

KIM MOODY 40c



Workers' Power

WE STAND FOR SOCIALISM: the collective ownership and democratic control of the economy and the state by the working class. We stand in opposition to all forms of class society, both capitalist and bureaucratic "Communist," and in solidarity with the struggles of all exploited and oppressed people.

America is faced with a growing crisis: war, racial strife, pollution, urban decay, and the deterioration of our standard of living and working conditions. This crisis is built into capitalism, an outlived system of private profit, exploitation, and oppression. The capitalist ruling class, a tiny minority that controls the economy and politics alike, perpetuates its rule by dividing the working people against each other — white against black, male against female, skilled against unskilled, etc. The result is ever greater social chaos.

Workers' power is the only alternative to this crisis. Neither the liberal

nor the conservative wings of the ruling class have any answers but greater exploitation. The struggle for workers' power is already being waged on the economic level, and the International Socialists stand in solidarity with these struggles over wages and working conditions. To further this struggle, we call for independent rank and file workers' committees to fight when and where the unions refuse to fight. But the struggles of the workers will remain defensive and open to defeat so long as they are restricted to economic or industrial action.

The struggle must become political. Because of its economic power, the ruling class also has a monopoly on political power. It controls the government and the political parties that administer the state. More and more, the problems we face, such as inflation and unemployment, are the result of political decisions made by that class. The struggle of the working people will be deadlocked until the ranks of labor build a workers' party and carry the struggle into the political arena.

The struggle for workers' power cannot be won until the working class, as a whole, controls the government and the economy democratically. This requires a revolutionary socialist, working class party, at the head of a unified

working class. No elite can accomplish this for the workers.

Nor can any part of the working class free itself at the expense of another. We stand for the liberation of all oppressed peoples: mass organization, armed self-defense, and the right of self-determination for Blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans; the liberation of women from subordination in society and the home; the organization of homosexuals to fight their oppression. These struggles are in the interest of the working class as a whole: the bars of racism and male chauvinism can only prevent the establishment of workers' power. Oppressed groups cannot subordinate their struggle today to the present level of consciousness of white male workers; their independent organization is necessary to their fight for liberation. But we strive to unite these struggles in a common fight to end human exploitation and oppression.

The struggle for workers' power is world-wide. Class oppression and exploitation is the common condition of humanity. US corporations plunder the world's riches and drive the world's people nearer to starvation, while military intervention by the US government, serving these corporations, awaits

those who dare to rebel. The "Communist" revolutions in China, Cuba and North Vietnam, while driving out US imperialism, have not brought workers' power, but a new form of class society, ruled by a bureaucratic elite.

Whether capitalist or bureaucratic collectivist ("Communist") in nature, the ruling classes of the world fight desperately to maintain their power, often against each other, always against the working class and the people. Through both domestic repression and imperialist intervention (the US in Vietnam, the USSR in Czechoslovakia), they perpetuate misery and poverty in a world of potential peace and plenty. Socialism — the direct rule of the working class itself — exists nowhere in the world today.

We fight for the withdrawal of US troops from all foreign countries, and support all struggles for national self-determination. In Vietnam, we support the victory of the NLF over the US and its puppets; at the same time, we stand for revolutionary opposition by the working class to the incipient bureaucratic ruling class. Only socialism, established through world-wide revolution, can free humanity from exploitation and oppression; and the only force capable of building socialism is WORKERS' POWER.

Life On The Line

John Weber

You don't need training or experience to get a job in an auto assembly plant. Average pay is around \$4 per hour, with fringe benefits that include a fully paid health insurance plan. The money isn't great if you have a family to raise. But if you're young and inexperienced, and you're trying to find work in today's tight job market, it might seem like a good deal. It's not.

While the auto giants don't have a hard time finding applicants for their job openings, they have a hard time keeping anyone. The present yearly turnover rate runs to about 30 percent of the work force. Right down the line from where I work, I've seen as many as five new hires try to break in on a job and quit in a two week period, and that was a few months ago, with very high unemployment in our area.

Trapped

When I hired in, I thought being an auto worker was a pretty good job compared to other work I've had. I thought I'd try to stick with it. I mentioned this, and people looked at me like I was crazy. It didn't take me long to find out why. There doesn't seem to be a young auto worker in the place who plans on staying a day longer than he or she absolutely has to. Most of the older workers began with the same idea, but got trapped by their seniority and their family obligations.

One of the demands that has always been raised by the ranks in the auto industry is "humanize working conditions." While the union leadership has never taken this demand seriously, it's really a matter of life and death.

The assembly line runs at a rate of about 50 jobs an hour, that is, about a minute and 12 seconds per job. The line stops 30 minutes for lunch, and once in a while for a breakdown, though they rarely last for more than a minute or two. You get two breaks, one before lunch and one after lunch, when a utility man comes and relieves you. But the break can come any time during that period. For instance, it's not unusual to get a break right before lunch, get back to the line right before it stops, and then get relieved again right after it starts up. The rest of the day is hell.

While the line is moving you have two bosses: the white-shirted foreman,



*"...It takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place."**

and the line itself. Whatever your job, you have to complete it and be ready to start again every 72 seconds. They run a mix on the line with different makes and different models coming one after another. Often, we have to do different operations on different jobs. Some require more work than others. If you get two or three tough ones in a row, you've got problems. But there is no one to tell your troubles to. The line keeps on moving and you have to keep on producing.

If you slip up on one operation and it takes a few extra seconds, you're in trouble. You get in the hole, but the line never stops. You work like hell to catch up with yourself. You get tense. You start rushing and straining your muscles. But the line never stops.

You're on your feet all day. The tension and the pressure are sometimes harder on your body and nervous system than the work. If you master the job,

they're likely to give you another operation or change your instructions.

The first few months are the hardest. When you get off work, your muscles and joints hurt so bad that you can't stand it. You have trouble going to sleep, and trouble getting up. But even after your muscles and body get accustomed to the strain you still feel like a zombie.

Most of the supervision is done by the line itself. It's cold and impersonal. You can't reason with it; you can't talk back to it. Unless you're careful, you start taking the frustration out on yourself. Most of the foremen don't seem to have any idea of what they are doing. If a problem develops, the first instinct they have is to ignore it and hope it goes away.

For instance, if you tell a foreman that your equipment is about to break down or that you are about to run out of parts, he just mumbles and keeps on going. Hopefully, he thinks, it will last

to the end of the shift, and then it won't be his headache any more. But if it does break, or you do run out of parts, he starts yelling and running in circles. He expects you to keep on doing the job without equipment or without parts, even if that's impossible. If something goes wrong, it's your fault, and he won't let you forget it.

The foremen always have supervisors riding their backs. When they get jumped on they take it out on you. I know a few guys who always try very hard to do their jobs just right. They always seem to be the ones who catch the most static. You learn quickly that no one appreciates good workmanship. You can do shoddy work for a week, and you get left alone. You can break your back to get it just right and get your ass chewed out. When you're goofing off, you don't mind catching hell. But when you're really trying, it drives you nuts.

The lesson you're forced to learn is that you do just enough to get by — that's the only way you have any chance of holding on to your sanity. But you pity the poor bastard who buys the piece of junk you're making. The speed of the line, the back-breaking workload, the insane supervision — we are forced to produce lousy cars. There is no self-respect in poor workmanship. They might tell you to put 10 welds into a section of the body. But when the line starts rolling, you can only get three in. That's the way it goes. It's no wonder these cars fall apart.

The fumes in the plants make you dizzy and sick to your stomach. Earplugs don't stand a chance of keeping out the noise. You learn to live with a 24-hour a day, 7-day a week, ringing noise in your ears.

Fight Back

New hires dream about leaving. Once you have a few years seniority, you still dream about leaving, but you know it's just a dream. At our plant, some of the workers have started getting together. We have decided to start fighting to make it a decent place to be. We want better wages and benefits, of course. But we also know that the majority of our waking day is spent in the plant. We see the fight to humanize working conditions as a necessary part of the fight for a decent life.

The Law in All Its Majesty

The National Labor Relations Board recently struck another blow at the ability of workers to fight back against their employers. In a 3-1 decision, the board extended the meaning of the secondary boycott provision of the National Labor Relations Act (Taft-Hartley), by ruling that it was a violation of this law for striking unions of one Hearst newspaper to picket another Hearst newspaper in a different city. The law originally forbade workers on strike against one company to picket and encourage workers of a different and autonomous company to strike also.

This decision will seriously hinder the attempts of newspaper workers to fight against the Hearst machine. Hearst had announced that he was willing to lose \$80 million if necessary to break the union in Los Angeles. That \$80 million didn't fall from trees, but came off the backs of workers for other Hearst newspapers throughout the country. One effective way to increase the pressure on Hearst would therefore be to have workers at his other newspapers strike also. The LA union attempted to do this in San Francisco, and it is this strategy which the NLRB ruled illegal.

