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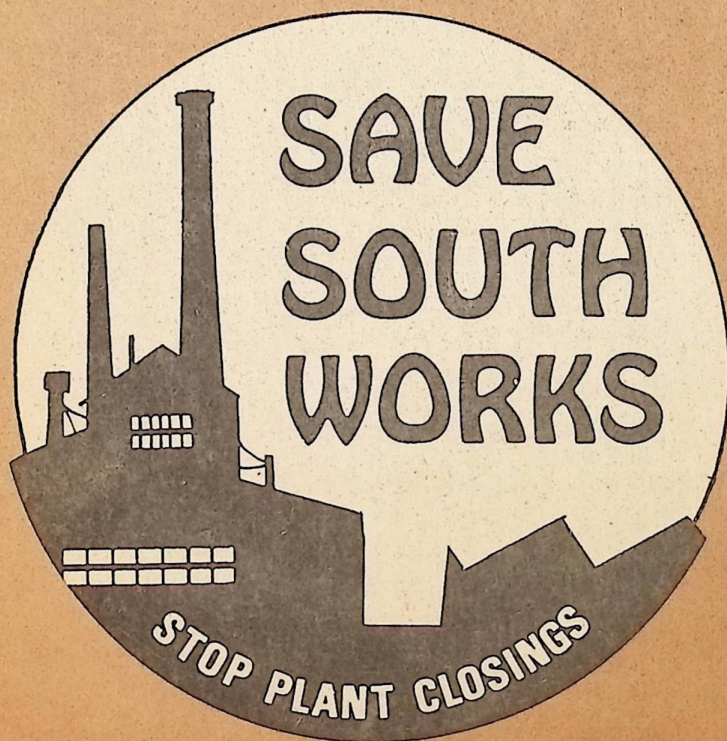
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Labor today

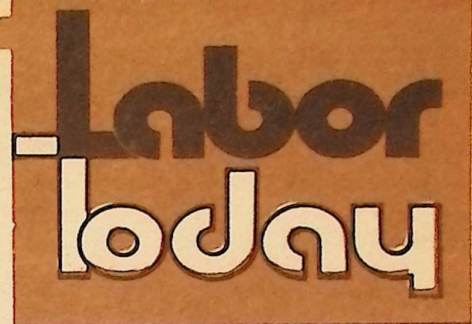
Volume 22, No. 10

November 1983



An interview with Mayor Hatcher

Mayor Hatcher & 1984



"We started by putting together a program by which to judge the prospective candidates and have now come to the conclusion that we should field a presidential candidate who happens to be Black," Gary Mayor Richard Gordon Hatcher began a recent interview with LABOR TODAY.

Hatcher, first elected Mayor in 1967, and now the senior Black Mayor in the United States, had agreed to discuss his views on Presidential Politics '84 shortly after publication of the People's Platform and before a final decision had been reached on whether or not to field a Black presidential candidate. "But I think there's little doubt that

there will be a Black candidate," he said. "And, if there is, there is little doubt that the Reverend Jesse Jackson will be that candidate."

According to the Mayor it all began a year or so ago when a number of Black leaders -- he mentioned Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP; Addie Wyatt, Vice President of the United Food and Commercial Workers; Jesse Jackson, President of Operation PUSH; Corretta Scott King; Congressman Fauntroy; and Julian Bond, among them -- held a series of meetings aimed at developing a strategy for the Black community in the 1984 presidential elections.

"We met as individuals -- I suppose we could be called 'self-appointed individuals' -- to develop a yardstick against which to measure the candidates. Then, based upon their response to that platform, we saw ourselves going to the Black community and to Black voters recommending support or non-support of individual candidates," Mayor Hatcher says.

According to Hatcher, "We did a lot of work. By the time we had completed work on our platform we had consulted with more than 100 organizations and held issues conferences in several states.

"But," Richard Hatcher says, "some slight differences developed in these meetings between those who thought our entire thrust should relate to the

program and the candidates' response to it and those of us who thought a more fundamental challenge was needed if our platform was to get its proper exposure. I was one of those who said then and who say now: 'To limit one's self to developing a platform is not a sufficient thrust to really change the nature of politics. It doesn't change the political picture. It is no guarantee that people who have not had a great deal of political power will have more political power.'

"True," Hatcher says, "they may get a little more if they pick the right candidate, but it doesn't really change the intrinsic nature of politics. You can not change, or even basically challenge, the political structure with just a platform, although you must develop your own platform if you are serious about politics."

When we repeated the argument that many people think a Black candidate would "siphon votes away from the most liberal candidate," and would "guarantee Ronald Reagan's re-election," Hatcher was quick to respond. "I've heard the argument, and I believe that many sincere people hold that view. However, I think that flies in the face of today's reality.

"The first thing to remember is that you can't defeat Reagan with Reaganism. Unless the issues are discussed, unless candidates -- and especially the candidate who wins the Democratic nomination -- has distanced himself from Reaganomics and

Reaganism -- then there's not going to be the kind of enthusiasm that is needed to generate a large voter turn-out in November. Unless that happens Reagan will, once again, sneak through with only a quarter of the voting-age population supporting him.

"The second part of my answer is that we are not talking about running a Black candidate in November. We're talking about the primary campaign. And we are talking about a candidate who just happens to be Black -- we are not talking about a Black candidacy. I say this because I think it's terribly important that we understand the difference between these terms."

We talked, then, about the large number of un-registered Black voters who Hatcher thinks would register during the course of the primary election campaigns if there were a Black candidate among the contenders. According to his figures, there are about eight million un-registered Black voters who remain unregistered, "because they haven't seen a whole lot to vote for." Then, pointing to Chicago and the fact that 300,000 Black voters were added to the voting lists during and prior to the Washington campaign, he said, "If Jesse Jackson ran nationally the same phenomenon would take place. Only this time, instead of talking about 300,000 voters we are talking about millions of new voters."

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The way Hatcher sees it. . .

... ON PLATFORMS AND CANDIDATES

Most candidates consider platforms as something to run on, but not something to stand on. In February, March and April platforms are everything. But by July, August and September, platforms are usually filed away somewhere. And believe me, if that candidate wins in November, you have to look long and hard to find even a copy of the platform that he ran on.

... RADICAL IDEAS

It's amazing that in 1983, it is considered radical to even talk about the idea that an American citizen who happens to be Black should exercise the right that all American citizens have to run for President of the United States. And it certainly shows how far we haven't come!

... ON CANDIDATES & CANDIDACIES

When we speak of a Black candidate, we are saying that a Black candidate would be running and addressing himself or herself to the concerns of peoples of all colors. What we are talking about is a candidacy where the person would be appealing across racial lines, across age lines, across economic lines, would be appealing to those who are concerned about this planet being blown up, would be appealing to women who had gotten the shaft on ERA and wanted somebody who could really articulate their needs and their concerns. In other words -- we see a Black candidate, but not a Black candidacy.

This candidate would be as articulate and eloquent in talking about the plight of farmers in Iowa as about the high level of unemployment in the Black community. He would be as informed on U.S. policies in Central America as he would be about the decay of our central cities. He would know as much about the problem of nuclear disarmament as he does about the problem of police brutality. He would speak out against -- and offer alternatives to -- plant closings. And, by the way, he would be more informed about and supportive of organized labor and union members than any other candidate now in the field.

... ON KEEPING 'EM HONEST

I would say that if a certain candidate runs really well in the early going, you may see that candidate separating themselves from the pack by the end of March. If a certain candidate gains enough early strength to get way ahead of the field, I'm not sure they'll be speaking to their own mother, much less to groups like labor, women, minorities, and so forth by convention time. Why should they? They'll have the nomination locked up and all they would be saying at that point is that as good Democrats we've all got to stick together so that we can defeat Reagan.

My argument is that if Jackson is in the race it all but guarantees that no one's going to be able to get way out in front of the pack. By the time you get to the Convention, the issue will still be up in the air, which means that the kind of groups we're talking about -- labor, women, minorities, and so

forth would then have some leverage based upon what they control in the way of delegates and candidates would have to negotiate with them.

... ON THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Frankly, I have not seen the Democratic Party take the kind of bold steps and bold positions that cause me to believe that the Democratic Party could become that vehicle that addresses the questions that need to be addressed. I seriously doubt if it wants to be the vehicle for tackling the tough problems that have to be tackled. I think that if we're talking about true independent politics in the United States, then we are probably talking about third party movement.

... ON WHAT WE NEED

I'm talking about is a party that is willing to address the fundamental problems of our society. That means, first of all, that we have to recognize that we have a class system in this country. People who are born poor, die poor. People who are born rich, die rich.

That has to be changed because as long as you have that class, that kind of class situation we're going to have a situation where a small handful control most of the wealth and, by virtue of that control, make most of the decisions by which the rest of us live by.

That's not going to be easy to change. We need a party that addresses this whole issue of class, that speaks to the question of work -- who works and who doesn't work, who gets laid off and who doesn't get laid off, and so forth. These are questions that have never been seriously addressed by either of the two major parties. Right now both parties place greater value on a handful of people who sit at the heart of industry and commerce in this country, than they do on the millions at the bottom of the pyramid.

At this point most of my efforts will be addressed to strengthening independent trends within the Democratic Party. It seems to me that that is the best opportunity that we have right now.

But, if we end up by electing a Democrat President in 1984, and it turns out that he is not prepared to take on the structure, we will have to conclude that nothing has changed very much. Then it seems to me that there's only one way to go -- to start, without waiting until 1988, to start working then, to build an independent candidacy.

... ON RANK & FILE TRADE UNIONISTS AND '84

Trade unionists should run for office everywhere they can and the labor movement should support them.

It's in everybody's interest for that to happen. But it's of special interest -- or at least it should be -- to organized labor.

I'm convinced that one of the things that the Reagan Administration set out to do in a purposeful, conscious way was not only to make sure that the wealthy got wealthier, but to break the unions. I think many companies are taking advantage of the atmosphere that Ronald Reagan created when he went after PATCO in order to reduce the power of the unions and to get back some of the hard-won gains that union workers have gotten in this country.



THE RISE OF THE CIO

In the summer of 1935, the American Federation of Labor held its annual Convention in Atlantic City. The Convention, dominated by craft union leaders, sought to suppress industrial unionism and maintain the status-quo. This was not surprising, since many of the older craft unionists were contemptuous of mass-production industrial workers and their leadership -- John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman and David Dubinsky.

Despite a strong minority report that pressed the case for industrial unionism, the delegates voted 18,204 to 10,933 to maintain their craft union orientation and jurisdictions. AF of L leaders William Green, Maurice Hutcheson and Dan Tobin called the vote a "great victory" and talked of labor "keeping faith." There was obviously little faith in the AF of L among industrial workers, as John L. Lewis threw "one of the most deliberate punches in modern history" at Big Bill Hutcheson, of the Carpenters Union, during a heated debate on the convention floor.

Following the AF of L Convention, the leaders of the industrial union movement called their own convention in Washington. The purpose of the Convention was "the encouragement and promotion of organization of the unorganized workers in mass production and other industries upon an industrial basis" and on November 9, 1935, the Committee for Industrial Organization was formed.

John L. Lewis (UMW) was named the first chairman of the CIO with Charles Howard (Typographical Workers) as secretary and John Brophy (UMW) as director. Other leaders participating in the convention were: Philip Murray, Thomas Kennedy, David Dubinsky, Max Zaritsky, Thomas McMahon, Powers Haggood, Adolph Germer, Wyndham Mortimer, Bob Travis, Len DeCaux, Roy, Victor and Walter Reuther.

Unions represented were the United Mine Workers; Amalgamated Clothing Workers; International Ladies Garment

Workers Union; United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers; United Textile Workers; Oil Field, Gas Well, and Refinery Workers and the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. On November 23, 1935, John L. Lewis officially resigned as a vice president of the AF of L.

Representing 7 unions and a million members, the CIO felt that it was time for militant, mass action in the name of industrial unionism. As John L. Lewis said, "The time is ripe" for the CIO because "the AF of L is standing still, with its face to the past." Stating that "we will take no backward steps," the CIO leadership moved to bring industrial unionism into all strategic sectors of the economy.

The AF of L was fighting to prevent strikes and to keep a caste system in the work place. The most blatant example of the bankruptcy of the AF of L was in the steel industry, where union leader Michael Tighe kept membership below 5,000 despite more than 100,000 membership applications. Tighe's reasoning for his action was that 5,000 was a "manageable number."

The first test of the CIO was the February 1936 strike of rubber workers in Akron, Ohio. Though barely 3 months old, the CIO accepted the rubber workers' plea for help against Goodyear Tire & Rubber. According to a union leader, "the two agitators in this strike are Goodyear hours and Goodyear wages." As Goodyear raised working hours, it reduced wages and fired union members, prompting 10,000 workers to walk out or sit down.

Using the sit-down, strategic picketing and a public relations blitz by McAlister Coleman, the CIO managed to involve all of Akron's labor and some in the business community in support of the strike by keeping them informed and reminding them that Goodyear was the villain, not the rubber workers.

By March 1936, the union was recognized and worker demands met,

(continued on page 6)

LABOR HISTORY



By Tony Michaels

- 1778- New York printer organize for the first time to win a wage increase.
- 1881- The Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU) is organized in Pittsburgh with 107 delegates representing 8 national unions. The FOTLU thus becomes the forerunner of the American Federation of Labor.
- 1887- Union organizers August Spies, Albert Parsons, Adolph Fischer, and George Engel are executed after being framed for murder at the Haymarket Square bombing.
- 1901- A meeting of the International Union of Textile Workers and the American Federation of Textile Operatives results in the forming of the United Textile Workers Union.
- 1915- Joe Hill, IWW organizer, is executed in Salt Lake City on trumped-up murder charges. Just before his death, Hill telegraphs IWW leader Bill Haywood and says: "Goodbye Bill, I will die like a true blue rebel, don't waste time in mourning, Organize."
- 1919- Over 400,000 coal miners strike the soft-coal industry for higher wages and shorter hours.
- 1919- Wesley Everest, IWW leader, is lynched after a mob of American Legionnaires attack Wobblie Headquarters in Centralia, Washington.
- 1935- The Committee for Industrial Organization is formed (feature story).
- 1936- Auto workers strike GM plant in Atlanta for union recognition, the strike soon spreads nationwide with over two-thirds of GM's production workers hitting the bricks for UAW recognition.
- 1943- Over 500,000 of the nation's coal miners refuse to work without a new contract and President Roosevelt takes over the mines.
- 1946- John L. Lewis and the UMW are found in contempt of federal court and fined \$3.5 million, the largest fine imposed for contempt of court in US history.
- 1959- The United Steel Workers, 500,000 strong, go on strike in a pension dispute with the big steel producers. After 42 days, the strike ends as the USW wins a company-financed pension fund and a worker-management financed insurance plan.
- 1968- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act is implemented by the Department of Labor.
- 1974- Karen Silkwood, a member of the Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers Union (OCAW), dies in an automobile "accident" while working for OCAW to expose violations of safety regulations at the Kerr-McGee nuclear processing plant in Oklahoma City.

The gathering storm?

by Joseph W. Norrick

Joseph W. Norrick, 84-years-old, is a retired coal miner/steel worker now living in Gary, Indiana. He writes here of the general strike in Terre Haute in 1935.

In the bitter cold of the winter of 1934-35 workers from all over the country made their way as best they could to Washington for a conference demanding enactment of legislation to provide unemployment compensation. Joe hitchhiked there as a delegate from his union. He was appointed to a delegation to call upon William "Bill" Green, then head of the AFL. The delegation received a cool welcome, but persisted in making its way to Green's office.

"Boys," Green said, "the American workers don't want unemployment insurance. They want jobs."

"We let him have it then," says Joe. "We yelled back, 'But where are the jobs?'"

As this is being written the Continental Airways strike is still on. Hopes many of us had that pilots of other airlines would join them are gone. They have been left "blowing in the wind," but tomorrow is another day. And, who knows?"

A storm is gathering, and a fellow's mind goes back to that other time so like this. I mean, of course, the 1920s-1930s.

In the 1920s, as now, there were two Americas.

One was the America of those who had "never had it so good." The other America was like the one Reagan and others would like to keep out of sight and out of mind today.

I was in that "other" America as were millions like me, and we were taking a beating. In the early 1930s farmers, as farmers today, were facing foreclosure. Workers, in the mines, mills and factories, were taking drastic pay cuts -- "Take it or leave it." The little was better than nothing, and many had nothing.

The reason: "overproduction," and indeed that was true under the profit system. The resulting distress was brought together, in the Indiana-Illinois coalfields, by an oft-cited irony: the farmers burned their grain because they could not sell it to buy coal, while idle miners and their families, just down the road, went hungry because they had no money for bread.

Such were the contradictions, over and over again.

From still another level of distress -- from those who had lost their fortunes in the Wall Street crash of 1929 -- this survives: Hotel clerks, it was said, were told to ask the registrant whether he wanted the room for sleeping or for jumping.

Today, of course, the situation is

somewhat different. The reason for that difference, let it never be forgotten, is that now, thanks to the workers' struggles then, some protection is built into the system. The Social Security Act, with its provision for unemployment insurance, is one. The National Labor Relations Act is another, and still another is the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Another protection people did not then have is that provided by the unions, not only for their own members, but for the populace as a whole, loath as many may be to acknowledge their debt. Unions have to be credited, too, with supplying some stability to the wage structure. By the 1930s, once powerful unions had been beaten down, and it took heroic struggles to rebuild and extend them into what they are today. The CIO, that started out as the Committee for Industrial Organization, was just coming into being then.

Unions are, and must remain, the people's instrument of struggle, and no one knows that better than those who are today out to destroy them. It is clear now, or should be, that today there is a sophisticated, well-coordinated, ruthless and sustained effort to remove all barriers to maximizing profits.

But a storm is gathering and, just as in the 1930s, it will break -- today's strikes are the lightning flashes. No one knows when or how or where that storm will break, but break it will.

So it was in July 1935 when the nation woke up to the headline news that a general strike was on in Terre Haute, Indiana.

I was living in Princeton at the time, 8 or so miles south of Terre Haute. I had gone out from 46 AF of L local unions for a mass meeting to protest the introduction of "scabs" into the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Mill. So I rode a freight to the meeting. It was held on the courthouse steps. A great crowd was there.

Talk that afternoon was of the likelihood that the governor would send in the National Guard, a common practice then in times of "labor trouble." Talk turned to action; it was decided that a general strike should be called for the following day.

Who among that crowd knew anything whatsoever about conducting a general strike? The only such strike we knew

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STAFF

EDITOR: Fred Gaboury
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: John Kailing, Jim Williams
ART DIRECTOR: Peggy Lipschutz
ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR: Susan DeGracia
RESEARCH DIRECTOR: Aaren Cohen
PRODUCTION: John, Mort, Bill

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FIGHT BACK STREET



The class struggle takes many forms. There are major strikes like the one at Phelps Dodge or at McDonald Douglas that involve hundreds and even thousands of workers. There are the battles against US Steel's threat to close more steel mills. And then there are the struggles that we seldom hear about -- the zillions of fights that workers are involved in every day across the country.

This month "Fightback Street" runs from the steel mills of the Chicago-Gary area to the Continental Airline picketers, with a detour through the Mayor's office in St. Louis, with a stop-off at O'Hare Airport with members of SEIU Local 372.

We invite our readers to send us stories of their battles for publication on "Fightback Street."

SEIU Local 372 VS. B/N

On February 3, 1983 the dock workers at the Burlington Northern Air Freight facility in Chicago's O'Hare Airport complex walked off their jobs and set up picket lines. The workers, members of Service Employees International Union Local 372, had been attempting to negotiate a first contract since winning bargaining rights in 1982.

The company arrogance that precipitated the strike was fed by the Reagan administration's support for take-aways and union-busting. With that type of political climate Burlington Northern demanded the right to strip the workers of pension, hospitalization and life insurance benefits they had already earned by their labors and reduce their hours of work at will. Wages were not an issue in the strike.

There are always important lessons to

be learned whenever workers go on strike to defend what they have won or to improve their wages, hours and conditions of work. This strike, through small, is no exception.

Burlington Northern Air Freight had prepared for the strike. When the workers went out the company resumed production by utilizing their office, sales, administration and management people to do the work. Working as much as 20 hours per day for a few days and then 12 hours a day, six days a week, they were able to manage about 50% of normal production. After a couple of weeks, the company began to hire scabs to replace strikers. Working with the non-bargaining unit people, they achieved about 75 to 80% of normal production. By March 10, 1983, there were about 28 replacements (scabs) at work when 11 of the strikers asked to be taken back. The company

rehired six, filling out its normal work force of 34 dock hands.

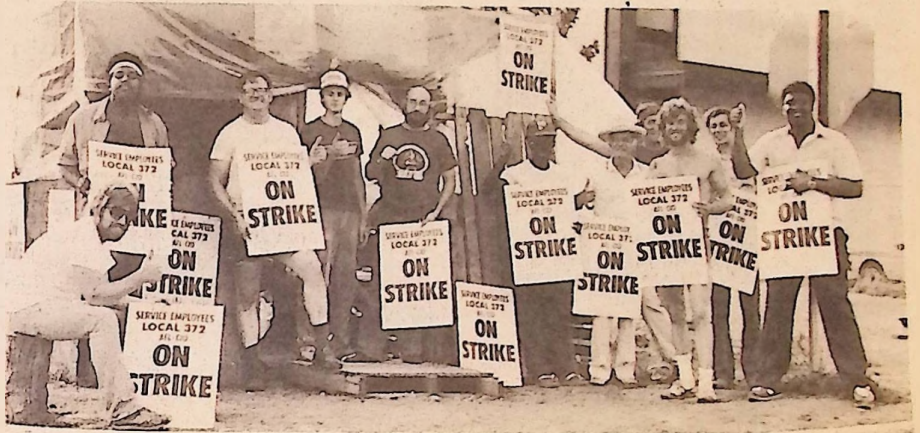
The strikers filed for unemployment only to have their claims contested by the company. At issue was the interpretation of the Illinois Unemployment Insurance Act. The opening sentence, "An individual shall be ineligible for benefits for any week with respect to which it is found that his total or partial unemployment is due to a stoppage of work which exists because of a labor dispute at the factory, establishment, or other premises at which he is or was last employed, "contains the key to the company's contention that strikers are not entitled to benefits. The company claims that "stoppage of work" applies to the cessation of work by the strikers.

However, that phrase has been interpreted by the courts in 24 states

strike comes from the company attempt to decertify the young local union.

A scab petitioned that SEIU Local 372 be decertified as the bargaining agent for the workers at the Burlington Northern Air Freight facility at O'Hare Field. At the subsequent election the company's decertification attempt was defeated by a vote of 28 to 26 -- a rarity in decertification elections where the bulk of the strikers have been replaced with scabs. The company has challenged the election and the union, too, has filed its own counter-charges.

There are two factors playing an important role in the company's failure to win the decertification vote. Foremost, is the excellent job Local 372 has been doing in keeping close contact with the strikers and clarifying



and has been determined (in 23 cases) to mean the cessation of work "at the employer's premises" and whenever there is a substantial resumption of that work, a work stoppage no longer prevails.

Based on that construction, the Vermont Supreme Court ruled on December 8, 1982 in the case of *The Rutland Daily Herald* that strikers can collect unemployment benefits when the strike does not substantially curtail their employer's operations.

The *Daily Herald* contended as did Burlington Northern that the phrase "Stoppage of Work" applied to the cessation of work by the strikers. The findings in the Vermont Supreme Court case were used by SEIU Local 372 in arguments on behalf of the striking members' request for unemployment compensation.

Eventually, the strikers were granted compensation payments retroactive to the date that Burlington had been able to effectively resume full production.

Another important lesson from this

all the issues for them. Their leaflets and appeals for trade union and public support for the strikers are fine examples of communication -- direct, clear and attractive.

The other factor is the arrogance of the Burlington Northern management as they continue to push the workers to their limits. With their take-aways and constant pressure for greater productivity, the conditions that led the workers to join a union in the first place, have intensified.

Putting these two factors together -- good union work and corporate arrogance and greed -- we have the rare occasion where a company decertification was defeated while a strike is in progress.

Local 372 asks that the public support the strike of the Burlington Northern Air Freight workers by calling Burlington Northern and telling them of your support for the strike and by refusing to ship any parcels through Burlington Northern Air Freight. Messages and financial support can also be sent to SEIU, Local 372, at 6 North Michigan Ave., Chicago IL 60602.

Lewis "Lew" Moye arrested

Last summer's arrest of TUAD Co-Chair Lewis "Lew" Moye and three others for disturbing the peace and trespass opened a new chapter in the fight to protect the public health care system of St. Louis.

Lew and the other members of the Campaign for Human Dignity had gone to the Mayor's office to demand that he not reduce the clinical services at Homer G. Phillips Hospital, the only health care facility still operating in St. Louis' Black community.

The fight to maintain a public hospital in the Black community had begun back in 1979 when Homer G. Phillips was first slated for closing. (About the same time public hospitals in New York, Detroit, Philadelphia and Chicago also came under attack, with many of them closed despite public outcry and struggle.) At that time the Committee to Save Homer G. Phillips and All Public Hospitals was established with Moye serving as Co-Chair.

Despite a city-wide campaign that worked to prevent consolidation of the Phillips facility with St. Louis' other public hospital (located, co-incidentally, in the white section of the city) the hospitals were consolidated in 1981, leaving only a clinic at Homer G. Phillips.

Shortly afterwards, Vincent Schomel, a white Democrat, was elected Mayor of the City. Although he trailed in the white communities, a 98% vote from the Black community, based upon Schomel's promise to re-open Homer G. Phillips Hospital, carried the day for him.

After two years of struggle over amendments to the City Charter and bond issues, things went from bad to worse with the City deciding to cut back on the staff of the Homer G. Phillips clinic. Should this happen, the effect will have been to have closed all

health care facilities in St. Louis' Black community.

The delegation -- Moye, Zenovia Thompson, Laura Moore and Steve Lucious -- were sent by the Campaign for Human Dignity to the Mayor's office to protest this latest assault on the Black community. But, even before the delegation was able to present their demands they were arrested by a security guard, who, after dialing 911, told the Mayor to leave.

Schomel complied, only to return a few minutes later, charging into the room brandishing a hammer. He grabbed Moore, raised the hammer threateningly and, when Thompson attempted to protect Moore, the Mayor, after asking if the guard had a gun, told him to "take it out and shoot one of them."

Eventually additional police officers came and Moye and the others were handcuffed -- not too gently, Moye says -- taken to the lock-up, mugged and charged with disturbing the peace and trespass. All were released without bond after six hours.

December 7 is the trial date on the trespass charge and, if convicted, each of the defendants face a possible jail term of six months.

In addition to all of the hassel, the defendants have incurred several thousand dollars worth of legal fees and more are in the offing.

LABOR TODAY readers wishing to help in this case can do so by writing to Mayor Vincent Schomel, Room 200, City Hall, St. Louis MO 63103 demanding that all charges against Thompson, Moore, Moye, and Lucious be dropped. And, if you can spare a fiver (or even a ten spot) you might want to send it to the Campaign for Human Dignity, 438 N. Skinker, St. Louis MO 63112.

Continental Airline Strike

by A Continental Flight-Crew Member

On September 24, 1983 Continental Airlines filed a petition for bankruptcy with the clear intent to rid itself of its labor unions. This blatant abuse of the bankruptcy laws was the latest maneuverings of Continental's Chairman Frank Lorenzo who claimed, "It wasn't a problem of insufficient cash or too great a debt load, our sole problem was labor." (Continental's balance sheets indicated that the airline had sufficient cash and sizeable assets which could have been converted to cash at the time that it filed its petition for Chapter 11 reorganization.)

What Lorenzo failed to tell the public was that the unions representing Continental's employees had previously volunteered to negotiate cost reductions to help return the airline to profitability. Instead of negotiating in good faith the Company rejected the Union's offers and raised its demands for further concessions.

After filing for bankruptcy, Continental shut its doors for several days,

reopening with a drastically reduced flight schedule. The Company recalled less than 30% of its employees, offering the remaining employees work at less than 50% of their previous salaries and benefits under appalling working conditions. In an attempt to lure fliers back to its airline, Continental offered the public cheap air fares. (Continental was depending on the return of the work force and flying public to generate an immediate cash flow. This has not happened.)

The Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) and the Union of Flight Attendants (UFA) struck the carrier on October 1, to protest the Company's efforts to circumvent the Railway Labor Act and break the Unions. (The International Association of Machinists [IAM] had been on strike since August 13, 1983 after having been unsuccessful in negotiations which spanned over two years. That strike is still in progress.) At the same time the Unions retained a team of legal experts in the area of bankruptcy law, which includes Vernon Countryman, Harvard Law School's

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Save South Works

The National Center for Trade Union Action and Democracy calls upon the labor movement to support the struggle of their Brothers and Sisters of Steelworkers Local 65 to prevent the United States Steel Corporation from closing its South Works in Chicago.

The time has come to call a halt to the policies of US Steel that are destroying the jobs of steelworkers, turning our communities into slums and threatening the industrial base of our nation.

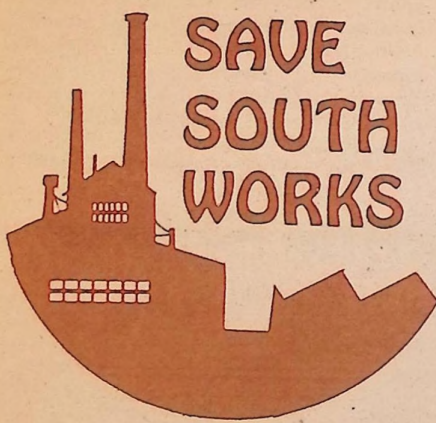
A way must be found to make them pull in their horns. And, if they won't we offer a very simple solution: Establish a National Steel Authority to take over and operate the mill as the first step toward nationalization of the entire steel industry.

We know that the proposal for a government take-over of a steel mill may sound radical to some. But we also know that it works in other countries. And we know that other proposals either haven't worked or won't work.

The fight to save jobs at South Works has been going on for several years. In the meantime, employment has dropped from more than 7,500 less than 10 years ago to barely 1,000 today -- and this at a time when the Steelworkers Union granted billions of dollars worth of concessions to US Steel, all meant to save and protect jobs!

Then came US Steel's 1981 promise to build a rail mill at South Works if Local 65 would grant more concessions ... if the State of Illinois would grant tax breaks and help foot the bill to clean up pollution.

Every one of these demands were met: The union agreed to new work rules. The State re-wrote its sales tax laws and agreed to chip in more than \$30 million for pollution control equipment.



Then came the news, first reported in a Pittsburgh paper: US Steel had decided to close South Works, proving once again, that concessions, tax breaks and other give aways don't save jobs.

As far as worker/community buy-outs are concerned, they don't work either. Look what happened at US Steel's Ohio Works in Youngstown, Ohio. US Steel refused to even consider selling the plant and the courts ruled that there was no way they could be forced to sell. Instead, US Steel dynamited three blast furnaces, one of which had been completely rebuilt only months before, and leveled the plant.

By any standard, the handful of men who own and control US Steel have forfeited their right to make decisions

and should be denied the power to continue doing so.

It doesn't take a great deal of smarts to figure some things out: At least 200,000 steelworkers have lost their jobs in the last couple of years. Our nation's bridges, highways, railroads and cities are falling apart. Were they to be repaired -- were there to be a massive, federally-funded public works program to rebuild them -- this work would consume more steel than could be produced in 10 years if every steel mill in the country, including South Works, were to operate at full capacity. And they blow up blast furnaces at Ohio Works, topple others in Pittsburgh and close South Works! There's gotta be something wrong, somewhere!

And that someplace is in the board room of US Steel. Over the years, these guys have pursued a careful, deliberate plan. They've laid out billions to buy Marathon Oil, to invest in real estate, to branch out into chemicals and other product lines. They've done all of this -- but they haven't invested a dime more than they absolutely had to for repair or modernization of steel making facilities. By conscious design they've let the American steel industry go to hell in a hand basket while shelling out millions of dollars in dividends and paying themselves six-figure salaries.

When you take on US Steel, you are taking on the biggest of the big: The largest steel company in the world, with plants and properties scattered over every continent. The 14th largest US corporation with close ties to the House of Morgan and other Wall Street banks. And you are taking on a company whose anti-union activity stretches back to its bloody suppression of the 1871 Homestead strike. But if we stop them at South Works we will have reversed a long string of shut downs that has seen Bethlehem, LTV and US Steel turn many cities into industrial wastelands. If we can do this one, we will have put a crimp to the shut downs that are bound to follow the LTV-Republic merger.

The fight to save South Works can not be left to our Sisters and Brothers at Local 65 even though they have to be the shock troops in the fight. Nor can it be they and their friends in the community do the job, even if the City of Chicago jumps into the fight with both feet.

If South Works is to be saved, then workers and trade unionists everywhere are going to have to make the fight to save South Works a national campaign. Every union leader, every rank and file union member, every labor organization is going to have to add their voice to the demand already put forward by Local 65's Unemployed Committee that Congress close the tax loopholes that allow US Steel to make millions of dollars by closing steel mills. They are going to have to join in the demand for a public take-over of the mill and for running it with the workers in the plant as the base of control and management.

There are a couple of "fringe benefits" that will come from such a struggle. Every trade unionist has suffered in one way or another from Corporate America's attack on the living standards of US workers. All realize that, with but few exceptions, we have not yet been able to blunt that offensive. And every worker knows that, somewhere, someplace, we have to score that first victory if we are going to stop and reverse that offensive.

Use it or lose it!

This statement by Roberta Wood, former Trustee of USWA Local 65 and now a laid off steelworker, was

presented as an "Editorial Reply" on a major Chicago TV station in mid-October.

More give aways to greedy US Steel won't save steelworkers' jobs in Chicago's southside communities that depend on steel.

Here are the facts: In 1981, Congress gave the steel industry multi-million dollar tax relief. In 1982 the Steelworkers Union gave back \$4 billion in wages and benefits. Instead of re-investing in new steel facilities, US Steel spent \$6 billion buying Marathon Oil and arranged to import steel slabs from Britain.

Here in Chicago, in 1982, US Steel got drastic work rule concessions and relief from the Illinois rail tax in exchange for a promise to build a new rail mill at South Works. But instead of building the rail mill, US Steel is threatening to shut down the plant.

Face it, US Steel does not want to produce steel in the United States.

But America's well being depends on availability of steel for railroads, bridges, schools and housing.

South Works has many modern facilities -- its #8 blast furnace, BOP shop and continuous caster; a great location on Lake Michigan near midwest markets, and a highly skilled and experienced workforce.

Let the Federal Government step in and operate South Works! Isn't our tax money better spent paying union wages to create a useful product -- steel -- than on unemployment compensation, welfare and food stamps? Money paid in wages stays here and makes our communities strong. On the other hand, give-aways to multinational



corporations like US Steel, go to finance the export of our jobs.

South Works belongs to us -- its workers -- and our community. We should say to US Steel: "Use it or lose it!"

How crazy can you get?

"The American steel industry was so accustomed to a sheltered market and administered prices that it forgot what free enterprise was all about. Price competition was so new that when it appeared the American industry called it unfair."

PAUL BLUMBER
Inequality in an Age of Decline

"We are no longer married exclusively to steel. Return on investment will dictate where the money goes."

DAVID RODERICK, Chairman
US Steel

"There's no divine law that says we were put on this earth only to make steel."

PAUL HARMON, Research Manager
ARMCO STEEL

"The unpleasant truth is that American steelmakers have been unable or unwilling to invest in new equipment and more efficient processes. They have let producers in other countries pioneer and exploit advanced technologies while they plug along with old mills. Instead of upgrading aging facilities and keeping them up to date, the industry has preferred to run them to the point of obsolescence and then close them, which is what US Steel did with its Ohio Works."

Business Week

"The distinguishing characteristic of the American steel industry is its tremendous productiveness, a quality which other countries have been unable to emulate so far."

JOHN S TENNAT, General Counsel
US Steel (1958)

In 1977, the six largest Japanese steel firms received loans of over \$1 billion from a group of US banks that included Morgan Guaranty Trust which owns a controlling interest in US Steel.

In 1947, US steelmakers produced 60% of the world's steel. Twenty-eight years later, the US share of world production had dropped to 16%.

Eight firms produce nearly 95% of all US steel produced in the United States. Two -- US Steel and Bethlehem -- account for nearly 40% of US production.

About 80% of the steel produced in Japan is produced in Basic Oxygen Furnaces (BOF); in the United States the figure is 60%. Nearly 50% of Japanese steel is continuously cast compared to only 10% in the US.

US Steel paid no federal income taxes in 1977 or 1978. In 1979 they did even better, writing off \$800 million at year's end by closing 16 plants. Thus, their tax return showed losses of \$292 million instead of a profit of \$507 million.

A successful fight to save South Works could well be that victory. A national campaign that succeeds in keeping the mill running will give workers everywhere new confidence and courage. A victory in this campaign will set the stage for a new level of struggle -- and will give a new boost to the campaign to defeat Ronald Reagan in 1984.

Problems will not be solved by wishing or dreaming. They are solved by those

who organize the actions that bring about solutions to the problem. And that means putting the needs of the workers at South Works, the needs of the people of South Chicago, the needs of the people of the United States before the property rights of the Morgans, the Rockefellers and the rich banks who own US Steel and much of the rest of the industry in our country.

Save South Works! If they won't run it, nationalize it!

Phelps Dodge strike

The strike of 2,000 Phelps Dodge copper workers is now in its fifth month. Despite full-blown efforts at strike breaking, backed up with state police and contingents of the Arizona National Guard, the 13 unions involved (led by the United Steelworkers) are determined to carry the struggle on to a successful conclusion.

There are several ways that rank and file trade unionists can help that campaign.

They can send money and letters of support to the Non Ferrous Strike and Defense Fund, 5 Gateway Center, Pittsburgh PA 15222. They can invite a representative of the Phelps Dodge strikers to appear at their local or central labor council meeting by calling the Committee at 412/562-2400. And, if they really want to display solidarity with our Brothers and Sisters in Arizona, they can organize delegations to go out there and walk the picket lines.

If you can't go to Arizona, it is possible

to put the heat on Phelps Dodge in other ways. Picket lines and demonstrations could, for instance, be established at Phelps Dodge headquarters, 300 Park Avenue in New York City. If you live in any of 30 states you may be able to picket a Phelps Dodge office or manufacturing facility of some sort. To help you get started we are publishing a list of Phelps Dodge facilities in cities where we have a large number of readers.

In addition to picketing at Phelps Dodge locations, people should raise hell with members of the Phelps Dodge board of directors. We are publishing the names of some of them and listing their other corporate ties. We leave it to our readers to figure out how best to make life miserable for them.

But keep in mind these guys speak with the full authority of Corporate America. They were the guys that gave the go-ahead to Phelps Dodge management to provoke the strike. When they say "uncle," the strike will end -- and not a second sooner.

COMPANY OFFICES

Glenwood Cable & Wire Plant
Yonkers, New York

Phelps Dodge Copper Products Mill
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire
1107 Burdsall Pkwy
Indianapolis, Indiana

Phelps Dodge Brass
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire Plant
941 N. Plum Rd.
Schaumburg, Illinois

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire Plant
7333 S. Lockwood
Bedford Park, Illinois

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire
5603 Lyndale Ave. S.
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire
360 Independence Tower
Cleveland, Ohio

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire
590 N. Cassady Ave.
Columbus, Ohio

Phelps Dodge Brass Plant
6100 S. Garfield
Los Angeles, California

Phelps Dodge Solar
1590 S. Sinclair
Anaheim, California

Phelps Dodge Brass
360 Mokaua St.
Honolulu, Hawaii

Phelps Dodge Brass
9546 SW Herman Rd.
Tualatin, Oregon

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire
10655 NE 4th St.
Bellevue, Washington

Phelps Dodge Refining
500 NW Plaza
St. Louis, Missouri

Phelps Dodge Cable & Wire
230 S. Bemiston Ave.
St. Louis, Missouri

Phelps Dodge Brass
8111 Kempwood Dr.
Houston, Texas

DIRECTORS

JOHN P. SCHROEDER is the former vice chair of Morgan Guarantee Trust as well as a director of Johns Manville.

L. WILLIAM SEIDMAN is a director of the American Seating Co.

GEORGE L. SHINN is the former chair of First Boston Corp and the New York Times. (This seems a good target.)

CLEVELAND E. DODGE, Jr. is president of the Dodge Manufacturing Co., Hoosick Falls NY. He is also a director of Key Bank, NA of Albany, New York.

WILLIAM E. FRANKS is the head of Southwest Forest Industries with offices throughout the country including Los Angeles, Chicago, Bloomington, Herrin and Union IL, Cincinnati OH, Indianapolis and Ft. Wayne IN.

CHARLES C. DILLON is the head of the Butler Mfg. Co. with operations including Visalia CA, Galesberg IL, Story City and Rockwell City IA, Villerica MA, Annville PA, Renton WA, and Ft. Atkins WI (Jamesway Div.). He is also a director of the notorious Mansville Corporation.

JOHN C. DUNCAN is also a director of the Irving Bank and Trust, Westvaco and Massasoit Corp.

GEORGE B. MUNROE, head of Phelps Dodge, is also a director of the NY Life Insurance Co., Manufacturers Hanover Trust, the Southern Pacific Corp. and the Manville Corp.

EDWARD L. PALMER is the former chief of the executive committee of Citicorp. He is a director of Corning Glass Works, Delmonte, the Mutual Life Insurance Co. of NY, the Union Pacific Co. and Monsanto.

MAYOR HATCHER (cont from page 1)

Saying that he was an "incurable optimist," Mayor Hatcher continued to talk about the figures -- "the facts of today's political reality" -- adding that "if Jesse wins, then I think it's clear that we will have a new situation. But assuming that he doesn't, what it all means is that whoever wins the nomination will go into next fall's battle against Ronald Reagan with two or three million new voters on the rolls who, I estimate, will vote by a 98% majority against Ronald Reagan. What a Black candidate will really do is enhance the chances of a Democrat winning the election next November.

Mayor Hatcher made two more points on whether or not a Jackson candidacy will weaken the chances of the "most liberal" contender in the Democratic Party primary. "When Reagan captured the nomination of the Republican Party, he defeated other -- I hesitate to use the word 'liberal' -- candidates and there was no Jesse Jackson

Then Hatcher put forth his most convincing argument for a Black candidate, stressing again that he was not talking about a Black candidacy. "Jesse Jackson, or any other Black candidate, for that matter, will make all candidates more honest on the issues during the primary. I also think that this candidate, running on the People's Platform, will have generated a new orientation on the issues that will keep whoever wins the nod at the Democratic Party's Convention from ducking the issues next fall."

As our discussion drew to a close, I asked Gary's five-term Mayor how he saw the anti-Reagan coalition developing. After saying that the coalition rested on a renewed alliance between the labor movement and the organizations representing the Black community his voice hardened for the first time. "I must speak frankly. Those in the labor movement who are serious about building that relationship must understand that they must give as much to us as they expect to get from us in return. That's the real basis for unity and coalition.

"I think," he said, "that it was not in the best interests of building the coalition that Jesse Jackson was not even considered by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in its deliberations leading up to the Council's endorsement of Fritz Mondale. I don't think that was a fatal mistake -- but it was a snub. I, for one, recognize that there are a great many people in the labor movement, including its leaders, who have shown great sensitivity to Black concerns, Black issues, women's concerns, the concerns of Latins and so forth."

Just before turning off the tape recorder and gathering my notes, Mayor Hatcher said, "There's one thing more that should be said about the way the 1984 campaign is unfolding. Although I

said what I said about the AFL-CIO, I consider it a positive development that they endorsed a candidate in the primary election. This opens up the door for others to run for political office at every level. And the Jackson candidacy will strengthen that tendency."

He smiled as he contemplated the possibilities: "What would happen," he asked, "if, as a result of Jesse's campaign and the AFL-CIO's new involvement in electoral politics, 10,000 people were to run for every local office you can think of -- mayor, city council, state representative, and senator? Then add in the fact of Jesse campaigning around the country for President. Can't you see it all coming together -- how Jesse's campaign would enhance every one of these candidates? Given that, whether Jackson wins or not, doesn't really matter. We would win anyway because many of those candidates would be elected and we would have taken a long step in laying the foundation for an independent political structure across the country."

Mayor Hatcher's enthusiasm, combined with his optimism and experience as what he says is a "practical politician" left me enthusiastic, too. On to the races!



WIN SOME (continued from page 7)

craft employees would be laid-off as a result. The proposal made no mention of affirmative action and how the 1974 Consent Decree, which had provided some protection for minority workers, would be affected.

Local 1033 President Frank Guzzo defended the take-away proposal citing "sweeteners" in the proposal which would provide special early retirement benefits for some workers.

Carl Turpin, a Local 1033 Griever, was one of the leaders of the opposition. Turpin blasted the content of the proposal and warned that such local-by-local agreements would seriously weaken the union's bargaining posture. He called for all Republic locals to get together and draft a common position on major work rule changes.

Republic Steel has threatened to implement work rule changes in spite of the local's rejection, indicating that the fight is not over yet.

Pamphlets for sub-getters

WE DARE BE FREE, a History of the Labor Movement in the US from Colonial Times Through World War I, by Dr. Phillip S. Foner.

Phil Foner is, without a doubt, the best of all American labor historians. He has written nearly 100 books, most of them dealing with the struggles of organized labor, Afro-Americans and women. His knowledge of the working class, to say nothing of his partisanship, has given him a special insight of the role played by the labor movement in the building of the United States and in the heroic battles of its people.

WE DARE BE FREE is a compilation of articles written for TEMP, the official publication of the Fur, Leather and Machine Workers Joint Board in New York City.

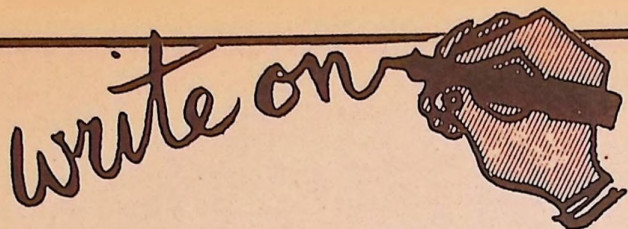
WE DARE BE FREE is must reading for all trade union activists and union officers.

EL SALVADORE: LABOR, TERROR AND PEACE, A special Fact-finding Report by the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador.

The title of this attractive, illustrated pamphlet says it as well as any thumbnail review can. In fewer than 20 pages, the Report presents a picture of El Salvador as seen by a 7-member delegation of U.S. trade unionists who visited El Salvador in May of this year. Co-chaired by William Lucy, Secretary of AFSCME and Jack Sheinkman, Secretary of ACTUW, the delegation lays it on the line.

This pamphlet, too, is a must for trade unionists who are concerned about the interventionist policies of the Reagan Administration. (U.S. troops landed in Grenada this morning.) Lots of ammunition for resolutions and speeches here!

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Dear LABOR TODAY:

I would like to comment on the article by Tim Kaminski in last month's "On Fightback Street."

I found it interesting that workers at Belvedere fought for "tag" relief on the assembly lines of that auto plant. It is interesting because I found that most workers preferred having the lines shut down for relief because when all the workers are on relief at the same time it is more sociable and enjoyable. Workers gather together at the coffee machines, in the lunch rooms or out on the lines where every possible subject of conversation can come up. We joke, laugh, tease and complain.

We also know each day exactly when the line will shut down and one can plan for the break. In addition, workers avoid the conflicts that often occur between the regular worker and the relief worker.

Tag relief does not create more jobs because the individual work load is based on the number of cars run per hour. If relief workers are added the workload increases. While it is true that with shut down relief, the line must run faster in order to maintain the same production that would be maintained with tag relief, more hands must be added to the line to maintain the increased speed.

At American Motors in Milwaukee a few years ago we were given a choice between tag and shut down relief on the trim lines. The majority of the workers voted for relief by shutting down the line.

Ted Silverstein
UAW Local 75, Milwaukee

★
Brothers and Sisters,

On the eve of Washington State's November 8th special election, here's what you should know about the new US Senator who will replace the late Henry M. Jackson.

It could be Republican former governor Dan Evans, who voted with Reagan 39 times in 39 chances after being appointed as Jackson's temporary replacement in September. Evans began the abbreviated campaign as "St. Dan," a simon-pure, unbeatable front-runner.

Or it could be the scrappy Democrat, US Representative Mike Lowry, whose record in Congress over the past five years is rated 100% by labor, peace, civil rights, women's rights and environmental groups. Vigorously backed by all these groups, Lowry has been gaining ground from day one in an uphill fight.

Both parties want the seat desperately, because it could well determine who will organize the Senate in 1984. For labor, the outcome could signify, among other things, whether Orrin Hatch of Utah chairs the Senate Labor Committee.

But the race is of significance for other reasons.

If Evans wins, the Senate will have one more cold warrior. Already he has voted to fund nerve gas, to develop the MX Missile, and to keep the marines in Lebanon. Nor is the former governor a friend of labor. To head his staff, Evans appointed William C. Jacobs, the man who directed the 1981 corporate campaign to gut the worker's comp system in Washington State.

But if Lowry wins, the Senate will have a labor, civil rights and peace champion unmatched in many years.

Labor here in Washington knows and trusts Lowry. The State Labor Council,

Dear Editor:

Your article warning against the attempts by Phelps Dodge to establish a 2-tier wage system is well worth heeding. As you say, this is one of the major goals of industry everywhere, as we who work for Chrysler know only too well.

We were among the first victims and, between 1979 and 1981 we made concessions worth a total of more than a billion dollars. We not only gave up our Cost Of Living Allowance (COLA) but, by the time we were able to re-negotiate our contract last labor Day, the hourly base rate at Chrysler -- that's total wages minus COLA -- was actually \$2.42/hr behind GM and Ford.

It's against this that one should examine the money part of the Chrysler settlement -- it provides another object lesson that "a penny saved is a penny earned" or, in our case, that a penny not given to workers is a penny in the coffers of the corporations.

While it is true that scheduled increases during the life of the new Chrysler contract will add \$2.42 to the total pay package of a Chrysler worker, only 30¢ will be added to the base hourly wage. The rest of the increases -- \$2.12/hr -- to be paid over the next three years -- are designated as "COLA Recovery" and will not be used in calculating overtime pay. When the contract expires in 1985 an assembler's hourly base rate at Chrysler will be \$9.64/hr and will still be below the comparable wage at GM and Ford.

If the \$2.42 had been "rolled" in to the base rate, each Chrysler worker would be several hundred dollars per year ahead of the game and we would, in fact, have made important progress toward closing the 2-tier wage structure that the Big 3 have succeeded in imposing upon the industry.

A Chrysler Worker

Building Trades Council, Teamsters Council #28, and Washington Education Association are all in his camp.

The unions endorsed Jackson, too, but that was pretty profunctor. There's real excitement in the ranks over Lowry.

Part of it is Lowry's sincerity. Evans is the prototype of the slick, smooth, image-conscious politician. Lowry has been described as an "odd, rumped duck," whose bulging eyes and waving arms are anything but pre-packaged Hollywood.

Lowry, himself, gets a kick out of it. "I know, I know," he says, "I look like hell on TV and the other guy looks great. But he's wrong on the issues and I'm right."

And Lowry is out front on the issues, refusing to back off no matter how often Evans smears him as "extremist," "radical liberal," and "pretty far out on the edge."

"I don't intend to allow Dan Evans' cheap shots to enable him to avoid stating where he stands on the issues," Lowry emphasizes.

Where Lowry stands is crystal clear: He opposes the MX missile. He opposes the European deployment of the Pershing and cruise missiles. He opposes keeping the marines in Lebanon. He opposes keeping the CIA in Nicaragua.

"The people of this State want their country to bring this arms race under control," he says. "I want a positive foreign policy that doesn't back right wing dictators."

THE CIO (continued from page 2)

thus ending the strike. According to *Business Week*, surely not a pro-labor publication: "Akron is from nine months to a year ahead of the national procession in labor recovery. It was in Akron that the Committee for Industrial Organization made its first stand in a big industry ... Today all the big rubber companies in Akron are dealing across the table with unions." By 1938, over 65% of the rubber industry was unionized.

The tactics used in this strike became characteristic of most CIO strikes. The success in Akron brought about a powerful stimulus as the CIO soon formed the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, and the Petroleum Workers Organizing Committee. Shortly after Akron, the United Auto Workers, with membership then perilously low, began a strong drive in 1936 under the leadership of Wyndham Mortimer, Bob Travis, and publicity director Len DeCaux. Within less than two years the UAW organized over 500,000 workers, more than 75% of the industry.

Despite vicious attacks by management and vigilante groups, the CIO built upon the successes of rubber and auto to organize steel, textile and petroleum workers. From its 5,000 members in the AF of L days, steel workers were organized in over 75% of the industry by 1938. Textile workers numbered

GATHERING STORM (continued from page 2)

much about was the one in San Francisco the year before. Who knew how to organize such an undertaking? Yet there we were talking about having one.

Maybe we would have been concerned about such details had we really believed such a strike would take place. The threat alone would be enough to get the "scabs" out. So we figured.

I left Terre Haute that evening so believing, but how wrong I was! Before daybreak I was awakened by a dozen or so men rounded up to get to Terre Haute where the strike was on. We appropriated a miners bus and took off.

Terre Haute, a city of 65,000, was closed down tight. You couldn't buy a newspaper or a cup of coffee. Not a business or a store had opened. The strike committee -- I assume one had been appointed -- had seen to it that milk was delivered early so that it could not be charged that babies were suffering. Such foresight!

It was eerie. Nobody had really believed it could happen, but it had.

True, 2,000 National Guardsmen were there, and the city was under martial law. But that came after the strike was on, not before. The general strike itself lasted only 24 hours, but that was long enough for the unions to show their strength, to show what they could do.

All ended quietly in February with a little noted victory for the stamping mill employees. The dispute had been placed in the hands of Federal mediators, and the newly-formed National Labor Relations Board sustained their demands.

The election, says Lowry, is "a crusade, a referendum on Ronald Reagan."

An honorary member of the Congressional Black Caucus who has fought Reaganomics as consistently as anybody in Congress, Lowry has the credentials to conduct that referendum.

If he wins, the nation will have a remarkable new US Senator. Win or lose, he's let some fresh air into the politics of a state long smogged by the Pentagon gamemanship of the late "Scoop" Jackson.

Will Parry

450,000 and petroleum workers, virtually unorganized in 1935, had 100,000 members in 1938.

After three years of battling for acceptance, the Committee for Industrial Organization became the Congress of Industrial Organizations. On November 14, 1938, the first CIO Convention was held in Pittsburgh. Claiming a membership of nearly four million, the new labor federation had improved wages and working conditions in basic industries where company unions and no collective bargaining had existed only a few short years before.

The CIO, as the new force of the labor movement, took its place as a powerful instrument through which a great mass of workers in American industry could express their demands on management with some assurance of success. With union recognition in basic industry, collective bargaining and grievance committees brought shorter hours, higher wages, better working conditions, vacations with pay, seniority and job security and an end to speed-up. In other words, the CIO gave new meaning to "industrial democracy."

By 1938, the CIO was responsible for \$1 billion in wage increases per year and reduction of two million work-hours per week. These gains were fought for by people who felt that economic justice and liberty could be extended to the working place through solidarity and unity of purpose within the working class.

The Terre Haute strike was followed in other cities by great demonstrations of labor's unity and strength. Great gains were made and great unions built by the new Committee for Industrial Organization and the old Federation.

Those gains are threatened now. A pilots' strike might have been the forerunner of industry-wide strikes, but -- who knows? Their coming together might seem to be long-delayed, but it just might happen again, coming with the swiftness of a summer's storm.

LOSE SOME (continued from page 2)

hundred workers. But now management plans to run the mill with about 50 workers and only 30 or so will be recalled from lay-off.

Workers who opposed the company's proposal and the agreement reached between the union and the company, were convinced that the company would use the agreement to affect both the 160-inch mill and the 110-inch mill workforce. They said that the company would manipulate the agreement to undermine conditions in the 160-inch mill where the status quo was maintained.

This is not the first time the company had demanded concessions from the union as the price of resuming production. But it is the first time that they have decided to impose new work rules and on a unilateral basis. We have a new plant manager who frankly says that if the union won't go along with management proposals this company will go ahead anyhow. They have decided to take their chances with the grievance procedure of the union where the company-oriented arbitrators more often than not rule in favor of the companies.

There are some tough fights ahead at Burns Harbor and the battle isn't over yet. Bethlehem's brazen disregard for their workforce -- to say nothing of the union and its representatives -- has stiffened the spines of the same union officials who were cautiously in favor of the agreement first worked out between the local and the company.

This is just one more example of Bethlehem treating the contract like it isn't worth the paper it is written on. And it points up the need for contract language that allows workers to strike over grievances -- at least over grievances as fundamental to a strong union as seniority, job elimination and work rules.

International Solidarity



by
Aubrey
Grossman

"The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people of all nations, & tongues, & kindreds."—ABE LINCOLN

FREE OSCAR MPETHA

Grossman defended Harry Bridges, founding President of the West Coast Longshore Union, during Bridges' many scrapes with the US government.

There are a number of similarities between the case against Oscar Mpetha and the deportation cases against Harry Bridges.

In 1945, Mpetha began his trade union career as a worker in the South African fish canning and processing plants. His union, the Food and Cannery Workers Union, from the very beginning defied the government by organizing Black, White, and Colored workers in the same union. In 1951, though not very experienced, he became General Secretary since twelve of the union leaders were "banned" from holding union office.

In 1955, he was a founding member of South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) which was later to be driven underground where it still functions, providing inspiration and guidance to South Africa's Black unions. SACTU was a trade union federation which placed its main emphasis on trade union unity and non-racial trade unionism.

As all trade unionists know, union leadership is more than a full time job. Yet Mpetha was also active in the main liberation organization, African National Congress, as President of its Cape chapter.

MPETHA BANNED -- AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS BANNED

In 1960, he was banned -- which means that without charges, trial or hearing, serious restrictions were placed on his conduct. He was forbidden to participate in a union or in the Congress. The ban was not lifted until 1978. Also in 1960, the Congress was

banned. Since then association with it is punished by a long prison term or execution. When his ban was finally removed in 1978, Mpetha returned to union leadership, being responsible for some of the most important strike victories in South African union history; because these strikes had impressive national and international support, a principle he understood, as Bridges before him.

THE FRAME-UP UNFOLDS

Blacks in South Africa have developed, perhaps in advance of the rest of the world, the 100% effective consumer boycott. This is used as an adjunct to strikes and for various political purposes. In 1980, in addition to his union activities, Mpetha was president of the Nyanga Residences' Association, which was sponsoring a boycott of city buses.

Police provoked a riot in which two Whites were killed and Mpetha issued a statement to the press condemning the police. The next day he was arrested, and soon, together with 18 others, was charged with "murder and terrorism." The specific charge against him was that he had made a speech which had incited the riot and resulted in the two deaths. (NOTE: Precisely the same charges are filed against Lula, Metal Worker leader, and the leader of the Agricultural Workers Union, in Brazil.

WHAT YOUR UNION SHOULD DO

Demand in a resolution and petition -- FREE OSCAR MPETHA

Make the demand on Prime Minister Pieter W. Botha, Pretoria, South Africa

Request similar action from your local labor council, your international union, and the AFL-CIO

Send a copy to the State Department, Washington DC

And, of course, we could point to the same MO in the Haymarket.)

At the time of his arrest Mpetha was 71 years old with a serious case of diabetes. Nevertheless six applications for bail filed on his behalf by union attorneys were denied. (NOTE: Bridges was also denied bail for proposing that his union ask for a cease fire in the Korean war.)

South Africa has three methods to exterminate opponents of apartheid. One, executions ordered by a court after trial, as in the recent case of three Congress activists, Mogoerane, Musololi and Motaung. Two, murder of political or trade union prisoners (usually claimed to be suicide) as in the case of Neil Aggette. Three, death by imprisonment, denial of bail and refusal of medical care to sick political and trade union prisoners.

The result of the Mpetha trial was a conviction followed by a five-year sentence -- which his doctors say he cannot survive.

BLACK UNIONS -- POLITICAL INSTRUMENTS

Mpetha's activities embody and illustrate the significance and power of the Black unions. This was well expressed by the Johannesburg Sunday Express:

"Employers are profoundly worried that Blacks denied political, but now granted economic rights, will use unions as political instruments."

It is possible to find hundreds of such comments written about Bridges in the late '30s. The evidence presented against him in his deportation cases was selected to prove him anti-capitalist, anti-racist, anti-war, pro-socialist; and the main charge was that he was using his union as a political instrument. Historically, what has distinguished the left from the right in the labor

movement of the United States was the question: "Should unions be used as political instruments?"

The Black unions must function as political instruments. Because many strikes result in the immediate deportation of a large section of the strikers to (what is claimed to be) their "homelands," never to be allowed to return to their job. Because the South African government assigns to the puppet "homelands" governments the task of imprisoning, harrasing and torturing union leadership on a mass scale.

Since only a small proportion of South African Blacks are in Black unions and since the unions are not the liberation or political organization for the Black people, the Black union leadership and membership participate in the political and the liberation organization. This is why Mpetha had to hold two full time jobs; and had to provide leadership in such organizations.

The multinationals understand this which is why the management of the Ford Motor Company plant in Port Elizabeth, in January of 1980, called in a Black worker and told him to choose between working for the company and leading a political organization. Black unions understand it better; which is why Ford Motor Company was presented with a militant strike in defense of the worker's job. This strike developed into a wave of strikes such as South Africa had never seen before. The result? In two years Black union membership doubled; wage increases as great as 70% were obtained; "illegal" agreements were made with many Black unions. The big employers and the government were very unhappy with Ford because Black workers had come to see the unions as important allies in the war against apartheid to be joined for political as well as economic reasons.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council in its report to the recent Convention, states: "The rise of the Black trade union movement in South Africa offers the best hope for the ultimate dismantling of the odious apartheid system."

From this it follows that there must be a worldwide campaign to save the life of one of the best representatives, and a symbol of this movement.

FIGHT BACK STREET



CONTINENTAL (continued from page 3)

eminent bankruptcy expert. On October 11, the labor groups asked the Bankruptcy Court in Houston to dismiss the airlines petition for Chapter 11 reorganization as having been filed in bad faith for the purpose of circumventing its labor contracts and improving its competitive posture in the airline industry (rather than to improve the debtor's ability to pay existing debts).

The strike at Continental has gained widespread support from labor groups both in and outside the airline industry.

Large numbers of employees from carriers such as United, Eastern and Western airlines are picketing with Continental employees and have launched programs to support the strike. Alpa has estimated that fewer than 100 pilots are crossing its picket lines to work and Continental has been forced to cancel a significant number of its flights in an already "bare bones" operation.

In response, Lorenzo launched a campaign to urge the employees to cross the picket lines, announcing that

he would hold meetings with rank and file pilots in several of the base cities. However, at each of the scheduled meetings there were more pilots picketing outside than in attendance. (In Houston less than 10 of over 600 pilots based there attended the meeting.) Moreover, when Lorenzo attempted to board a Continental flight between Houston and Denver he found that the crew had walked off the job in protest and that the flight had cancelled. Lorenzo then bought a ticket on United Airlines but the flight attendants refused to serve him and the pilot refused to carry him until given direct orders to do so by United's Chicago headquarters.

Since it was clear that Continental was not breaking the solidarity of the employee's strike, on October 7, it placed ads in newspapers in New York, Denver, Miami and Los Angeles for pilot new hires.

The employees are committed to the strike and recognize that if Continental is successful in its efforts it will be an incentive for other companies to follow suit.

You win some . . .

by Jim Williams

Members of Local 1033, United Steelworkers at Republic Steel here voted to reject a company bid that would have combined all skills and maintenance crafts into two units -- mechanical and electrical.

The vote, one of the few occasions when an issue of such importance has been put to the membership -- represents a rejection of company takeaways.

The Republic workers were still smarting over the national agreement last year when the USWA national leadership agreed to a contract re-opener which gave away wages and benefits worth \$12,000 to the average steelworker during the life of the 41-month pact.

Moreover, opponents of the multi-craft re-opener pointed to the example of US Steel South Works, where a massive local take-back agreement had failed to provide job security.

Since last year, Republic has embarked on a campaign to reduce jobs throughout the mill by job combinations, reducing crew sizes and by forced overtime.

The multi-craft proposal at Republic failed to describe how an employee would advance in the system and how that determination is made, nor was the agreement clear in stating how many

(continued on page 5)

. . . You lose some

Kaczocha, Editor
Local 6787 Organizer
Burns Harbor

The struggle of workers in the 110 inch plate mill at the Burns Harbor Works of Bethlehem Steel only serve to point up the difficulties that steelworkers have in defending themselves against the constant demands of the industry.

Workers had rejected a series of concessions demanded by the company as the price for re-opening the idled, 5-year old, computerized facility. The company demanded work rule changes, new seniority provisions and the elimination of some jobs.

These were rejected by the affected workers and many thought that would end it. But, within a week, Bethlehem informed the Local Union that they would go ahead with their plans to re-open the mill under the very same terms and conditions that were rejected by the workers.

Although the company had presented no written proposals to the Union, company and union representatives did work out an arrangement that called for some workers to work part time in the older 160-inch plate mill labor pool and part time at their regular jobs in the re-opened 110-inch mill.

The 110-inch mill has been shut down more than it has run since it was built. But, at its peak, the mill employed more than between two and three

(continued on page 6)

Holidays, subs and pamphlets

When I was growing up on a stump ranch during the depression, my parents

When I was growing up on a stump ranch during the depression my parents taught me two things: You don't get something for nothing -- and there really isn't any Santa Clause, at least after you're five or six.

I believed them and told my own kids the same thing. But now I wonder, especially about that Santa Clause bit.

What brought about all these changes is LT's Holiday Special. Although some thing that costs \$15.00 isn't something for nothing, anytime you can get five

subs to LT and one of our pamphlets for that price, you've come close to finding Santa Clause -- and that counts for something these days, what with Reagan in the White House!

Here's how it works: Use the blank below. Fill in the names of five of your shopmates, your union brothers and sisters or your friends and neighbors and we'll send each of them a 1-year sub. And we'll send you your choice of either pamphlets that are reviewed on page five.

That way everybody gets something and we get to feel a little bit like Santa! Now all we need is to find those little helpers that people talk about!



<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>1 Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>2 Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p> </div> </div>	
<p>LABOR TODAY 1831 S. Racine Chicago, Ill. 60608</p> <p>Please enter these five subs for \$15.00</p> <p>Please send me a copy of:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> WE DARE BE FREE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EL SALVADORE: LABOR, TERROR AND PEACE</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>3 Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>4 Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p> </div> </div>
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