

# Workers' Power

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## Class War in Poland



STRIKE! THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

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# Angela Davis



Since November, Angela Davis, black militant and declared Communist, has been in jail awaiting trial on charges of conspiracy to commit murder. She will conduct her own defense, attempting to prove the charges a "political frame-up."

The basis for the charge is the State's claim that Davis purchased guns which were used in an armed attempt to free three prisoners on trial in a Marin County Courthouse last September. The leader of the escape, a judge, and two of the prisoners were killed as shooting broke out when guards tried to block the escape (see "Jailbreak," *W.P.*, no. 21).

Under California law, the State need not prove that murder was intended, that Davis knew how the guns would be used, or even that the prisoners shot anyone: if *anyone* was killed by anyone, even one of the prisoners by the police, the prisoners are guilty of murder and Davis is an accessory.

Davis' troubles with the State of California, however, began long before she was charged with murder. A brilliant philosophy student who had worked under Herbert Marcuse, Davis had been hired to teach at UCLA's Westwood campus in 1969 — ironically, because UCLA was looking for a "qualified Negro" to offer as a token concession to dissatisfied black students.

In September, 1969, an FBI informant revealed that Davis was a member of the Communist Party. The Regents of the University of California immediately fired her. They made no bones about having political reasons: "The taxpayers in a capitalistic, democratic society should not pay the salaries of professors, or the bills of students, who want to change the system," said a statement supported by a majority of the Regents.

But a court ruled that Davis could not be fired until her contract expired in 1970. Student groups and the Philosophy faculty organized to defend her and UCLA's Chancellor stalled for time. Finally, the Regents took the matter out of his hands and, last June 19, voted not to rehire Davis.

Davis said she would remain in Los Angeles to contest the case, and with huge majorities of students and faculty supporting her, the case threatened to tear the university apart in the fall.

In this situation the opportunity to accuse Davis of murder was a godsend to the State of California. We may

never know the precise truth about Davis' connection, if any, with the Marin jailbreak. It's difficult to believe that someone in Davis' exposed position would have risked involvement, even if the reason for buying the guns were not made clear.

The Black Panther Party, her own Party, and liberal sympathizers all had ways to buy guns without her help. On the other hand, if Davis did buy guns, this proves nothing about complicity in the jailbreak.

Further, there was *never* a "conspiracy to commit murder" except in the sense of the twisted California law. Rather, the State of California and its police are guilty of murder: faced with the choice of letting the prisoners go or starting a shoot-out, the State decided instantly that its authority was worth more than the life of a judge and some prisoners. The blood is on Gov. Reagan's hands, not Angela Davis'.

Since the logic of the murder charge is so tortuous, the trial can only be understood in terms of its *political* meaning. This is threefold. First, the murder charge is a way to finish the purge of Angela Davis — and more generally, of revolutionary ideas — from California's universities; in this sense it fits into a long line of other attacks by the Regents on radicals in the universities.

Second, and more important, since the first attempt to fire her, Davis had become famous — a big-name radical throughout California, and to some degree across the country. Thus the murder charge represents another attempt to nail a prominent revolutionary and intimidate the left.

Finally, hoping to exploit the death of the judge in the Marin jailbreak attempt, the state sees the trial as part of its campaign to use the issue of terrorism, and the general uneasiness about radical violence; as a way to discredit the radical movement.

The political meaning of the trial — a three-sided attempt to karate-chop the radical movement — makes clear what our response should be. *We do not demand a "fair trial" for Angela Davis. Davis, conducting her own defense with the aid of several brilliant lawyers, should indeed fight hard in the courtroom — but a fair trial she cannot get. The very law under which she is to be tried is blatantly unfair.*

Moreover, the courts — today more and more openly — are stacked against

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## Workers' Power

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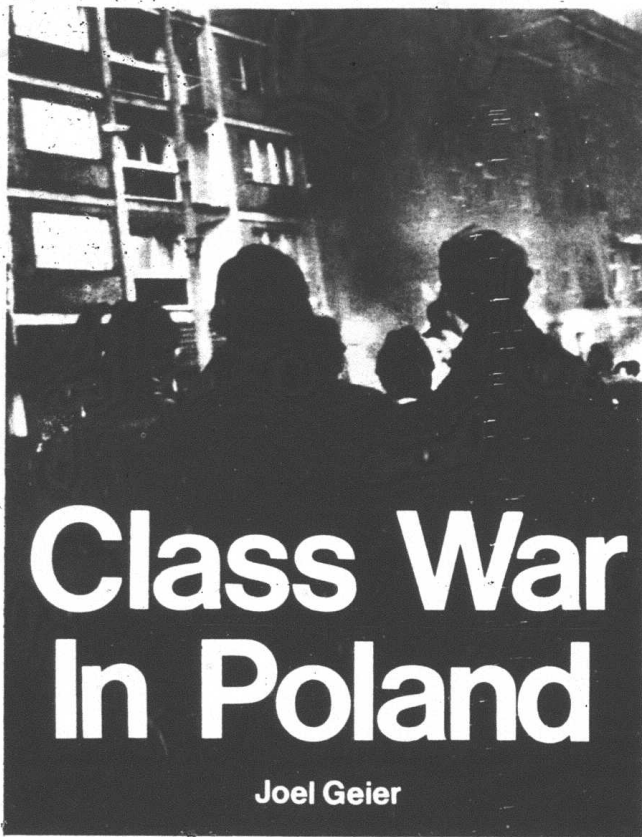
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# Class War In Poland

Joel Geier

Polish workers who revolted so dramatically and courageously in December continue to fight on, sending new shock waves throughout the bureaucratic ruling class. The mass upheaval from below continues to simmer and boil over.

The Lenin Shipyard workers of Gdansk who started the demonstrations which brought Gomulka's fall are still the vanguard. For the last three weeks they have mounted a wave of strikes,

work stoppages, slowdowns and sit-downs. From January 5 through 25 barely a day has gone by without some reported job action in the yards, trams, railways and factories of Gdansk.

Backing up the workers of Gdansk are those Szczecin. Here the vanguard is also shipyard workers, from the Warski works. After burning down the 6-story Communist Party headquarters, storehouse for political and work files, the workers faced down a squadron of

armored cars, tried to take the militia headquarters, and from December 17-22 established workers' control over the city.

The *New York Times* reports Szczecin was in a "virtual state of insurrection when Mr. Gomulka fell. Strikers were reliably reported to have been running the town as they negotiated with party leaders. Internal services were reportedly being maintained during a 5-day period at the request of strikers." *Le Monde* reports that the strike committee took over the administrative power of the Party and municipal authorities and that a workers' militia patrolled the factories and city.

Since Gomulka's fall the workers of Szczecin have maintained their fighting stance, calling strikes and job actions similar to those of Gdansk, and conducting two general strikes in January.

## Political Economy

Rather than reporting on this remarkable page of working class history being written today, the Western press has focused its attention on the economic demands of the workers. Indeed, the standard of living of the Polish working class is abysmal. Average monthly wages are 2,400 zlotys — \$100 at the inflated official rate — and over a quarter of the labor force makes less than 2,000 zlotys a month.

Prices are astronomical. 18 zlotys (1 hour's pay) for a pack of cigarettes. Typical meat prices range from 65 zlotys for a kilogram of porkchops (2.2 lbs.) to 120 zlotys for a kilogram of Polish ham. Over seventy per cent of each worker's wages has to go for food alone.

But this miserable economic picture has a political side. In Poland, as in all the so-called Communist countries, the bureaucracy controls the nationalized economy through its collective, political control of the state, which owns the means of production. Using its totalitarian suppression of any independent working class organization or political and economic opposition, it is able to thoroughly subordinate the consumption and living standards of the masses to the class goals of the bureaucracy:

industrial growth for the power and privileges of the bureaucratic ruling class.

In a rare moment of frankness, a minor by-product of the class war in Poland, the Chairman of the Planning Commission, Stanislaw Majewski, admitted to a national meeting of Polish economists on January 8 that "there was a tendency to develop production for production's sake."

With their standard of living kept at bare subsistence minimum, or below, the economies of the Communist countries from Poland to Cuba all suffer from absenteeism, inefficiency and low labor productivity. These problems result from the total alienation of the worker from the process of production, the recognition on the part of the worker that there is practically no relationship between his effort and productivity and his standard of living.

This economic bind could be solved by workers' control of production. But that would mean the end of the rule — the power and privileges — of the bureaucracy, whom so many gullible Western leftists think are "serving the people" by making sure that the people don't serve themselves. The bureaucracy, like any other ruling class, won't voluntarily give up power — it will have to be thrown out by a workers' revolution.

Naturally, the bureaucracy has an alternative solution to Poland's economic stagnation. Under the guise of an "economic reform" embodied in a new 5 year plan, it proposes the introduction of market mechanisms, to make every factory have to produce at a profit, trade on the world market, and in turn buy the Western technical goods and machinery needed for modernization from those factory profits.

To ensure the profitability of the factories, some workers would be sacked and the rest forced to speed up under a new incentive pay plan. To top it off, wages were frozen and prices raised from 10-30 per cent on most consumer goods, to restrict the already miserable level of working class consumption for the sake of greater exports.

## POLISH WORKERS' APPEAL:

# Bloody Thursday In Gdynia

*[The following is a reprint of an underground document written by the shipyard workers of Gdynia, Poland.]*

Workers of the Paris Commune Shipyard in Gdynia, dockers and white-collar workers of all industrial enterprises on the Baltic coast are pleading for the condemnation of the crime of genocide committed by the Polish N.K.V.D. (General Moczar's boys trained in centers in Slupsk, Pila and other Polish towns) on the innocent population of our region:

We request that this letter be spread abroad by all mass media, and we demand the punishment of those responsible for ordering the brutal massacre of women (some pregnant) and children, of our mothers, fathers and sons, at a time when, in response to the appeal of Kociolek [Stanislaw Kociolek, a Deputy Premier], the population was on the way to resume work in the shipyard, in the port, and in the establishments situated in the area of Polska and Marchewski Streets and on the Oksywie.

Between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Dec. 16, 1970, Kociolek made a radio appeal to the population to end the strike. In response the workers concerned, suspecting nothing, went back to work in good faith.

To reach the port, shipyards and

other industries, it is necessary to cross the railway bridge that links Czerwonych Kosynierow Street (formerly Morska Street) and Polska Street. The first person to go down the steps leading from the bridge to Polska Street was a pregnant woman; close behind her were four workers, probably from the shipyards.

Suddenly, without any warning, there was a burst of machine-gun fire. The woman shouted "Jesus Maria!" and fell down the steps onto the street. After the next round of fire one of the workers was left slumped against the railings while the three others collapsed on the steps.

There was panic and terror. Someone shouted: "It's cold-blooded murder!" It was at that moment that two electric trains bringing workers from Gdansk and Wejherowo arrived at the Gdynia shipyard station. When the people getting off the train saw what was happening they began to jump onto the rails and tried to escape along the tracks to Czerwonych Kosynierow Street.

Two people fell onto the rails, probably shot by snipers, because Moczar's police could not get at them as they were on the other side of the train. A large crowd gathered at Czerwonych Kosynierow Street shouting: "Murderers! Gestapo!"

There was general commotion and feelings rose high against the so-called people's authorities who had given the order for this massacre.

When it had become light, helicopters joined in as well, dropping tear gas and firing machine guns, killing and wounding many.

People fled in all directions in an attempt to hide from the helicopters. Young people, in spite of the risk of being shot, tore down a door from a staircase and on it laid the body of a boy who had been killed on his way to school.

They dipped a Polish flag in his blood and set off toward town. At least 2,000 people joined the group, and they marched to the town hall to demand an explanation. When they reached Swietojanska street, the disciples of Moczar were already waiting.

A horrible massacre followed. One could only hear the moaning and crying of mothers as they saw innocent people being murdered.

The press reports state that 21 people were killed, but they made a mistake; they have left off the nought at the end of the figure.

The wounded were treated in inhuman fashion. The police said that bandits should die like dogs, there was no need to take them to the hospital. ■



Mieczyslaw Moczar

In short, what was announced was a scheme of economic rationalization — to be paid for by the working class, the victims of the mess that the bureaucracy has made of the Polish economy.

It is these "economic reforms," so beloved by Western liberals, that sparked the working-class revolt. Workers have demanded higher wages, rollback of price increases, and, most of all, an end to the incentive-pay speedup system.

One "economic" demand raised by the workers of Palmo Automotive plant in Szczecin called for "the equalization of party workers' earnings with the average level of earnings in industry." It was this demand which the *N.Y. Times* dismissed as "evidently unrealistic," an opinion which American capitalists share with Communist bureaucrats and rulers all over the world.

This socialist demand was won by the Russian workers in the 1917 October revolution. It was lost, with all other socialist gains, during the Stalinist counter-revolution. It was this demand, coupled with the election and recallability of all officials, that Lenin declared was the rock-bottom measure a workers' state must take to prevent the rise of a privileged bureaucracy. It is now back in the program of the Polish workers' struggle for socialism against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

### Workers' Underground

The demands raised by the workers are not all economic, nor could they be for long in a country in which both the economy and politics are fused in the hands of the state bureaucracy. Workers in Gdansk have called for freedom of the press — and have begun to win a



Striking workers in Poznan outside the City Hall. The banner reads, "We are hungry."

small measure of more accurate press reporting on the workers' struggle.

They have demanded, and struck for, the release of those imprisoned during the December revolt, and the dismissal of unpopular bureaucrats and factory managers. Time and again, the demand has been raised for independent trade unions.

In Poland, as in all the other Communist countries, trade unions function as labor fronts, as state institutions to discipline the working class and to ensure their fulfillment of production norms. Independent trade unions, to defend the standard of living of the working class and to fight against speed-

up and for decent working conditions, cannot be granted by the regime.

The development of independent working-class institutions would naturally become the spear-head for organized working class opposition and would be a death-blow to the political and economic power of the bureaucracy. Although the regime cannot grant this demand which, in a nationalized economy, would be the wedge for further incursions of workers' control over production and the state, it appears that the working class is already creating, from below, its own independent organs of struggle.

The remarkable degree of disciplined,

coordinated working class action would indicate that the embryo of trade unions or factory committees already exist and function in Gdansk and Szczecin. For example, one series of strikes proceeded along the following lines: workers in the shipyards strike for two hours, when they return to work the tram workers go out for two hours, in turn when they return to work, a two-hour strike begins at a factory, etc. This series of precision strikes, beyond showing a high degree of political and tactical sophistication, could only occur as a result of an organized network within the factories and between the factories.

The *Christian Science Monitor* has reported that a "workers' underground" exists with factory workers "sending couriers from one factory to another to consult directly with each other." The factory network is reported to include not only Gdansk and Szczecin but also the Ursus tractor factory, textile plants in Zydrow, the Polish Fiat works, the rolling-stock works in Poznan, and factories in Warsaw and Piaga. Reports also indicate that workers' committees have begun direct negotiations with management, going above the heads of the official "trade unions."

The reaction of the government to the continued unrest has been to grant some minor reforms, sack a section of the most unpopular party and union bureaucrats and try to stem the workers' movement with the usual methods of carrot-stick and lots of hot air.

The promised concessions include no further price increases, vague promises of wage increases, public assistance for the neediest families, allowing work-

(continued on page 5)

# Polish Women: The Double Burden

Louise Mitchell

As the women's liberation movement in America fights for equal access to jobs, some American radicals urge it to look East for inspiration to China, Russia, Eastern Europe, etc. We are told that the women of the Communist countries have already won the social equality which for us is barely visible on the horizon. Why then did Polish women flood the streets of Gdansk last December, joining shipyard workers and students in bitter demonstrations? U.S. newspapers say that it was all over price increases. But we must take a look at how the women of Poland live to see why simple price rises would force them into the streets.

The picture we get of that life, not from American supporters of the Communist regimes but from the official publications of these regimes themselves, is quite unlike the parade of women doctors, dentists, ditchdiggers, and scientists enjoying "socialist" equality that we have been told about.

**JOB:** The December issue of *Poland* magazine, a glossy official publication from Warsaw, tells the story: "Women's increased role as worker does not mean that a working woman has divested herself of her traditional role at home and in the family. To her former duties at home she now adds her earnings."

In other words, to quote a Russian government publication, women come

home from work to enjoy "women's second working day."

Polish women and their Eastern European sisters did not force their way into the paid labor force through an independent women's movement bent on liberation. The rulers of these countries have always made it perfectly clear that getting women into industry is a matter of the "national interest" (production), not social justice. Sheer economic necessity forces nearly every family in Poland to have at least two wage-earners.

In fact, as Russian and Czech statisticians have revealed, this means that married women sleep nearly an hour less than men and have nearly two hours less a day for free time, education and entertainment. The physical price of this kind of equality is confirmed by statistics on the relative life-expectancies of men and women.

What about the status of women on the job? Again, *Poland* magazine: "The increasing number of women who work receive on the average over 30 per cent less than men. Every study confirms that men hold higher-ranking positions than women even in what are known as feminized institutions. But of course women constitute the majority of the working force in less remunerative jobs such as teaching, the health, and other services."

**SOCIAL SERVICES.** Little has

been done in the way of providing minimal public facilities like laundromats, although the technology for it is there. We have heard a lot about Eastern European child care, yet even in Russia facilities cover only about one-fourth of the pre-school children — and Russia is the most advanced Eastern European nation in this respect.

**LEGAL RIGHTS.** The ease with which abortions and divorce may be had varies according to government population planning. Right now, abortions are available, but not encouraged or approved. Abortions were legalized when the government realized that the medical and social costs of illegal abortions were higher than the costs of legal ones. At present about 80 per cent of divorce claims are granted in Poland, accompanied by a lot of red tape and some expense.

**PERSONAL STATUS.** Polish women's "traditional role" off the job is depicted in the pages of *Poland* and the *Polish Weekly*. Cozy young ladies artfully posed, praise for the "bridal boom," high fashions no one can afford. In a recent interview, track star Teresa Sukniewicz commented on women's two roles: "As soon as I notice that my muscles are being overdeveloped by the exercises for stamina and strength

I'll give up championship sport. . . . In the end a career in sports lasts just a few, or at best, a dozen years, but you are a woman all your life."

*Polish Weekly* carries supposedly humorous articles such as "How to Marry off Your Daughter" and reprints from campus humor magazines. This would be familiar stuff to women students in the U.S. — the same dumb blondes and snickering sexist attitudes found in the worst American college publications.

In short, there is no reason to believe that Poland offers either women's liberation or socialism. Like American women, Polish women must look to a future when a powerful, independent women's liberation movement of their own can join with sister movements in other countries.

An international alliance of women to fight to end forever the secondary status, deep oppression and outrageous exploitation of women the world over could link up with an international, working class socialist movement for the liberation of all humanity. The popular revolt in Poland, with shipyard workers and housewives fighting side by side, foreshadows this development and gives us some idea of the kind of promise which the future holds. ■



# Cambodia: U.S. Sinks Deeper



Michael Stewart



On Wednesday, Jan. 20, the government finally admitted what the papers had been reporting for days, that there had been a massive new escalation of the air war in Southeast Asia, including the bombing of North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and that the U.S. was now flying air support missions for the ground actions of the South Vietnamese and Cambodian army operations in Cambodia.

The path that led up to Secretary of Defense Laird's admission has been an all too familiar one during the war. First a newspaper report, then a rash of government denials, and finally, in the face of overwhelming evidence, admission that the reported actions are indeed going on. Each time it is claimed that nothing new is happening, that there has been no change in policy.

Behind the recurring farce of government "explanations" is the reality of continuing U.S. imperialist aggression in Southeast Asia.

After the U.S. invasion of Cambodia on June 30th, Nixon stated that "when we come out our logistical support and air support will also come out with us."

Even after initial reports of the new air war, the government tried to claim that it was only flying interdiction missions, that is, those aimed at enemy supply routes leading to South Vietnam.

However, as the fighting developed in Cambodia, this explanation became ridiculous. In clear contradiction to what Nixon stated last spring, the U.S. is now providing air support for ground actions in Cambodia.

Yet Laird was correct when he claimed that there was no real change in policy. *There is only a change in what they are now admitting to the American public.* For the government has always maintained that the success of the Lon Nol regime in Cambodia was crucial to the success of the "Vietnamization" program. What the government has tried to disguise is the extent of its involvement there.

The importance of Cambodia lies not so much in the strategic military advantages it would provide to the National Liberation Front forces fighting in South Vietnam, but in the political repercussions in Southeast Asia of a Communist victory in Cambodia.

tions have been used by Gierek and Moczar to purge the bureaucracy of elements tied to Gomulka, and to replace them with loyal machine-men of the Gierek and Moczar cliques. The new rulers are old bureaucrats, graduates of the Stalin school of counter-revolution.

Gierek and Moczar were the two chief figures leading the crackdown and wave of repression which followed the student demonstrations of 1968. The two vied with each as to who could use more anti-semitic demagogery and persecution to channel that revolt into safe, reactionary forms.



Gierek is the leader of the "technocrat" wing of the bureaucracy, the group most committed to the economic rationalization which produced the working class revolt in the first place. Moczar, as Internal Minister, earned a reputation for brutality and the hostility of the masses.

Workers of the Paris Commune shipyards in Gdynia have accused Moczar of being responsible for the massacre in

The struggle in Cambodia is becoming a crucial testing ground for Nixon's entire Vietnamization program. Thousands of South Vietnamese troops have been sent into Cambodia to take on major responsibility for the ground fighting there.

The Vietnamization program involved using Vietnamese soldiers for all ground combat operations, restricting U.S. involvement to providing air support. In Cambodia, the use of U.S. ground combat troops has been barred by congressional action. Thus, the success or failure of the current Cambodian operations will provide an excellent indication of the long-range possibilities for that program in Vietnam itself.

As we go to press, the indications are that the U.S. and South Vietnam will flunk their exam. Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, has been isolated for months, all lines of supplies being cut off. The recent military operations were aimed at opening the main highway from Phnom Penh to the coast so that supplies could get to it.

Though Vietnamese and Cambodian troops have officially cleared the highway, it is far from "open" since the liberation forces have merely pulled back and are in position to attack any convoys which tried to move along it. The escalation of the air war is evidence of the lack of effectiveness of the South Vietnamese troops.

There has been some talk of a "Berlin type" airlift from Phnom Penh. Even this may be impossible, for on Jan. 21 the liberation forces attacked and destroyed the airport at Phnom Penh, and 95 per cent of the Cambodian air force. At that time they also launched attacks directly into the capital itself.

It is unclear what the reactions of the Nixon regime will be. The logic of his position clearly leads to the reintroduction of U.S. ground combat troops. However, the political dangers of such

a policy are great, given the social discontent at home, and the fact that elections are only two years away.

More than likely, we will see a continuing escalation of the air war, as Nixon tries to save what is rapidly becoming a hopeless situation, and "bomb his way to victory." Perhaps that is the real significance of Laird's lifting the limits on the air war. (Already it is admitted that "Jason personnel" are flying on the helicopter gunships to coordinate attacks, and it is rumored that the U.S. has also sent in military "advisors.")

## Sorry Spectacle

The sorriest spectacle in this whole mess is the show being provided by those Democrats who "oppose the war."

"Foul" they have cried, claiming that it violates the "spirit" of the Cooper-Church amendment which barred the use of U.S. ground combat troops in Cambodia. Nixon has quite logically replied that he is not using such troops there. The liberals in Congress never had the courage to fight to end all military involvement — nor was this really their aim.

The real "spirit" of the Cooper-Church amendment was de facto embodied in the bill it was amended to, that is, the bill providing \$500 million worth of military aid to Cambodia. It is absurd to criticize Nixon's current attempts to defend the Lon Nol regime when the military aid was aimed at doing just that.

Indeed, what seems to bother the Democratic critics is not the underlying policy of U.S. military aggression in Southeast Asia, but only the level that that aggression takes. They wish that imperialism was not so messy. If they want to really end the war, let them put forth a bill this time calling for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops, including air support.

# Poland

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

ers to determine how \$300 million will be distributed (about 1 per cent of the gross national product — a bargain if the bureaucracy can get away with it), and the call for greater "consultations with the workers." In response to this last opening, workers have turned Party and trade union meetings into stormy sessions, and have moved to direct negotiations with management.

Revolt from below has produced a new shuffle at the top. Edward Gierek, the new Communist Party strongman, quickly received the blessings of Moscow, the Church and the Western press. No. 2 man in the new regime is Mieczyslaw Moczar of the secret police, leader of the "Partisan" faction which combines ultra-Stalinism with Polish nationalism. The two are long-time factional opponents and it is unlikely that any balance temporarily struck between them will last for long.

As the representatives of the technocrats and Partisan factions, their's is a marriage of convenience for the sole purpose of stamping out the revolt from below. Faced with a workers' revolt, all sections of the bureaucracy, "liberal" and "Stalinist," are uniting to maintain the hold of the ruling class.

The workers' demands to remove the bureaucrats responsible for past condi-

Gdynia on December 17 when the secret police machine-gunned over 200 workers to death. Since then, strikes in Gdansk and other Baltic cities demanded Moczar's removal. While it is unlikely that this will occur, neither of the new leaders will have the enormous political popularity which Gomulka did when he came to power as a result of the workers' uprising of 1956.

Gomulka used his political capital, coupled with concessions to the peasants and the Church, to develop a base of support among the most backward elements of Polish society — in order to suppress the workers' councils and the organizations and journals of the intellectual opposition which resulted from the 1956 revolt. Although Gierek has indicated he wants to establish better relations with the Church, it is unlikely that he will be able to repeat the Gomulka pattern.

Unlike the Western capitalist press, which showered Gomulka with praise in 1956 and is now repeating the same thing with Gierek, the Polish working class isn't falling for it this time. They have summed up the situation in one of their brilliant, sardonic jokes: "It's still the same old horse. They've just changed the flies circling round."

So far, the new regime has been unable to squash the turbulence and fighting spirit of the Polish workers. The government counter-attack peaked on January 23 when Jaroszewicz, the new Premier, sent a letter to industrial managers instructing them to crack down on workers engaged in strikes and slow-

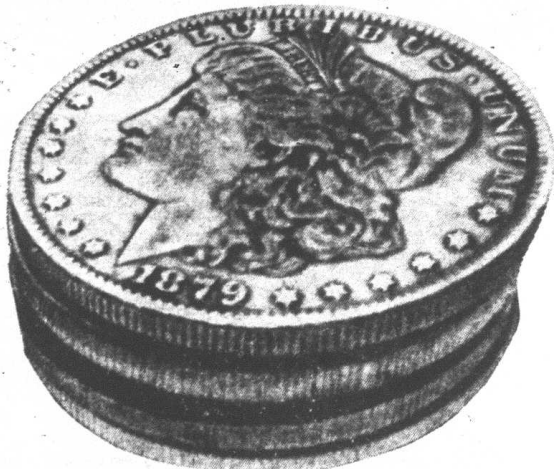
downs.

He warned the factory managers they would be held responsible for tolerating "loose work discipline" and ordered that they must "oppose all unrealistic and demagogic demands." The Polish press ran a campaign for increased productivity — complete with stories of factories "enthusiastically greeting" new production quotas — in the time-honored fashion of the "workers' states."

The working-class reaction was immediate. A new wave of strikes in Szczecin on January 25 forced Gierek to fly to those cities to meet with the workers. They forced him to cancel the introduction of the incentive pay scheme. Many of the workers believed it was to be abandoned, but the regime only intends to postpone it for a year.

This new victory that the Polish workers have won with only help strengthen the self-confidence and combativeness which they have displayed in the last six weeks. Their underground organizations will continue to spread. The lessons of Gdansk and Szczecin will be learned by workers throughout the Stalinist bloc, where similar "economic reforms" are being introduced.

The wave of anti-Stalinist revolution is rising again. This time, unlike 1956, it finds a counter-part in the rising militancy of the working class in Western Europe. The Polish working class again is in the vanguard, bringing honor and courage to the world proletariat and its struggle for international socialism.



## THE STATE OF THE UNION: Nixon's "Revolution"

Michael Stewart

For a long time now America has been in crisis. We have witnessed the deterioration of our cities, rising crime, pollution, a war entering its second decade and jobs that are so unsafe that the deathrate is higher than that in Vietnam. Meanwhile, the government has responded with programs like the "Great Society" — programs made up of press releases and little else.

Some people still hope that the government will put forth bold new programs to begin the solutions that are so urgently needed. Thus, many Americans turned on their TV sets to watch Nixon's "State of the Union" message to Congress, hoping this time would be different.

The uproar which has resulted from that message almost makes one believe that this time it was different. Indeed, Nixon described his program as leading to "a new American revolution." This certainly sounds good. Already, battle lines are being drawn, as Nixon tries to drum up "grass roots" support for his program to overcome the opposition of the Democrats who control Congress.

What is the struggle over? Federal sharing of some tax money with the states — a paltry \$16 billion (half of what is spent yearly on the Vietnam war) — and reorganization of the Cabinet! That is offered as the "new American revolution!" Perhaps more than anything else, it reflects the true "state of the union." Nero fiddles while Rome burns.

Nixon's program begins with unfinished business — his welfare reform proposal sent to Congress last year. The key feature of this proposal would establish a minimal income for all people — but keep it low enough so that no one could live on it, providing only \$1500 a year. Also included are "incentives" to encourage (force) people to work. Besides the despicable view this program has of the people on welfare — i.e., they are all "no-good loafers" — it is a ridiculous demand given the fact

that unemployment nationally is at 6 per cent and rising (it is much higher in most cities) — there are no jobs to be found.

One might imagine that this problem is to be solved by Nixon's next proposal — the full employment budget. Unfortunately, the only relation this budget has to full employment is the words in the title — for full employment is defined by the government economists as 4 per cent unemployment.

If the government were serious about the problems of welfare and unemployment, it would not juggle words or try to force people to find non-existent jobs. Rather it would at the very least support the modest demand of the Welfare Rights Organization for \$5500 a year, half what the government itself claims a family of four needs for a modest standard of living. Furthermore, it would recognize the principle that every one has a right to a job. Where industry fails to provide jobs, the government would, and at a minimum wage high enough to assure everyone of a decent standard of living.

### Revenue Sharing

It was the last two points of Nixon's message which have caused the most discussion. The first is the Revenue Sharing Plan, important because it was at least nominally aimed at the crisis of the cities. It calls for giving \$16 billion of Federal tax money back to the states — to be controlled by the local government.

This Nixon has the nerve to describe as "historic and bold." Given the crisis that exists, spending \$16 billion is like trying to kill an elephant with a pea shooter. This sum is so absurd that even the *Wall Street Journal* points out it may only be enough to enable the cities to continue existing programs — and we know how inadequate those are.

A truly bold and historic program would be one which aimed at rebuilding the cities. This would include con-

struction of housing, schools, hospitals, and rapid transit systems. Such a program would help end the seasonal unemployment in the construction industry, and provide jobs for those who presently can't find any. It would begin to end crime by ending the poverty which causes it. It would be designed to make our cities decent places to live and work.

This type of program would take large sums of money, but it need not come from new taxes. Plenty of money now exists in the Federal Budget. It is currently wasted on such programs as useless missile systems, supersonic planes, germ warfare (which is developed and then dumped in the sea) and the war in Vietnam. If the money that is currently spent on "defense" and other worthless programs is not enough to rebuild the cities, then more could be raised by increasing the taxes on corporations, instead of giving them a tax cut as Nixon did recently.

### Shell Game

The most interesting part of the proposal, however, was Nixon's motivation for it. We must give "power to the people" he declared (who said they couldn't co-opt that slogan!). How is this to be done? Why, by giving the money to the local governments over which the people have more control. And he expects us to believe this! As if we had any more control over the Daly machine in Chicago, or Reagan in California than we do over the Federal government.

Nixon, of course, was addressing a real popular sentiment. He quite candidly admitted that people are alienated from and even hostile to the Federal government — and, we would add, towards the local government as well. But the shell game he is playing won't solve that problem.

Real control would mean that all money allocated towards programs would be directly under the control of the people affected — for example, if there is money for new schools, then the communities those schools are to serve should have control over how the money is spent.

Nixon's last point was a plan to reorganize his Cabinet. It is difficult to understand the commotion this has caused. For no reshuffling of the Cab-

inet is going to do anything to solve the problems we face.

Nixon will now go to the public, to try to convince them that these programs really are different, that they are not just the hollow promises we have come to expect from government politicians. By characterizing his program as "historic and bold" and leading to a "new American revolution," he hopes to co-opt a legitimate sentiment that exists in America, not to fulfill it but to diffuse it.

The Democrats will make a lot of noise opposing Nixon's proposals, but while they will shout and scream, they will have no alternative to propose. In fact, it has been the Democrats who have controlled the Congress during the Sixties, and who have in the main presided over the growing crisis. Now they will be asking us to give them another chance. On what basis? Why, on how loud they shout!

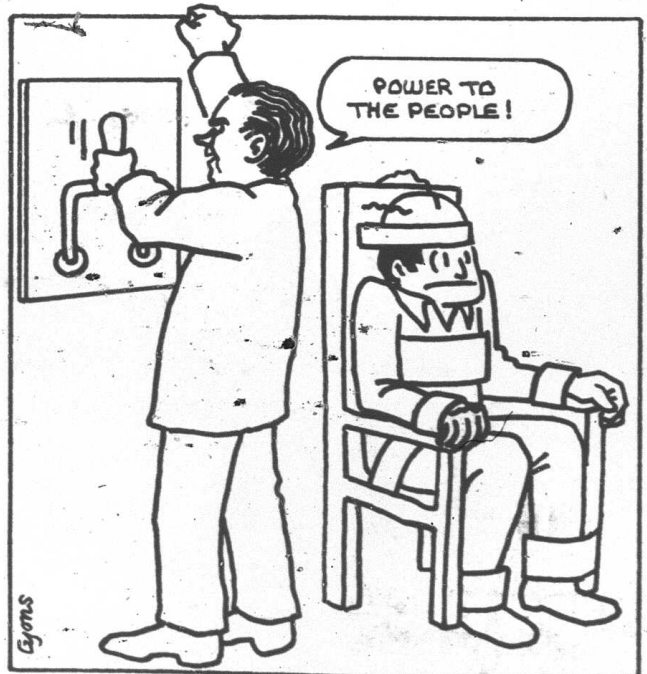
So while the crisis deepens, the two major parties of this country are going to offer us, not a serious debate, but a circus. This entertainment, they hope, will make us forget about the problems we face. No greater evidence of their bankruptcy could be given.

### Organize and Fight

If there is to be an alternative, then people are going to have to develop it themselves. We cannot afford to wait for either of the establishment parties to give us the things we need.

History has shown that it is just the other way around: the programs we need will only be won if we organize and fight for them. The trade unions that exist today, and the higher standard of living they have won, were not given to workers by their employers. They exist because workers struggled for them.

Similarly, today, if we want national programs which meet our needs, we will have to organize and fight for them. This does not mean organizing support for the bankrupt Democratic Party, but organizing a party of our own, of working people. Only such a party, democratically controlled by the people in it, could develop and fight for programs which would bring about a change in the current "state of the union." ■



# CHRYSLER AND THE FOUR DAY WEEK



Karl Fischer

STEINBERG

The last of the auto industry's Big Three — the Chrysler Corporation — concluded an agreement with the international leadership of the United Auto Workers in mid-January. This final national contract means that, except for a small number of local UAW bargaining units yet to reach agreement, contract talks in the American auto industry are over for another three years, until 1973.

In the Canadian auto talks, national agreements are yet to be concluded, with the bitter issue of wage parity with American workers providing the point of conflict. This demand — supposedly won "in principle" by the UAW leadership in 1967 — has been resisted by all three auto giants in this year's negotiations.

The Chrysler contract contained almost exactly the same deal previously worked out at GM and Ford; a first-year wage increase averaging about 50 cents an hour, 14 cent increases in the second and third years of the contract, minor improvements in the pension and retirement plan which fall short of the original 30-and-Out demand, and a return to an unlimited cost-of-living clause after the first year of the contract. (The details of the package, and its serious inadequacies, have been discussed in previous issues of *Workers' Power*.)

## Absenteeism

The Chrysler pact did contain one new wrinkle which has received a lot of publicity. It provides for the establishment of a joint company-union commission to "study the feasibility" of switching to a four-day, 40-hour work week sometime in the future. The main motivation for studying this possible change is quite openly admitted to be the hope that such a change would "combat rising absenteeism" in the auto industry.

Absenteeism has unquestionably risen in recent years; statistics from the Big Three indicate that it has more than doubled since 1965. The effects of absenteeism are quite harmful from the company's point of view; many workers must perform unfamiliar jobs, backup personnel is often unavailable, and a general loss of efficiency and produc-

tivity results.

Also, absenteeism tends to be concentrated on specific work days. This writer has seen auto plants so empty on Fridays and Mondays that every relief man, inspector, and utility man must be rounded up and stuck on the line simply to run the plant at all. And while the line runs, the jobs are poorly done, the repair shop piles up with defective cars, and shutdowns are frequent.

The company and the union leadership both feel that switching to a work week of four ten-hour days will cut absenteeism. The problem is that neither really understand why absenteeism has increased so sharply of late. The company chalks it up to "employee irresponsibility." The official union in effect echoes this by preaching sermons to workers to be good little boys and girls.

What neither side understands — or at least cares to articulate — is that workers take time off because of the conditions of their work. Work in an auto plant is boring and mind-bending even under the best of conditions. The continual efforts of management to speed up the lines, increase the work-

load on each job, and squeeze more production out of workers make it pure misery. Moreover, overtime in most big auto shops is compulsory.

Faced with such a situation, workers get up on Friday, with a week's pay in their pockets (or on Monday if they're on the day shift); they're tired and sore, they think about the weekend, and they say to hell with it and call in sick.

Beyond this, the type of worker likely to take a day off is very revealing. Everyone admits that it is the young worker — under 30 — who is the biggest "problem." Most younger workers, having relatively little seniority, work the afternoon shift, and have no nights free during the week to spend with friends, family, dates, etc.

More importantly, it is precisely these younger workers who are more and more rebelling against arbitrary shop-floor discipline, challenging the authority of the company, leading wildcats and other fights. In short, rising absenteeism is not a symptom of "growing worker irresponsibility" or other such nonsense, but rather a direct reflection of a growing rank-and-file re-

bellion against speed-up and deteriorating working conditions.

Detroit newspapers have run numerous articles praising the 4-day proposal. It is quite likely that many workers will be for this idea. Many people, faced with 40 hours of work, would prefer to get it over in four days, with three days off. In plants where it has been tried, absenteeism has gone down and morale up.

Whether or not this will solve management's problems — and we don't give a damn about that — it will not solve workers' problems. To begin with, the 40-hour week does not really exist in auto. 54 hours and even 63 hours are the rule at certain times of year. We don't know if Chrysler would try, for example, 4 13-hour days (52 hours) or 5 or 6 10-hour days (50 or 60 hours) — but 4 10-hour days would be the exception, not the rule.

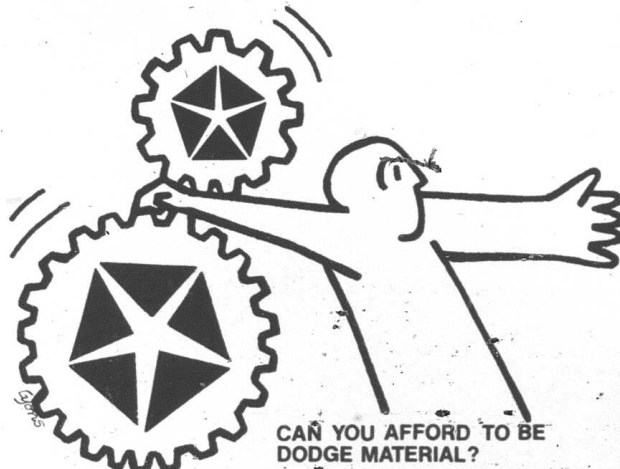
Thus, to win a 40-hour, 4-day week in reality, workers will have to fight to BAN COMPULSORY OVERTIME. This is vital no matter what the work week is.

## 30 for 40

A better way to fight intolerable working conditions however, is to win a SHORTER WORK WEEK: 30 HOURS WORK, AT 40 HOURS PAY. This would also create thousands of new jobs in auto, and help fight the seasonal unemployment in the industry.

But most of all, the worsening working conditions of auto workers can only be fought if auto workers move toward control over their production standards. Line speeds and quotas must become legitimate union business — negotiable issues over which workers can legally strike if necessary. Any changes in these standards must be agreed to beforehand by the workers affected.

Until such changes are implemented — that is, until auto workers demand and fight for such changes — the "problem" of absenteeism will remain. It will remain; quite simply, because the urge to "take a day off" has become a small voice of sanity in the mind of a worker caught in an increasingly inhuman job situation. ■



Nothing Like Experience

The Nixon administration has given further proof of its lack of interest in mine safety. It recently appointed a Mr. Edward Failor as "enforcer" of the Federal Mine safety standards. Mr. Failor's only credentials seem to be his work for the Republican Party, for which he has been a fund raiser and midwest regional director of the Goldwater for President Campaign. He has no mining experience at all.

The Bureau of Mines claims that his first accomplishment was to set new penalty schedules for safety violations.

However, this schedule has been widely criticized for being a complete sellout to the mine operators and for further weakening the mine safety law.

The new schedule allows for the mine operators to avoid the fines of up to \$10,000 if they can show that "the operator either a) did not or could not, with the exercise of reasonable diligence, know of the violation, or b) did not or could not have available to him at the time of inspection the equipment, material, personnel or technology to avoid the violation." ■



Edward D. Failor

New York City cops learned the real meaning of law and order last week when they were hit with the harsh penalties of the state's Taylor Law prohibiting strikes by public employees.

After a six-day wildcat strike which, like the firemen's slowdown earlier, had failed to resolve the deadlocked negotiations between the Lindsay administration and the city unions, the cops found themselves faced with fines of two days' pay for each day out, plus departmental penalties. Lindsay is threatening to invoke the Taylor Law against other city employees as well.

The issue which sparked the wildcat was a court ruling sending the patrolmen's "parity" suit back to a lower court for trial. The Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA) claims that the men are owed \$2700 back pay because of an agreement maintaining a certain pay-ratio with police sergeants.

and is cutting back the size of the city work force.

Lindsay has skillfully blamed the impasse on soaring welfare costs, which he claims are bankrupting the city. It is true that rising welfare costs, caused by growing unemployment, are putting severe strains on the budgets of New York and other major cities.

But Lindsay is using the welfare crisis to pit the city workers against the poor. Other workers resent the demands made by city workers because they fear that wage boosts will result in higher taxes, and the union leaders have done little to win city-wide support.

The solution to the city's fiscal crisis — an end to the Vietnam war, new taxes on banks and business instead of workers, and decent public employment for the unemployed who are being forced on welfare — isn't being advocated by Lindsay or by the leaders

hated Lindsay administration is undermining them with investigations and review boards, and the public calls them "pigs" and gives them little support.

The frustrations of the police, however, stem from fundamentally different causes than do those of other city workers. While other city employees are caught in a squeeze between the city and the poor, or caught in a fiscal trap, the problems of the police are rooted in the very nature of the role that police play in this society.

### Shock Troops

The real function of the police isn't to help people across the street, direct traffic, or even to solve crime, but to enforce the laws of the state — in particular, to protect the property and position of the ruling class. No matter how an individual cop may feel about a strike, for instance — even if the strikers belong to the same union he does — it is his job to prevent that strike from threatening the company's property.

Thus, at a time when workers, students, the black movement and other social forces are struggling for their rights, the police are forced to be the shock troops of the government's defense of the status quo. Getting rid of the "bad" cops or adding more blacks to the force won't change the role of the police, because "good" cops will have to perform the same functions as long as they remain on the job.

Last week New York City cops discovered what it's like to be on the other side. As soon as they stepped out of their role and began to act like militant workers themselves, the power of the state came down on them even more heavily than it did on other workers. For the first time, the full penalties of the Taylor Law were invoked, with support from James Buckley, Conservative Party Senator who many cops supported because of his strong stand on "law and order."

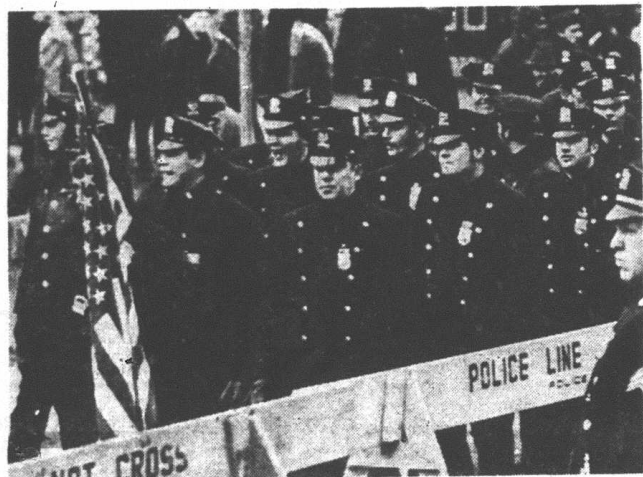
If the police continue their fight against the city and the Taylor Law, the contradiction between their role as police and their needs as employees will intensify. Black cops are already feeling the pressure of trying to resolve the impossible contradiction of opposing racism in the police department and the society, while enforcing the racist laws of that society against black people.

Policemen cannot simultaneously identify with social movements and repress them, or oppose anti-labor laws such as the Taylor Law and then enforce them against other city workers. Individual cops can resolve these contradictions for themselves by leaving the force; but as long as the capitalist state exists and hires policemen to protect itself, the police will remain a focus of hatred.

It is a mistake for other city workers to depend on the police to fight their fight for them, as has happened with the parity suit. The Sanitation union, in particular, has taken a back seat this year and gone along with the traditional formula of accepting slightly less than police and firemen.

The PBA will not wage the kind of fight necessary to overturn the Taylor Law and win significant gains for other city workers; furthermore, they will not struggle alongside the other city unions to protect what those unions win.

[Anne Goldfarb is not a member of the New York City Police Department. She is active in the women's liberation and labor movements in NYC, and is a member of the International Socialists.]



# POLICE ON THE LINE

Anne Goldfarb

Kiernan, the head of the PBA, had suppressed a strike move by militant rank and file groups last May on this issue by initiating the court suit. When the court ruled against them, angry cops exploded all over the city. They stayed out over Kiernan's opposition until a stormy PBA delegate's meeting voted to return to work and await the outcome of the parity trial.

As we go to press, the trial is still in progress. But whatever the outcome, it will not resolve the basic conflict between the city unions and the administration, so long as the city continues to try to solve its financial crisis at the expense of city workers.

While city employees struggle to keep pace with inflation, Lindsay has been offering only meagre cost-of-living increases. The firemen's slowdown forced him to begin bargaining, but the city has not made an adequate offer to the 80 unions whose contracts expired last month. The city is now trying to tie wage gains to productivity increases — doing more work for the same pay —

of the city unions, most of whom supported Lindsay for reelection.

The union heads, in fact, have tried to restrain their membership, and it is only the tremendous pressure of the ranks which has brought the struggle this far.

### Anger and Frustration

Rank-and-file workers aren't angry because of money issues alone, but because they find their jobs increasingly frustrating as social conflict intensifies and city services deteriorate.

Firemen, welfare workers, and others find that they have become symbols of the white power structure and are increasingly the targets of the black community's hostility. Sanitationmen find themselves blamed for their inability to do the impossible job of cleaning up overcrowded slums. The city's attempts to save money mean that antiquated, dangerous equipment is a constant hazard.

The police are particularly angry. They feel that they are the target of unwarranted abuse from all sides — the



# THEI S'

Jack Trautman

Richard Nixon seems to raise a firm hand against the steel industry, but steelworkers are looking up his sleeve. Bethlehem construction steel prices went up 10.5-12.5 per cent over the 1970 level in January. This comes on top of an 11.8 per cent increase over

# AFSCM

On January 19, 2600 AFSCME workers at the University of Michigan went out on strike. The main issue which concerned the rank and file was wages. Maids working within the campus receive just \$2.20 an hour; janitors get only \$2.60.

Despite the fact that these wages place many of the AFSCME workers below the poverty level, the university administration, headed by Robben Fleming, piously proclaimed that the university had no money. At the time of the strike the negotiating teams were forty cents apart, and there was no real sign that the university had changed its hard line. Throughout the campus area, the expectation was that the strike would be a long, hard struggle.

This strike was only the most recent round of one of the most significant campaigns of the American labor movement in the last decade — the struggle for the unionization of public employees, including university employees. AFSCME, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, has been at the center of this campaign in many areas.

### "Fact Finding"

Two days after the strike began, a membership meeting voted to go back to work and await the findings of a special "fact-finding" commission ap-



"Steel is dropping! Run for your life!"



# BIG STEEL

the last two years — making a total rise of nearly 25 per cent since 1969. The steel corporations will be sure to raise prices again after the upcoming strike by their workers.  
Officially, Nixon blew up at these "enormous" increases, threatening to

allow more Japanese steel into the country. Japanese steel is now "voluntarily" limited to 10 per cent of U.S. steel consumption, since it sells for less. Bethlehem's really huge price raises were an embarrassment to the government's supposedly huge effort to brake inflation.

U.S. Steel then announced that it was also going to up its prices, only less than Bethlehem did (5.9-8.8 per cent, two-thirds of Bethlehem's raise). Since the government was now only two-thirds as mad, it said it could live with the U.S. Steel inflation. Things quieted down.

The press-release battle between Nixon and Steel is a re-run we've been seeing for 10 years. Here's the plot: 1) some of the steel companies announce high price increases; 2) the government makes ominous noises about it; 3) others in steel announce smaller but still substantial increases; 4) the first corporation backs down to the lower level; 5) the government is satisfied in enforcing moderation and the corporations are satisfied in getting increased profits.

The conclusion of this little show is edited out of the mass media, but *Workers' Power* provides it as a reader service: 6) you and I pay for it.

But this year's performance with steel may be a pilot for a new series. It took place in the middle of an official recession, surrounded by official efforts to combat inflation. Nixon's anti-inflation drive has been aimed mainly at workers: increase unemployment and make propaganda against sizeable wage increases. This policy encourages the corporations to slow down their price increases while at the same time allowing them to maintain their profit rate.

The alternative — price control — has

never been considered, because government represents business first and last, despite the press releases and elections in between.

The Nixon plan has done well against unorganized workers. They have no defense against inflation, layoffs and speed-up. Even big unions like the UAW have barely kept up with rising prices. But while Nixon tries to ride out the waves of inflation and recession, he feels tremors from below — such as the nationwide Postal strike and the Teamster strikes in Los Angeles and Chicago — which threaten to upset his canoe.

## Wage Control

In 1971 contracts covering 5 million workers will be negotiated. Many employers will force workers to strike to win a liveable wage and liveable working conditions.

The most important contract negotiation covers 400,000 steelworkers. Steelworkers are angry about declining real wages. They are talking tough. At the United Steel Workers Convention this fall, they pressed their President I.W. Abel hard for his unsatisfactory performance in getting some real increases. The USW contract will set the pace for other big-union contracts. If Nixon wants to clamp down on wages, he must start here.

The game Nixon played with the Steel corporations over prices gives him an excuse to step in on wages.

Moreover, the proposed attack on steelworkers is just the first step in a whole new strategy. Said one steel management source: "The Administration is making it's move, not only to control prices, but more importantly, this is the first setting of the stage to control the

exorbitant demands of labor. By hitting the Bethlehem price move, Mr. Nixon is setting the stage for controlling wages" (*Wall Street Journal*).

There is every reason to believe that this management spokesman has rightly predicted the government's future course. Inflation has not been stopped, and has barely slowed down. As Nixon tries to decrease unemployment — aiming at the 1972 elections — there will be an increase in workers' bargaining power. Prices will continue to go up since wage increases are automatically passed on in the form of price increases. The government will have to intervene, and it looks like the upcoming steel contract where it will begin.

The President can intervene in various ways. He can send federal "mediators" to sit in on the negotiations. They will recommend a settlement that has an air of impartiality but in fact taken the teeth out of the steelworkers' demands.

## Taft-Hartley

More importantly, Nixon can invoke the Taft-Hartley Act and force the steelworkers back to work for an 80-day "cooling-off period." A lengthy steel strike would obviously jeopardize the "national interest" — meaning the interests of American business.

If federal mediators and Taft-Hartley fail to break the insurgent spirit that has been growing among the steelworkers and in other unions, we may see the Administration turn toward the imposition of wage controls. Already, a law is on the books — passed by the Democratic Party-controlled Congress — which permits the President to institute wage controls. ■

# ME at Ann Arbor

John Willoughby

pointed by the State of Michigan. The leadership argued that the investigator would be able to help the university find the money, although militants argued that only a continuing strike would make the U. buckle under the pressure and discover "hidden funds."

In retrospect, the union's retreat was not surprising. Confusion and indecision reigned within the organization throughout the entire period leading up to the strike. The leadership twice extended the deadline without consulting the rank and file, and the negotiations always remained secret. When a membership meeting was finally called on January 18, the workers voted overwhelmingly to strike when the deadline expired the next day.

## Student Support

During the short period of the strike itself, picketing was poorly organized. At times, picketers walked in the bitter cold up to seven hours without a break or even a cup of coffee. At first, the leadership refused to let the student support coalition picket with the workers. (Eventually, however, they requested students to support the strikers on the lines.)

The formation of the student support group was a significant development of the strike. Campus unionizing drives provide a chance to build solidar-

ity between the student movement and the new workers' militancy. Student support can have a real effect — when campus workers struck the Illinois Institute of Technology a year ago, the lack of student backing helped defeat the strike (see *J.S.*, no. 14, Dec. 1969).

The coalition attempted to educate students on the demands of the workers, and the necessity for students not to scab. Their efforts met with some success. The Housing policy board voted not to penalize any non-union worker within the dorm for walking out in support of the strike. On the second day of the strike, students from the coalition temporarily blocked some buses driven by scab drivers. The university administration began to feel the pressure and went to court for an injunction to end the strike.

The request for an injunction was denied, however, by Judge Ager, the same judge who broke the AFSCME strike at Eastern Michigan University. Instead, as Charles McCracken, president of the union local, stated, the honorable judge "browbeat" the union officials for several hours behind closed doors. The result was an agreement to accept the proposals of this fact-finding commission.

The union meeting which considered this recommendation brought back by the negotiating committee was long and

chaotic. McCracken controlled the microphone throughout. There were no floor microphones. Although the opposition wanted to stay on strike, there was no organized caucus demanding the right to speak at the stage in order to refute the highly slanted views which McCracken presented, and offering an alternative, militant leadership. The opposition became demoralized and confused. The negotiating committee's proposal passed by a majority of above 700 to 300.

These events demonstrate many of the difficulties of organizing public employee unions. The members of the local work in separate areas of the university. This means that militants have trouble getting together to talk their problems over. In addition, the fact that the strike was officially considered illegal intimidated the leadership from taking a clear position in favor of a walk-out.

## Ranks Must Organize

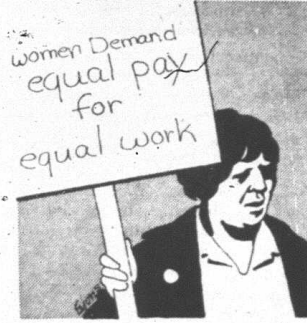
To overcome these weaknesses, rank-and-file militant caucuses must be formed. In addition to pressing for greater militancy, it is critical to unite the divided sections of the work force by overcoming the inequalities among them. Not only must wage parity be established between maids and janitors, but also women clerical workers must be recruited into the union.

Sexual and racial discrimination must be fought within the union as well as in the university. Only when all the workers who keep the university functioning unite and fight together will the union be able to combat the strike-breaking pressure which the state will inevitably attempt to mobilize.

inevitably attempt to mobilize.

Students must continue to support the AFSCME workers in their drive for decent wages and working conditions. When the membership sees that many students are behind them, this can only increase morale and willingness to fight. Moreover, as was demonstrated at Ann Arbor, student groups should not be afraid to criticize an often weak and timid leadership. Attempts must be made to communicate with the rank and file, to discover what their opinions and ideas are, and encourage them to organize independently of the union bureaucracy.

In the long run, students should attempt to link the strike with other problems confronting the university. Students should demand that a fair settlement be coupled with a commitment to recruit more working class students into the elite colleges. Furthermore, the corporations which have benefitted from the existence of these universities should pay for any demand which outstrips the university's present financial resources. ■



# Davis

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The radical movement's only answer to the state's use of the issue of terrorism — and the only way to prove their charges a frameup — is to show that our strategy is one of mass struggle.

Another aspect of the political meaning of the trial is being played but through the formation of "Committees to Defend Angela Davis" across the nation. It's no secret that the Communist Party is playing an important role in promoting these committees. The rightness of forming defense committees is clear — but the political meaning of this, too, must be examined.

The Communist Party, which until now has rightly been considered compromising and compromised by young radicals, is using the Davis case, and the building of these defense committees, as a vehicle for regaining political legitimacy among the radical movement. But it's unlikely that the C.P. will do this by trying to convince people of its politics. Beyond saying that Davis has been framed because she is a Communist, the committees will say little about Davis' politics or those of her party.

In fact, Davis is a hard-line Stalinist, identified with the Maoist-leaning wing of the C.P. in California; this wing is more militant than the rest of the Party on domestic issues, but — like Mao Tse-Tung, who is its political hero — it isn't for socialism under workers' control,



but for a collectivized state ruled by a party bureaucracy (Stalinism).

Davis herself stands four-square behind the forty-year record of Stalinism in the USSR, including the purge trials of the 1930's. More, she stands publicly in the name of her Party, which defends the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, and, in domestic affairs, tries to channel all the movements it is active in towards support of the "progressive" wing of the Democratic Party.

We do not defend Davis because of her politics, but in spite of them. Left groups which have kept silent on these politics out of solidarity, are performing a disservice.

Exactly because we are defending

Davis, it is all the more necessary to be clear — and to make clear to newly political people — that her politics and those of the Communist Party are Stalinist and anti-working class, and represent the wrong leadership for the radical movement.

Not only the left, but all working people should defend Angela Davis in their own interest. Even the most conservative of black organizations, the NAACP, has recognized the danger to all blacks if the State can frame black people with impunity. The organized labor movement has said nothing. But rank-and-file workers must recognize the danger.

They must recognize, not that Davis as a Communist is struggling for Workers' rights — Stalinism is opposed to workers' rights — but that if the State of California convicts Davis, the resulting climate of repression, the witch-hunting of all radicals and revolutionaries, including radical and revolutionary workers, and the red-baiting even of non-political militants, will choke off the new militancy of the working class at birth.

The last wave of repression — in the early years of the cold war — destroyed the strength of the working class for 25 years. Now, when we are beginning to go forward, we cannot afford to move back. ■

the left. Judges act increasingly arbitrarily, and the lawyer or defendant who protests is slapped with contempt sentences without trial.

Davis' innocence or guilt does not matter to the State: they are out to suppress radical politics and will browbeat any jury, falsify any evidence, to get a guilty verdict. We join in the demand that Davis be set free.

The radical movement, in coming to Davis' defense, must educate the public on the political meaning of the trial. It's not enough to repeat the defense line that the charges are a frameup; it's necessary to expose the political attack by the Regents, to expose the propagandistic use of the terrorism issue to disguise the state's own terrorism against the left.

Because this issue must be faced squarely, the movement must be clear on its actual attitude to terrorism and to the Marin jailbreak attempt. Terrorism as a political strategy is now becoming discredited in the student-radical movement (see "New Weather: Changing Line," elsewhere in this issue). In contrast to the terrorist idea of a few people paralyzing the government, we aim to build a mass movement of people struggling for their needs.

We defend the Marin jailbreak attempt as a desperate gamble for freedom, justified by the impossibility of non-whites and other poor gaining justice in American courts. But we do not regard such efforts as showing a strategy for revolutionaries: they cannot build a mass movement; and they are suicidal.

## THE GOLDEN YEARS

Jack Trautman



LNS

In the current economic recession United States corporations, feeling a squeeze on their profits, are looking around for sources of cheap labor. One of those that they are beginning to latch onto is older, retired workers.

Younger workers have been refusing to put up with low pay and rotten working conditions. More and more they have been rebelling: the rate of absenteeism goes up, as does the strike rate. Workers are more militant today than they have been for 25 years. They are less and less willing to sell their bodies without getting a decent price for them.

Older workers are finding that when they retire their lives end. They have barely enough money to survive, and with the rapidly rising prices, what they do have gets quickly eaten away. There is little for them to do but sit around and stagnate, both because of their lack of funds and because there are no provisions for any meaningful activity for older people in our society. When they retire they are put on the shelf and expected to quietly disappear. Dignity? That's reserved for people with money.

So it's no wonder that when the corporations ask them to come to work they do so happily and willingly, without asking too many questions about what pay they get or what will be their conditions of work.

"There's never going to be any retirement for this man," proclaimed an older man who went to work after being retired for a year. "You've always got

and being dead  
is just the same,"  
the master said.

3

Because it was so relaxing to sit and watch the animals heel precisely to a steel rhythm, we sat contented and filled the deep heat each time the master passed it. "I'll even buy fortified dog meal," he said, smiling, cracking his whip, "with whatever's left over after my hunter's expenses have been met. It is dangerous, though, in the dark continent now. It is not so easy as it once was. Expenses are up. We thank you, however, as always, and ask as you leave that you note the menagerie visible on the left. Next year we hope to have a black panther for your edification and amusement. But they are hard to take alive." Then, like a good promoter, he added, "If there are any left next year, we'll have one performing here."

to keep your mind occupied. Besides, how can a man live on a \$80 a week pension?"

And when they go to work, since they can be discharged at any time, they are not inclined to make trouble, as are younger workers. "The older workers may go at a slower pace, but over a year's time you get more out of him because he's more steady, conscientious and always shows up for work," says a corporation executive.

What this means is that corporations are able to get away with murder.

They avoid having to pay sick pay, pensions, vacation pay and other fringe benefits by hiring older people through personnel agencies and by hiring them as part-time employees. Furthermore, many older people are kept from working for decent pay by social security regulations, which cut off one half of the payments when a person between the

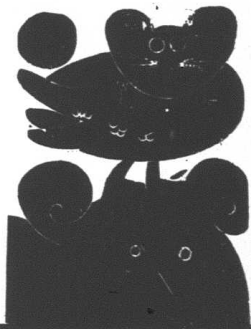
ages of 65 and 72 earns more than \$1680 annually, and cut off all payments if he or she earns more than \$2880. As a result, retirees must either work part-time or full-time at very low wages. Thus, social security taxes help to subsidize employers.

The effect that all this has on the rest of the work force is to increase unemployment and help to drive wages down and make working conditions even worse than before.

The fault does not lie with the older people who are forced to work for pittance in order to survive. It rests with a system that pits groups of workers against one another: old against young, men against women, blacks against whites, and forces each to try to improve its own situation at the expense of the other — while the only real reward is reaped by those who collect the improved profits. ■

## Three-Ring Circus

Richard Lyons



# new weather: changing line

James Coleman



In a statement issued Dec. 6, the underground Weatherman group acknowledged what the autumn had made clear to most of the radical movement: the strategy of "revolutionary" terrorism which Weatherman had pushed was a flop.

"The townhouse forever destroyed our belief that armed struggle is the only real revolutionary struggle," said the statement signed by Bernadine Dohrn, the major figure in the underground group.

This was a reference to the explosion which killed three Weather people in a New York townhouse last winter. Dohrn's statement admitted what had long been known — that the three victims had been killed by their own bombs. But the statement gives new details which show that had the three lived to carry out their program, the results would have been an unparalleled political disaster for the radical movement.

Disappointed that bombings of property had had no real effect, the statement says, "this group had moved from firebombing to anti-personnel bombs." Some people close to Weatherman think the idea was to bomb one of the luxury nightclubs in mid-Manhattan.

## Terrorism and Elitism

We have always opposed terrorism, but never simply because it is violent. No union was ever built without using violence to defend against employers' and police violence. No revolution was ever won without using violence to defend against the armed power of the state. But this has been the violence of a mass movement, the necessary and unavoidable violence that a popular movement must use to defend itself against reaction.

Terrorism, on the other hand, is the idea that a small group of heroes can bring down the enemy without a mass movement — or can spark an uprising

by example. It is wrong in the first place because it doesn't work. Worse, the ordinary citizen can easily conclude that the revolutionaries are out to kill for the hell of it. Blowing up Sardi's or Jack Dempsey's would only have convinced many people that all revolutionaries were bloodthirsty maniacs.

The terrorist, in common with elitists and authoritarians of different stripes, views the mass of the people as sheep to be manipulated. Terrorism tells people not to struggle, that everything will be handled by the "real revolutionaries" — who, if they were actually to achieve their goals, would continue to substitute themselves for the masses; if the working class isn't good enough to make a revolution, then it can't be trusted to democratically rule society.

The Weathermen ideologically were only one of the stalinist tendencies that emerged out of the ruins of the Students for a Democratic Society. Their particular emphasis on guerrilla warfare brought a special notoriety to the Weathermen, but a thorough-going elitism and a profound distrust of the working class were characteristic of all of the SDS remnants that opted for Stalinism.

Why did the Weatherman Underground take nine full months, after the townhouse explosion, to change its line?

The statement doesn't say. Our suspicion is that it tells only half the story, and that they waited to see if the "fall offensive" bombings which they called for at election time would come off. If they were waiting for these bombings — which didn't take place on the scale predicted — then not just the townhouse explosion, but the failure of their whole strategy was behind the Dec. 6 statement.

From terrorism Weatherman has turned, at least on paper, to a form of mass action. "It is time for the movement to go out into the air," the statement continues, perhaps pardonably using the phrase "the movement" to refer to the Weathermen; "to organize, to risk calling rallies and demonstrations, to convince that mass actions against the war and in support of rebellions do make a difference."

This is a welcome change. But the statement contains no acknowledgment of the fact that the strategy of "revolutionary" terrorism itself, the Weathermen's insistence that this and only this was truly revolutionary, helped demoralize the movement and played a part in creating the present low level of activity. It's nice that people learn from their experiences; it's too bad they destroyed a mass movement first.

The statement contains no real analysis of why activity has declined — except that Weathermen have been absent. "The bombings [of N. Vietnam in November] could have touched off actions expressing our fury... war research and school administrators and travelling politicians are within reach of our leaflets, our rallies, our rocks." As an analysis, this claim that the virtual collapse of the radical and anti-war movements turns on the presence or absence of a few Weathermen leaves one gasping.

## Cultural Revolution

But there's a reason the analysis goes no further. Part of the statement is devoted to saying out, very unclearly, a perspective for revolutionaries to "change and shape the cultural revolution." This continues an idea Weatherpeople have pushed since late 1968 — that because of oppression in the family and schools, high youth unemployment, and so on, young people have become a distinct revolutionary force, as shown by the growth of a culture of rebellion.

"Either you saw the youth culture that has been developing as bourgeois or decadent and therefore to be treated as the enemy of the revolution, or you saw it as the forces which produced us, a culture that we were part of, a young and unformed society (nation)."

The alternatives aren't so simple. You can be for youth culture, see it as part of the rebellion of youth against a world we didn't make and which wasn't

made for us. Yet one can see, too, that a majority even of youth are workers whose most basic struggle is the struggle to defend their lives and dignity at the workplace; see that the student left (and in different ways, the revolutionary wing of the black movement) has gone as far as it can go unless it triggers support from the working-class majority.

A new militancy and political awareness of the working class will be the only hope even from the viewpoint of the survival of student radicalism and rebellious youth culture... because without such a working class upsurge, repression and a new youth cynicism will grind today's movement to powder. A left isolated from the working class majority can no longer exist.

The Weatherman statement does not even begin the analysis which would show a direction for the movement (even a wrong direction). Instead, it calls for anti-war rallies; demonstrations to support prison rebellions (the prison rebellions are a new phenomenon; but support demonstrations are one of the oldest); confronting war research institutes and university administrators; and youth culture... in other words, all the things the Weather people, and the Movement, were into two years ago.

It's as if, having abandoned revolutionary terrorism, the Weather people had time-travelled back to early 1969 to start over — from the same place. But the Movement, what's left of it, is in a different place. The real tragedy of the Weather people is that they have learned nothing.

## Frantic Backtracking

Another tragedy is that their statement is being taken seriously as political guidance. Rap groups and collectives have discussed it; it has been reprinted by the underground media. Even in rejecting the Weatherman line, the movement is still dependent on Weatherman authority.

How many activists smothered doubts and criticism of these suicidal politics because the Weather people had "put themselves on the line"? How much of the movement got out of the habit of critical thinking, into the practice of accepting political guidance from brains no better than their own, because those brains were acting dangerously and heroically?

Since the strategy of terror has already failed, has already been seen to fail, and the entire movement is demoralized as a result, the Dec. 6 statement in fact represents a frantic backtracking, another application of that fine old slogan, "There go my people — I must catch up to them, for I am their leader." Not only should we break politically with the Weathermen, but the whole movement already has, in practice. It only remains to recognize that the Emperor has no clothes. ■

# "Workers' Participation" in Cuba

Roger Cid

Last May, Castro, First Secretary of the Cuban Communist Party and Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, announced that the 10 million ton sugar harvest, [the regime's primary economic target for 1970] would not be reached. This was not too surprising — many observers considered a harvest of that size to be beyond the reach of the Cuban economy. The actual harvest, 8.5 million tons, was a record in itself, and was only achieved by the mobilization of almost all available resources.

What was somewhat surprising was that Castro's July 26th speech, commemorating the attack on the Moncada barracks in 1956, was devoted almost exclusively to a discussion of the results of the 10 million ton harvest attempt. The speech offered a relatively candid account of the more obvious effects of the sugar harvest on an already poor economic situation.

The harvest attempt can only be understood in the context of Cuba's continued reliance on sugar production and the various measures this has forced on the regime. In 1963, after an internal debate on the expected rate of industrialization of the island, the Cuban Communist Party reversed earlier policies and decided to stress sugar production. The Party saw this as a way out of the regime's growing economic difficulties in general, and of its most pressing problem, a balance of payments deficit, in particular.

Although this meant continuing the distortion of the Cuban economy — its dependence on one crop — the regime felt that along with Soviet aid, large sugar exports were the only way to stem

the growing balance of payments deficit and obtain the foreign currency to finance necessary imports.

Even if carried out intelligently, this strategy would only be effective on a temporary basis. The world market operates for profit — and this is as true for the "socialist" countries as for capitalist America. In this context, increased crop exports would tend to lower the price of the crops on the world market, and therefore bring in proportionately smaller returns.

Worse, the rising prices of manufactured goods, coupled with Cuba's lack of capital, low productivity and poorly developed power, transportation, and communications, would continue to worsen its position in relation to the industrialized nations.

Moreover, the need to secure markets for all the sugar has its political cost. Since 1964, Cuba has become increasingly dependent on the Soviet Union, which for political reasons purchases a large portion of Cuba's sugar (even though the USSR is a sugar exporter). This, plus a growing debt to the Soviet government, will limit the regime's options in the future.

## "Moral Incentives"

The Cuban bureaucracy's attempts to escape from their economic blind alley have meant spurring the Cuban workers on to increased production. The question was, and still is, how to do this when the workers could get little in return for their increased efforts. The regime did not lack ingenuity, and in place of "material incentives" (bonuses for higher production, etc.), came up with what it calls "moral incentives."

"Moral incentives" have primarily included exhortations to self-sacrifice, appeals for solidarity with the Third World against American imperialism, and depictions of an ascetic, puritan lifestyle as the revolutionary ideal. But this is only one side of the approach. The other side is the liberal use of "moral" pressure on those workers who don't believe in the regime's increasingly empty promises.

The organizational vehicle of this pressure is the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution which also function quite well as a surveillance network. The advantages for the regime of "moral" over "material" incentives are obvious. In the short run, they are cheaper, and they fit in well with rationing: there is little to be bought with bonuses anyway.

Only as a part of this emphasis on "moral" incentives does the 10 million ton harvest attempt make sense. Economically, by pouring unwanted sugar on the market, it makes a farce of the sugar-export strategy. (The French agronomist Rene Dumont, who is pro-Castro, saw it as evidence of Castro's penchant for impressing foreign visitors.) But by trumpeting this production goal as a solution to Cuba's economic problems, and also as a moral blow against imperialism, Castro could hope to mobilize the workers to work harder.

If the goal had been reached, morale would have been raised, "doubters" silenced, absenteeism reduced, and the remaining problems could be explained away as minor.

The decision to go for such a huge harvest was obviously a gamble, for failure would create real problems. Castro

would then be forced to explain the reasons for failure, the persistence of old problems and the creation of new ones, without the benefit of a morale-boosting blow against imperialism. To lie about the failure, or to understate the problems significantly would only prepare the way for a tremendous demoralization as soon as the problems became obvious.

This explains the lay-the-cards-on-the-table nature of the speech. Yet, in the long run, preparing the Cuban people for coming difficulties will not long be able to offset the regime's need for increasingly repressive measures, as rationing is extended (cigars and cigarettes have been added to the list; meats, poultry, and fresh fruits have been further restricted), consumption remains stationary or declines, and absenteeism and grumbling increase.

The harvest attempt itself has helped ensure that things will get worse — it has created some fairly severe problems. First, numerous production goals of the year's economic plan were not fulfilled. By Castro's admission, for example, there were lags in the production of leather footwear, fabrics and garments, bread and crackers; all these were due to labor shortages resulting from the "agricultural mobilization" and absenteeism.

That consumer goods should suffer is not surprising — they have never been high priorities of "Communist" regimes. But production of such industrial essentials as cement and steel bars also stagnated, and labor shortages had an adverse effect on the laying of power lines and the building of substations.

In addition, the sugar mobilization required the reallocation of human and material resources away from areas in which they were relatively productively employed to the sugar harvest; Volunteer brigades from the cities (and the U.S. left) were inexperienced in cutting cane and caused a fair amount of cane to be wasted.

## Efficiency

Now, more than ever, Castro must try to increase productivity, which, given the state of the economy, involves increasing efficiency. The question of efficiency is an important one and Castro dwelt on it at length in his July 26 speech. A good part of the talk, for example, was a scathing attack on the leadership, with Castro denouncing ignorance and inexperience, including his own, and proclaiming that "the people can replace us whenever they wish — right now if you desire."

While this claim is clearly demagogic (the people have no means of changing the leadership, short of revolution) the problem of inefficiency in the bureaucracy is a real one. Aside from technical backwardness, there is a certain narrowness on the part of the bureaucrats that results in a lack of coordination among the various planning and administrative bodies.

To deal with the incompetency of the bureaucracy, Castro has a number



of ideas, none of which get to the root of the matter: (1) at all levels, fire individual bureaucrats deemed incompetent and/or disloyal; (2) at the planning level, de-emphasize the role of the Council of Ministers (the highest level of government) and reorganize the relationships between the Ministries and the planning bodies; (3) increase Communist Party control over planning through a new Bureau of Social Production attached to the Central Committee; and (4) at the plant level, establish collective bodies to aid in the management of each plant — made up of the Advanced Workers' Movement, the Young Communist League, the Communist Party, and the Women's Front (that is, organizations controlled by the leadership of the Communist Party).

### Time and Motion

Castro is well aware that just increasing the number of hours worked will not solve the problem of the efficiency of the workers. Forcing workers to work longer does not mean they will work better. So, Castro proposes "to make every second and every motion of the workers' bodies count... to obtain maximum and optimal utilization of every machine, every gram of raw material and every minute of man's work."

Perhaps this will mean the introduction of Time and Motion studies, with which American workers are quite familiar. One thing is certain, that the object of the efficiency drive will not be to lighten the labor of the Cuban work-

ers.

Castro is also aware that increasing efficiency is a political task — again, one of mobilizing the workers. To do this, he plans to encourage various forms of "workers' participation." This is now being held up by some sections of the American Left as an example of Castro's commitment to workers' control, but Castro's own comments belie this. His speech said nothing concrete about these participatory bodies — except that only those workers already recognized by the regime as exemplary in their loyalty will have a direct say in them.

### Hand-Picked

It's quite possible that these workers' "representatives" will be hand-picked from the top; if they are elected, they may be subject to veto from the top, as is the case in the selection of candidates for membership in the Communist Party. It should be obvious that this "participation" is not meant to increase the workers' control of the work process but to increase production. Odds are that if it fails in this it will be scrapped.

Even if employed by real workers' governments, measures to boost the enthusiasm of the workers would only be stop-gaps — the only long-run solution to underdevelopment in the poor nations is a socialist revolution in the industrialized capitalist states. This would unlock more than half the world's wealth, now controlled for profit by these states' ruling classes.



But even as stop-gaps, Castro's schemes will fail miserably. In the context of increasing centralization and militarization (all major administrative posts are being filled by army officers), most workers will quickly realize that "participation" is not control. They will know that they don't control their wages, their working conditions, the direction of the economy. They will know that, in fact, they don't control anything at all.

Since Castro is not about to establish real workers' control, involving representation of all the workers, to allow real democratic rights and independent workers' organizations — that is, to *dismantle his bureaucratic regime* — he will never significantly reduce the red-tape and bottlenecks.

Nor can he tap the workers' creati-

ty and initiative that would help a real workers' state to survive while awaiting the triumph of the revolution in the rest of the world. Long speeches, and quotes from Che Guevara will not help him.

### Blind Alley

In the meantime, Cuba is in an economic blind alley not much different from that of many other poor nations which are tied to a one-product economy. With real economic growth out of the question, the lot of the workers will get worse, with a deteriorating housing situation, increased rationing and greater pressure to work harder and longer. Bad workmanship, absenteeism, and general discontent will be what the regime sees.

Organizational tinkering will not stop this, and Castro's new set-up will probably be shaky. Possibly this instability and the bad economic situation will be a rallying point for opposition elements in the Communist Party. Whether an internal struggle will result is hard to tell. If it does it will probably be difficult to keep it hidden behind closed doors.

In the context of an upsurge in the working classes of the industrialized nations which the coming decade will probably see, general disaffection will be a major weak spot in any bureaucratic regime. A major political crisis in the Cuban bureaucracy might well crystallize a generation of grumbling into an actual movement against the regime and for real workers' power. ■

# Castro's New Year's Resolutions



LNS

Cuban workers had little to celebrate on New Year's Eve. The disastrous effects of the past year's sugar harvest were made that much clearer as Castro discussed prospects for 1971 in a speech in Havana, Dec. 31. With a frankness that seems to hypnotize certain left-wing circles in this country, he also outlined the measures he hopes will help him to help the Cuban bureaucracy "help" the Cuban workers.

Predictably, 1971 will see an effort to increase production, without, however, even a prospect of economic improvement. The ration list, significantly expanded this year, will see some further additions as a result of the decline in non-sugar agricultural output. Castro will have a tough time selling this to Cuban workers as a necessary evil of economic growth.

At a time when Cuba will be even more dependent on sugar exports, this year's harvest will be between 5 and 6 million tons, no more than an average yield for the Batista regime. Furthermore, the government's costly efforts to mechanize cane-cutting appear to have failed completely; according to Castro, all of this year's harvest will have to be cut manually. Since he is calling for a harvest of 7 million tons, and since the harvest, supposed to be completed in June, is already behind schedule, it should be clear what's in store for the workers.

1971 has been named "the year of productivity." Efforts will be made to improve productivity, the quality of work, and work organization. At present, records of absenteeism, bad workmanship, etc., are kept in "workbooks" which the workers must present when they change jobs.

The infamous "workbook" has been used by Fascist and Stalinist regimes

alike, both to control workers' movement from job to job, and to discipline them on the job. Cuba is not stopping there, however. A new law provides up to two years at forced labor for able-bodied males (other than students) who refuse to take a job. The same penalty awaits any worker who is absent without leave for more than 15 days.

But absenteeism is not the only "vice" plaguing Cuba these days. Truancy amounts to nearly 25 per cent of the country's school enrollment. These nearly 400,000 youth (between the ages of 6 and 16), along with others whose scholastic record is not satisfactory will be sent to special "work schools."

Apparently these students, as American educators would say, "lack motivation" for the post-graduate work of cane-cutting — a job which, since the improvements of the early revolutionary days, has not gotten less back-breaking, nor gained in dignity or rights. They will probably not "improve motivation" in the work schools either.

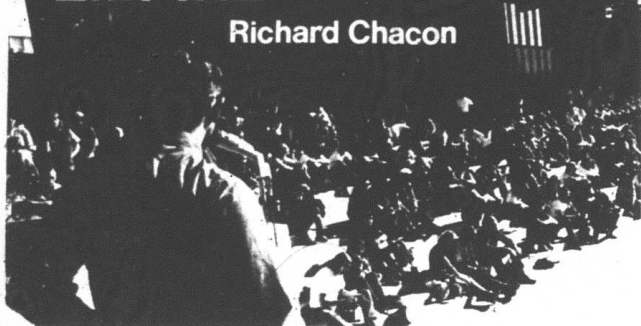
These youth apparently do not believe the regime's promises. At the same time, the older workers are watching some of the Revolution's early achievements, in particular the increase in milk production and the expansion of the educational system, disappear before their eyes. Now many of them are suspicious of the government.

Under these circumstances, efficiency drives, laws against absenteeism, work-study/labor camps, etc., will only further alienate the working class from the regime. How and when they will move against it are open questions. Whether they will do so is not; they have little choice, and the Polish workers are showing them how. ■

— Roger Cid

# LAW AND ORDER IN THE REDWOOD EMPIRE

Richard Chacon



On Oct. 4 of this year, in Humboldt County, California, a pre-law honor student, son of a well-established Italian-Swiss family in the dairy town of Ferndale, was shot and killed by a deputy sheriff — simply for looking at a pair of marijuana plants on a river bar. "Justifiable homicide is the finding of the Grand Jury," reported the District Attorney, William Ferroggiaro, former local campaign head for Robert Kennedy. "The case to all intents and purposes is closed."

The Humboldt sheriff's department is a fiefdom within a fiefdom. Its arrogant attitude parallels the feudal control over this county's economy and political institutions by the heirs of the timber barons who carved out their Redwood Empire here at the turn of the century. Central to the construction of that empire was the systematic repression of the

original inhabitants, the Indians, who were treated as poachers on their own lands, and also the use of official violence against attempts by lumber workers to organize militant unions.

The original goals of county "law enforcement" reign supreme to this day. Everyone outside of the lumber baron's retinue is treated as an "outsider" (be they Indians, workers, poor whites, conservationists, long-hairs, or students) and to be an outsider means — to the Sheriff's Department — to be "outside the law."

When Pat Berti was murdered on Oct. 4, the first reaction came in the form of petitions "demanding justice" and calling for creation of a Civilian Review Board. Details of the incident were suppressed by the local daily newspaper. While the curtain of silence over the case

was ripped only by a dittoed hand-out circulated among students, the D.A. brought the evidence regarding the shooting to the Grand Jury.

Those who knew the D.A. as a liberal Kennedy supporter confidently expected Ferroggiaro to obtain an indictment. Instead the D.A. apparently asked for the verdict of justifiable homicide.

At Humboldt State College, a rally was called on Oct. 28 by the student body president, Bill Richardson, who compared the killing with the brutality he saw as a youth in the black ghetto of Sacramento. Walter Sheasby of International Socialists called for an initiative campaign to reorganize the Sheriff's Department into zones with resident deputies and community control.

In Berti's hometown, Ferndale, the parents and family friends organized a Committee for Justice and mobilized over a hundred dairy farmers, merchants, and art gallery owners to pack a city council meeting on Nov. 3 and demand a new investigation. A community which in the past has shown more than a measure of intolerance for long-hairs was forced to confront "law and order" as something more than an abstraction. The townspeople declared for the victim.

The Grand Jury's investigation established that the marijuana plants did not belong to Berti or McCanless and that neither had cultivated the plants. Nevertheless, McCanless was indicted for cultivation in what seems like a desperate attempt at face-saving.

In the course of a court hearing on the indictment of McCanless, the Berti family lawyer was able to bring out the details of the shooting by skillful cross-examination of the deputy sheriff involved. Berti and McCanless, were on their way to an often-used dumping site on the Eel River when they spotted two coffee cans with plants growing in them sitting in a field. When they walked over for a closer look, they passed with-

in a few yards of a Deputy Sheriff who was on an unofficial stake-out of the plants.

While they examined the plants, the officer emerged from his cover in the brush with his revolver drawn, and called out that they were under arrest. Pat Berti turned from his crouching position over the plants and was suddenly shot in the chest. Recognizing his assailant, who was not in uniform, as someone he had known since high school, Berti shouted "Christ Larry, you shot me!" He staggered, turned and fell to the ground.

## They Shoot Students

On Dec. 1, when 250 Ferndale residents returned to their City Council for action on their proposed resolution demanding a new investigation, they were startled to hear a confession by the real owner of the marijuana plants. An Army veteran told of bringing seeds back from Vietnam and cultivating the plants that provoked the fatal stake-out. Although he testified about this to the District Attorney during the Grand Jury investigation, the County continued its willful prosecution of McCanless. It is clearly worried about losing the \$1 million suit for wrongful death filed by Berti's parents.

Meanwhile, the Arcata Community Office — an off-campus center for student and community activists started after the spring strike against the war — has been the target of harassment by the Sheriff's Office for its role in keeping attention focused on the case. Two narcotics officers came into the office hours before a meeting was to be held on the case to tell the staff to "tell your friends the pigs will be here for their meeting."

A week later the Sheriff dropped in to pick up a bumper sticker that has become popular in the area. It says: "They shoot students, don't they?"

## Telephone

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

picketing that could have stopped deliveries and discouraged company trucks from leaving the garages. Those lines that were thrown up were organized by the stewards at certain buildings.

Above all, the leaders of Local 1101 refused to take even minimal steps toward calling out the operators — the one action that would bring N.Y. Tel. to a stand still. Such a call would have required a promise of protection to operators who respected our picket lines. This was too bold a step for Howie Banker, John Smith, Don Cottuchio and the Executive Board of Local 1101.

In part this failure stems from their narrow view of union action: "As long as we get ours, what do we care about them." The problem is that every Local 1101 action in the past few years has shown that we can't get "ours" unless we are willing to support the operators and commercial employees in getting "theirs."

In part, also, their failure stems from our leaders' own ambitions. Everyone knows that they had to cancel the results of the November election just to maintain their positions in the Local. Their initial militancy during the strike was an attempt to improve their chances in the up-coming election. Further-

more, it appears that some of our leaders have ambitions in the International bureaucracy.

In this sort of context, the operators appear to them only as a bother. Why take chances by appealing to the operators, with all the legal complications that follow from such an action? What they needed most was prestige among the N.Y. Local Presidents, who are a large block in the "politics" of the International. This they won.

It is a sign of the times that these bureaucrats had to assume a militant posture — short-lived as it was — in order to forward their ambitions. But what we need is genuine leadership, not posturing.

Unfortunately, the opposition candidates, led by Carnivale and Serrette, did not demonstrate much leadership or initiative during the strike either. In spite of past action and present rhetoric, these opposition leaders did not lead any push to get the Local to make a serious appeal to the operators. Nor did they seek to expand their base by organizing mass picketing at the Central Offices where they have influence.

No doubt the Banker-Smith leadership intended to come out of the strike with a strong Local. This, of course, is what the ranks want too. But for the Banker-Smith faction this seems to mean building the stewards' organization as their own political machine.

This strike shows that the kind of stewards' organization we need is not a political machine for the Banker-Smith clique. We need a strong stewards' or-

ganization that represents the ranks and will fight when the ranks want and need to fight — one that will make the officers of 1101 responsible to the rank and file. The certification of stewards must be based on elections or majority petitions from the work force they represent, not on the will of the leadership.

## Organize For July

Even in the wake of defeat, it is doubtful if the present leaders of Local 1101 will do anything serious about organizing the operators before next spring or summer. So far, the only organizing drive among operators or commercial workers has been conducted by the International — and it has been pitiful.

If the operators are going to be organized into CWA (and broken from their company union, the Telephone Traffic Union) the stewards in the Central Offices will have to become organizers. These stewards, backed by the ranks, can force the Local leaders to endorse the organization of the operators and commercial workers by initiating the drive themselves.

This is not just a matter of leaflets, but of helping the operators set up organizing committees and protecting these committees by active support. There are, of course, all sorts of laws and regulations aimed at preventing such action — not the least of which is Article 11, paragraph 11.01 of our own contract — but no fighting union was

ever built by adherence to anti-labor laws and no-strike pledges. Indeed, our own strike was "illegal."

To pull off such a drive, the craftsmen will have to take seriously the problems faced by our sisters in the N.Y. Telephone Co. Not only are the operators and other women employees underpaid, they are also treated in the most insulting fashion. One-minute toilet breaks, absurd dress regulations, rampant spying, and speed-up are only a few of the degradations these women face every day.

An aggressive organizing drive based on opposition to these working conditions can be the basis for victory for craftsmen, operators and commercial workers alike next summer. Together we can "close it down."

As things stand now, Banker says he will call the craftsmen out again on Friday if the company doesn't send the out-of-state men home or come to terms on the issues. This sounds like so much hot air. On the first day back to work, the company spared no effort to make our lives miserable. In Brooklyn, militants were fired and in many areas no overtime was available.

If the Banker-Smith leadership doesn't stand up to this, their political careers in the union aren't going to be worth much. They will more than ever deserve defeat in the Local elections. Their temporary militancy can hardly cover up a long-term unwillingness or inability to work for one strong union in telephone and a decisive victory in July. ■

# support your local

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**DETROIT:** 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich., 48203.

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# 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.

# Telephone Strike Hung Up

Brian Mackenzie

After two weeks, the strike of Local 1101, Communications Workers of America, against N.Y. Telephone was called off on Jan. 25 without even a partial victory. The strike of 15,000 telephone craftsmen and Plant Division Clerks had been called because of the cuts in overtime and the freezing of transfers and upgradings that resulted from the importation of 1,000 out-of-state craftsmen.

The leaders of Local 1101 ordered the strikers back to work on the basis of a company offer to submit the issues to binding arbitration and a promise not to let the out-of-state men work until the issues were resolved. Until the decision to return to work was made — without a membership meeting — the union's position had been that the out-of-state men must return home before

arbitration was acceptable.

Even more cowardly was the union leaders' acceptance of the company's right to fire any militant who was arrested during the strike. This failure of nerve is particularly significant in view of the long range implications of the strike.

While the immediate issues, particularly overtime, remained crucial, it was clear by the second week that the strike had become a dress rehearsal for the contract fight next summer. As the attacks by the company, the courts, and, for a while, the International leadership increased, the strike became a power struggle between the union and the company and a fight for the life of Local 1101.

**N.Y. Telephone, backed by AT&T, made it clear that it was out to break**

the power of Local 1101 and weaken the position of all CWA members in the strikes that are expected to begin when the Western Electric contract expires next May. The courts and the police were mustered by AT&T to destroy our union. Except while they were on "strike," the police appeared in force to protect company property, and beat up the more aggressive union militants.

The courts, in the very partisan person of Judge John Canella, levied fines amounting to over \$1 million on the Local and \$100,000 on the International. These fines were payable directly to N.Y. Tel.

With this kind of support, the company remained intransigent. It rejected both mediation and arbitration unless the strikers returned to work. In usual AT&T fashion, letters were sent to all

employees explaining how reasonable management was, and, of course, how unreasonable the union was.

Toward the end of the strike, craftsmen began receiving phone calls from their foremen enquiring whether the men really knew what this "senseless" strike was all about. Our guess is that everyone concerned knew what it was really about.

## Militant Stance

To the surprise of many, the leadership of the Local did not back down under this pressure during the first week and a half of the strike. In fact, they responded by escalating the struggle. They were successful in convincing most of the CWA locals in N.Y. state to join the strike on its fourth day. By the end of the first week, almost all of the state's craftsmen were out.

This move forced the International leadership to neutralize its opposition to the strike and to withdraw its threat of a receivership. After a six and a half hour meeting with the N.Y. State Local Presidents, on Jan. 16, Joseph Bierne, President of the International since its founding in 1947, stated that the company had indeed broken the contract. The next day, Judge Canella began imposing fines on the International. Thus, the Local leaders did succeed in winning grudging support from the International.

The stance of the Local leadership, until they capitulated, was a militant one, but their conduct of the strike was conservative and half-hearted. For a while they stood up to the company and its courts, but they never took the decisive steps that could have led to victory.

They failed to organize the mass

*(continued on page 14)*



## Traffic Trouble



Rose Veviaka

While 15,000 craftsmen struck New York Telephone, women in the Traffic department (operators) and Commercial department (clerical) continued to work almost no more affected by the strike than by bad weather.

Although we knew that the men were on strike, we weren't quite sure why, since the only news we got about the strike came from either the company or the newspapers — neither of which presented the position of the workers accurately or sympathetically. Anyway, the strike was outside somewhere, unpleasant and seemingly unconnected to us. Sometimes they would yell "scab" at us as we entered the building, but the yelling was halfhearted; the men didn't seem very sure that they meant us and we didn't feel like scabs.

Part of the reason for their confusion (as well as ours) was that Local 1101 of

the CWA never asked us to stay out and were not willing to formally support any of us who did honor the picket lines. Since both operators and commercial workers are "represented" by company unions, and therefore totally unprotected, a formal appeal as well as an offer of protection would have been a necessary first step in obtaining support from women telephone workers.

Almost more shocking than the fact that one half of the telephone workforce continued to work while the other half struck is the fact that this did not seem particularly strange to either. The telephone company's policy of keeping the workforce divided sexually in terms of job classifications, pay scales and even social life has meant that men and women employees are only barely conscious of the other.

Only now after repeated failures by both to win struggles against New York Tel. are telephone workers beginning to realize the potential strength of a united fight. Unfortunately the leadership of the CWA lags behind the ranks. Not only did they fail to ask for the support of women workers but they did not even once attempt to explain the strike to us or to show how it was relevant to our struggles.

In fact, since the strike was partially a dress rehearsal for the upcoming national/telephone strike when we will all have to go out, it was very relevant to us. Indeed, anything that will help assure a victory in the upcoming strike is crucial for women telephone workers, who have the most boring jobs and are the least paid and most supervised of all telephone workers.

Ironically, while the craftsmen were on strike to maintain their rights to over-

time and to assure upgrading, "Ma Bell" (from our point of view "Ma Bell" looks more like "Big Brother") was clamping down on dress regulations for women employees. The recently granted right to wear pants has now been more narrowly defined to mean only "pants suits" and boots of any kind are forbidden.

Along with more stringent dress regulations has come a drive to increase productivity by having less operators at the board (even if it means that those taken off the board do nothing) so that each operator will be forced to answer more calls per half hour. Operators will be forced to compete with each other in terms of speed and those that do not pick up will eventually be fired. All of this has produced not a peep from the T.T.U. (Telephone Traffic Union) other than justifications of the company's actions.

Not only did the T.T.U. play a leading role in justifying speedup and the nonsensical dress rules, it also took on the responsibility of informing us that we were expected to cross the picket lines and come to work. (Did anyone doubt us when we said the T.T.U. is a company union?) Most of us were told that we would be "jeopardizing our jobs" if we were to support the strike, and one woman in the commercial department was fired.

Obviously, women in Traffic and Commercial must get rid of the company unions that "represent" us if we are going to fight the horrendous conditions we work under. It is also clear that if any workers are going to win against the telephone company, we must be united — and that means building one strong union that represents all

telephone workers — plant, traffic, and commercial.

Unfortunately, as the craftsmen's strike proves, we cannot count on the CWA leadership to do this job for us. If the CWA is going to become the strong militant union it must be to win against AT&T, it will have to be built by the ranks.

Women telephone workers must also be well aware that if we join the CWA we will have to make it fight for us. When the men are out alone and need our support to win, it is very easy for them to understand why all telephone workers must be united. When we are all inside working it is not so obvious.

We must be strong from the beginning about what we want or else our demands will probably be the first forgotten. We must demand full equality for all telephone workers, which means equal pay for women and an end to sexual discrimination in hiring. Equality must also mean childcare facilities for all employees, paid for by the company and controlled by the workers, so that we don't have to spend all our spare time and money arranging for babysitters.

As long as equality for all telephone workers is a central demand we will not have to worry about the men not fighting for our demands — and the men won't have to worry that when women get jobs in the crafts our presence would lower the pay scale or worsen the working conditions. But if we are going to win these or any other demands, we must begin to organize now. ■

*[Rose Veviaka works for New York Tel. in the Traffic Department and is a member of the International Socialists.]*