



The ORGANIZER



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Bell Workers Fight Rate Hike

by MEGAN O'MALLEY

Rank and File telephone Operators of Local 1944 have been urging the Public Utilities Commission to *reject* Bell's request to increase telephone bills by \$139 million. They have testified before the Commission, filed a formal complaint, with the Commission, and have even voiced their opposition on radio.

Union officials of Local 1944 have warned that a rate increase in Pennsylvania would mean a lay-off for Operators — up to 50% of the workforce. The Operators have stated that they are fighting to save their jobs and to protect the public from a fleecing by Bell. The Operators question why residents of Pennsylvania should be expected to pay higher phone bills when Bell's profits were \$435 million in 1976!

WHO WILL PAY BELL'S TAXES?

Bell claims they need higher phone rates to pay taxes. Over half of the increase, \$73 million, they say, will go for taxes. The Operators argue, "It's unfair to expect Pennsylvania residents to pay Bell's taxes. Their taxes should be paid out of their profits, not our pockets. When we have to pay our federal income taxes, we can't go to the PUC and request Bell raise our wages! We pay our own taxes and so should they."

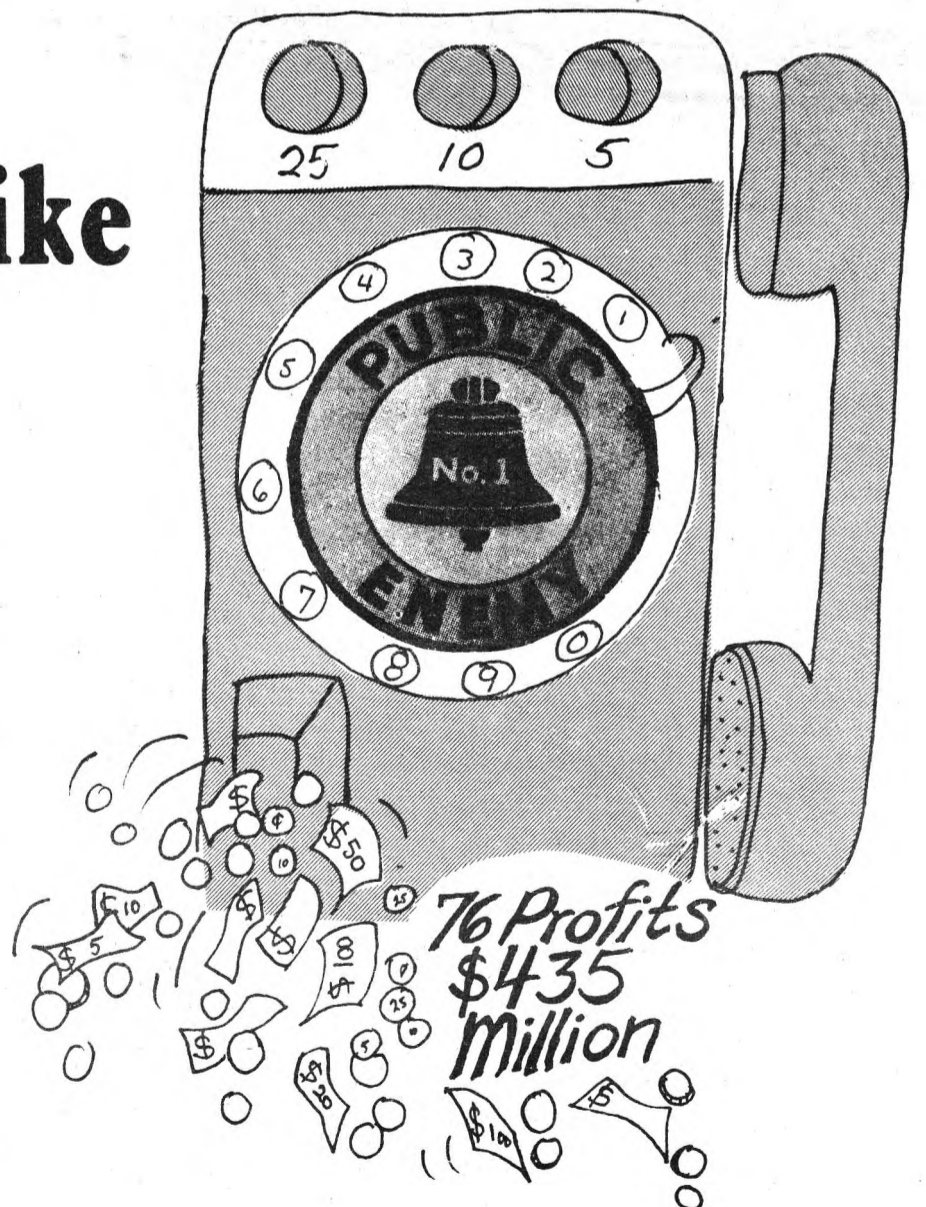
Higher wages to their workers and the cost of inflation, Bell claims, have hurt revenues. However, the Operators' starting wage last year was \$3.70 an hour, only \$0.20 higher than the year before.

Since their last contract in 1971, Operators' wages have increased only 11%, while the Consumer Price Index shows that prices for that same period have risen by 58%!

The Operators insist that the buying power of their paychecks has been cut in half, while profits of Bell and AT&T continue to zoom out of sight. "AT&T made profits of over \$4 billion last year. How can inflation be hurting a company when their profits continue to double? For sure, inflation has hurt telephone workers, bad."

The Operators called Bell's demand for new machinery a real "Flim-Flam". "Sure, they want us to help they buy new machines, so they can lay us off!" Between 1972 and 1976, Bell of Pa. got rid of 1,823 workers through new automated equipment. "Automation shouldn't knock us out of work," the Operators contend, "it should make our jobs easier."

But at Bell, like most places, new machines cost phone workers jobs. For the workers who remain after an automation cut, production quotas are doubled and speed-up strictly enforced. Right now, the Operators are going through an automation process which will save Bell \$1½ million a year in wages, and cut out 3,000 Operators jobs in Pennsylvania.



OVERWORKED OPERATORS = POOR SERVICE

To continue "good" service to our customers, Bell says they need more money. Operators point out that *right now* customers don't get good service. "As long as working conditions continue to decline, service will not improve".

The Operators describe what they must put up with for such a low wage. "We work split shifts, weekends, and holidays, and are allowed no excuse absences or lateness and are forced to meet intense production quotas which drive many of us to nervous breakdowns."

(Continued on page 12)

Letters To The Editor...

A Question- are supervisors "productive workers" ?

Dear Staff;

In your Feb. - Mar. '77 issue of the *Organizer* you refer to "... roughly two-thirds of the total number of employees listed for the Co." as the number of working class employees. . . ." (Nuts and Bolts, p. 22). What exactly do you mean?

Does the one-third include supervisors, police guards, management? And if so, to what extent do you consider someone "non-working class"?

Also, to what degree are you in accord with the provisions of the *National Labor Relations Act* in defining "supervisors"? Keep up the good work!

thanks,
Alfred
Oakland, Calif.

The Organizer responds:

The reference to "working class employees" is an inaccuracy on our part. We really mean productive workers, that is those workers who are involved in the creation of surplus value on which profit is based.

This category not only excludes management but non-productive labor (clerical workers for example) not involved in the creation of surplus value. However, these workers are definitely part of the working class, which broadly defined, includes all those who own no means of production and are forced to sell their labor power.

We are glad you called attention to this mistake on our part, for we certainly

don't want to be associated with a view that excludes huge numbers of service workers, who are driven down by capital along with workers in the commodity producing sectors, from the proletariat. At the same time, we cannot be mechanical in making a class analysis. There are certain categories, (police, security guards, etc.) who while from a purely technical standpoint would be considered wage labor are nevertheless clearly part of the capitalists' retinue, and this political function separates them from the working class. In other words, the question of relationship to the means of production, the Marxist determinant of class, cannot be reduced to a purely formal consideration.

Finally, we think the NLRB, not surprisingly, defines supervisors much too narrowly. The NLRB generally regards supervisors as those with the power to hire and fire. This definition excludes a large category of supervisory personnel who maintain labor discipline. Very often foremen do not have the power to hire and fire, but they are obviously no less "supervisors" than their superiors.

In a number of situations, bargaining units have been defined to include these low level supervisory personnel, a situation that has invariably weakened the union. We know of a number of unions in which foremen are union members and act not only as fifth columnists for the company, but also as a base of support for the class collaborationist bureaucracy. Communists and all class conscious trade unionists have to oppose this practice of including foremen in the bargaining unit.

Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

Who We Are



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

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

handful of monopolists -- by the rule of the many -- the working people.

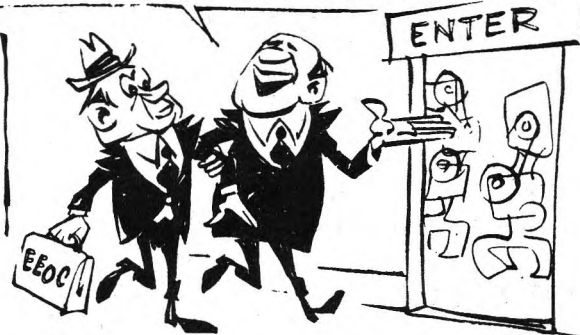
The masses of people in the US have always fought back against their exploitation and today the movement in opposition to the monopolists are rapidly growing both in numbers and intensity. What is lacking is the kind of political leadership that can bring these movements together, deepen the consciousness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

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

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

Fred Wright, Union Cartoons

(WE HAVE A POLICY OF NO SEX DISCRIMINATION HERE...)



(ALL OF OUR EMPLOYEES ARE OVERWORKED EQUALLY!)



PWOC Commissions Review "The Organizer"

The PWOC Black Liberation and Women's Liberation Commissions recently completed reviews of *The Organizer* and other propaganda and agitational materials that have been developed by PWOC members. The purpose of these reviews was to evaluate our consistency and comprehensiveness in dealing with the struggles against racism and sexism. Both reports were thoroughly discussed in all the PWOC's units and their criticisms and recommendations heartily endorsed.

The Black Liberation Commission, while finding much positive content in the *Organizer*, also identified a number of weaknesses. Many articles glossed over or ignored the question of racism, even where its importance was obvious. Other articles treated the question mechanically or superficially, substituting pat phrases and stereotyped and abstract language for vivid and concrete analysis. In a number of instances, our graphics were all white where a multi-national picture was clearly called for. In general, *The Organizer* has

not succeeded in effectively integrating the struggle against racism into all of its coverage.

The Women's Liberation Commission made similar criticisms. The Commission also noted that there had been far too few articles dealing with the substantive concerns of women. More theoretical and propagandistic articles in this area were called for. Both reports underlined the need for drawing out the triple oppression of national minority women in our agitation.

The Organizer staff has benefitted greatly from these constructive criticisms. Consistent with one of the recommendations of both commissions, we have established a closer working relationship with them in order to aid us in upgrading the paper's content in both these critical areas. We urge our readers to join in the process of evaluating *The Organizer*. We welcome criticism in the spirit of seeking to make the *Organizer* a sharper, more consistent revolutionary voice of the working class.

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A PWOC Pamphlet

RACISM AND THE WORKERS' MOVEMENT

RACISM AND THE WORKERS' MOVEMENT analyzes the role of white supremacy in the US, particularly in the trade unions... Who profits and who pays for the oppression of Black people?... How can racism be licked?... How do activists in the rank and file movement build this fight? Amply illustrated and written in popular language, Racism and the Workers' Movement can be a real tool for building the struggle in your shop or union.

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Labor Round-up

CLS workers to vote on unionization



NLRB elections will be held for employees of Community Legal Services on June 17th. Members of the organizing committee, working with 1199, have been building toward the election for several months. Although CLS administration put on a front of benign cooperation for several weeks, more recently they have been showing their true colors.

A few weeks ago, a letter went out to all CLS employees eligible to vote in the NLRB election, stating that the administration was not sure joining 1199 was in the "best interests" of CLS employees. The letter, signed by CLS Director Larry Lavin, stated that he would personally meet with each individual eligible to vote in order to provide them with as much "information" as possible with which to make their decision.

The organizing committee responded immediately with a warning to CLS workers not to attend such a "meeting" without an organizing committee representative present. The "meetings" never really materialized.

An organizing committee member told *the Organizer*, "Things are looking pretty good -- we continue to gain support, support from different classifications." This indicates an improvement from the early weeks of the drive, when organizing committee and supporters were based almost exclusively among paralegals -- a

predominantly white classification.

Some white paralegals were anxious to go ahead as rapidly as possible, but were slowed by their Black co-workers who pointed out the futility of proceeding without taking up the questions of racism in CLS and building support among the mostly Black secretaries and clerical workers.

The key issues which have been addressed are: 1) Job security -- the need for a seniority system, and for broader action to ensure both jobs and the valuable service CLS provides, in the face of cutbacks in funding. 2) Training and upgrading -- the need for on-the-job paid training for CLS workers who want to upgrade, particularly from clerical to legal secretary, or to paralegal. Both these issues speak to the needs of job security and the right to train in skilled jobs for the large number of Black women who work at CLS.

Most CLS workers seem to realize that only a union has the possibility of making this program work. According to an organizing committee member, they see right through the administration's attempt to undercut the union drive by establishing its own phoney "grievance procedure" just three weeks before election time. CLS rank and file workers need to keep involved in the questions facing them as workers even after the elections are over. Only in this way will they be able to make their union work for them.

Banks Threaten Schools; PFT Caucus Responds

The dictatorship of the banks is coming to Philadelphia -- and the quality of education for Philadelphia school students will suffer and many teachers and other educational personnel face permanent lay-offs if the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) fails to lead the community in a militant struggle to tax the corporate interests of Philadelphia to maintain and improve the quality of education in the city.

The response of the Ryan-Sullivan leadership of the PFT to the ultimatum that the district "balance its books or close" has been weak, relying on legislative action -- support for two state senate bills which offer short-term relief and no long-term solutions. They have paid only lip service to the idea of mobilizing the rank and file to fight for their jobs and for the education of Philadelphia students.

At April's union meeting, the School Employees Action Caucus, a rank and file group within the union, put forward a series of action resolutions for fighting the cut-backs: a letterwriting campaign to the legislature, and local and district-wide picketing; raising the issue in the Central Labor Council; seeking out parent groups with whom to work; and devising a tax program which won't place the burden on working people through the sales and income taxes. In a victory for the rank and file this passed, but the leadership was able to attach the familiar rider that the Executive Board has discretion to add, subtract or change -- an escape clause to relieve them from specific responsibility to the rank and file.

These resolutions were not discussed at a union meeting May 18, Wednesday,

where 2000 rank and file members of the PFT got a taste of the way in which their leadership will deal with them if they fail to organize and force their hand.

The SEAC put forward another progressive set of demands, and led a spirited debate on their proposals, which formed the central discussion of the meeting. The SEAC demands, presented as an amendment to the leadership resolution were:

- 1) Call on City Council to immediately reinstate the corporate net income tax to at least its former 1%.
- 2) A one-year moratorium on bank interest payments.
- 3) Lobby for increased state subsidy and change the date when aid is delivered to avoid unnecessary loans.
- 4) That the PFT urge the AFT to take up the organizing of a national coalition to demand the federal funding of social

welfare -- and support HR 52, to fund social welfare from defense spending. In addition to the community organizing thrusts put forward in the previous resolutions, these demands could form the basis for an effective struggle to prevent the cutbacks. Although the racist nature of the cuts was pointed out on SEAC placards at the meeting, mention of this was absent from the resolution.

After debate, a voice vote was called on the SEAC amendment. It was close enough to call for a division of the house, which President Sullivan did quietly and in confusion, adjourning the meeting immediately after the announcement "motion defeated". Other important issues on the agenda, such as the right of laid-off teachers to participate in the union, were not touched.

This action by Sullivan is the clearest indication of the attitude the leadership will take toward the rank and file in the coming struggle. It is also fair warning to the rank and file that they will have to further build their own organization to stop the cutbacks.

Conrail Workers Protest Lay-Offs

On Monday, May 2nd, Conrail trackmen, members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance and Way, staged a sick out and held a demonstration at Conrail's Center City headquarters to protest massive layoffs. Over 1000 trackmen have been laid off by Conrail, 120 of them in the Philadelphia region.

The layoffs are part of a company scheme to reorganize track gangs and institute an 80 hour week at straight time with the following week off. A number of trackmen who were laid off have been recalled on the condition that they accept assignment to one of the 80 hour shift crews. The Brotherhood leadership beyond the local level has taken no serious steps to oppose the Conrail scheme.

The sickout registered strong support in the areas of Pennsylvania and New Jersey affected by the layoffs. In one track gang of 54 only 14 showed up for work. The action also gained widespread sympathy and support from shop craftsmen, who also have been hard hit by layoffs, and trainmen, who are reportedly the next target of Conrail's productivity drive.

Conrail responded to the action by bringing disciplinary charges against Bill Smith, Local Chairman of Lodge 3012 and a leader in the trackmen's rank and file movement. The May 2nd action followed a picket line at 30th St. Station in April, and the trackmen plan further action to press their fight for their jobs.



DON'T BUY the "Buy American" Campaign

—by ANNA GOLD

It's 2 pm on a hot muggy day and your boss comes up to you and says "take the rest of the day off and go demonstrate with your union." Impossible? That's just what happened on April 14th when anti-import demonstrations were staged across the country by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Apparel manufacturers who make a habit of threatening their workers for even wanting to talk to their union officials sent everyone off early with their blessing for this particular union function.

Officials claimed that 2000 Philadelphia workers attended the Independence Mall event to hear politicians and labor leaders denounce Jimmy Carter's refusal to impose quotas on imports. Rank and file workers present estimated the number at half that however, and said that many of those there were either union officials or supporters outside the union.

"There isn't anything in it for us," a presser told the *Organizer*, "Our contract is up at the end of May. They're using the whole imports thing as an excuse to sell us down the river in the negotiations."

"If they were really serious about our jobs they would organize down south and they would enforce our contract here. As it is, our contract isn't even worth the paper it's printed on and they go and blame our problems on some poor worker overseas who's in even worse shape than we are!"

UNION CAMPAIGN PLAYS TO RACISM

In the past several years, the needle trade unions have been waging a consistent campaign to stop foreign imports. Union materials carry the barely veiled suggestion that workers in Taiwan and Korea are responsible for our problems here. In an industry that has large numbers of underpaid immigrants, including a growing Asian workforce, this logic plays to racist attitudes towards these workers.

But while most workers are suspicious of the union's explanations, there is a tremendous amount of confusion around



Workers in apparel factories along the US-Mexican border make about 55 cents an hour. Los Angeles' Olga Co. has made \$500,000 on a \$40,000 investment in three years at its Mexicali plant.

the question of imports and justifiable cynicism around Carter's attitudes. After all, the facts are that one out of every four garments sold in the US is imported, compared to one in 20 a decade ago. Two-thirds of these imports come from Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan. Tens of thousands of jobs have been lost because they were sent overseas. In 1975 and 1976 alone, close to 35,000 apparel workers were certified by the government to apply for special unemployment benefits as victims of "import penetration."

It is also true that wages in the Far East and South American apparel centers are abysmally low -- often falling to 14 cents an hour compared to the \$3 in this country. While low wages are an incentive for any business, they are particularly important in the clothing industry, because wages represent a higher than usual percentage of the cost of the finished product. This is because the overhead costs are relatively low and because the industry still uses mostly simple and non-automated machinery. The industry is therefore much more competitive than monopolized industries such as auto and steel.

STOPPING IMPORTS THE ANSWER?

On the face of it then, it might seem logical that the solution to the problem is lower import quotas to prevent cheap competition from entering the country. In reality, however, these quotas not only will do nothing to insure increased employment, but in fact they will do just the opposite in the long run -- they will mean more unemployment. Furthermore, these quotas would insure that prices will remain sky high on the products that all of us have to buy.

And is this really the solution to the problem of unemployment in the industry? Isn't it suspicious that the union find themselves on the same side as many manufacturers on this question? After all, the manufacturer is out to make as much profit as possible out of the worker and the worker is out to get as much of that profit as possible back from the employer. In fact, the most enthusiastic support



BEFORE WE DEMAND THAT CONGRESS PROTECT OUR INDUSTRY AGAINST CHEAP FOREIGN IMPORTS MANUFACTURED AT SLAVE-LABOR WAGES, I'D LIKE TO REMIND YOU, SIR, THAT WE OWN 67% OF THOSE FOREIGN FACTORIES!

for the demonstration came from the many small manufacturers in the city who have understood that low import quotas will mean bigger profits for them.

First of all, it's important to point out that a large percentage of "foreign imports" are in fact produced by companies owned by US manufacturers. Item 807 of the Tariff Schedules of the US provides that American-made articles may be assembled abroad in whole or in part and returned to the US with duty paid only on the value added by foreign labor. This loophole to the import tax has allowed US manufacturers to take advantage of low foreign labor costs and high US prices, reaping super-profits from their operations.

Secondly, it is not at all clear that a stop to imports would lead to more jobs for clothing workers in the US. Stopping imports would in fact stop competition in the clothing market. This would open the door for the manufacturers to set prices very high, and would not necessarily force increased production. The net outcome would be a continued high unemployment of clothing workers in the US and higher prices on clothing for everyone.

AFFECT ON TRADE

Finally, it is important to look at the situation in a broader light. If the US sets low import quotas, this will obviously affect the economies of those foreign countries involved. These countries would not be able to sell their products. They would be forced to cut back production and would be faced with increased unemployment. Their obvious defense would be to retaliate with similar quotas on US products going into their countries. These quotas would mean that US products won't be sold and their production would be cut back. And there we are back at our starting point: increased unemployment for US workers!

This is exactly what happened in 1969 when the US tried to restrict Japanese imports. Recognizing that such a trade war would be deadly to both economies, the US government was forced to withdraw the restrictions. Clearly then, workers are slitting their own throats by calling for protection of US industry through import restrictions.

So what is the solution to the dilemma? The answer to this question depends on understanding why manufacturers are leaving the big US industrial centers. They are leaving to find cheap, non-union labor. They are finding this labor in two places: 1) in the south and southwest US and 2) abroad, in Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, and increasingly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Workers are forced to work for low wages in these countries by anti-labor dictatorships backed up by US wealth and military might. This is the heart of the prob-

lem. But neither the ILGWU nor the ACTWU have ever mobilized their memberships to oppose US aid to the corrupt dictatorships of South Korea, Taiwan, or Haiti, to name only a few. The ILGWU is "gung ho" in support of US policy, while the ACTWU registers only token and partial objections.

SOLIDARITY WITH WORKERS OVERSEAS

The best protection for workers in the US lies in solidarity with workers abroad, in aiding them in winning better wages, working conditions and democratic rights. Real improvements in their conditions undercut the employer's ability to use cheap labor to the detriment of all workers. Instead of pitting workers of different nationalities against each other both here and abroad, the unions should be doing:

1) An aggressive campaign to organize the south. While in 1950 only 17% of the apparel industry was in the south, today that figure has jumped to 44%. When the companies run south they are running away from the unions. If the unions are strong everywhere there will be nowhere for the companies to run to.

2) An aggressive campaign to help organizing efforts in those countries which have been singled out by big business as sources of cheap labor. Strong ties must be established with unions abroad.

3) Part of our solidarity with workers overseas must be expressed in an end to US support for anti-labor dictatorships such as in South Korea, Taiwan and Chile.

4) We must push the passage of a law making it necessary for US manufacturers to pay minimum wage to all of its workers, in the US or abroad. This must apply to companies which subcontract work from US manufacturers as well.

5) All tax loopholes must be closed up. The ILGWU and the ACTWU are working to repeal section 807 of the Tariff schedules. This is a step in the right direction.

In the face of the growing crisis in the industry, the apparel unions have abandoned the workers they are supposed to represent and have chosen to join hands in collaboration with the manufacturers. They have undercut the power of organized workers by ignoring the masses of unorganized, and they have pitted American workers against foreign workers. This policy is suicidal for labor.

The only way for us to stop the capitalists from running away from union labor is for all workers to be very clear on their class interests. We must identify all workers as our allies. There can be no national boundaries which limit our solidarity, just as there are no boundaries limiting the interests of capital.

from
the
other
side
of the
wall

prisoners and the law

A NOTE ON ARTICLES FOR OTHER
SIDE OF THE WALL

We have received inquiries on what the Organizer's criteria are for articles for the Other Side of the Wall column. We see the column as having two functions. First, we want to bring to our readership exposures of the conditions in the prisons in order to bring home the role prisons play in capitalist society and to aid the prisoners' movement in fighting repression. Secondly, we hope the column can be a forum for class conscious prisoners to address the problems of theory, strategy and tactics that face the prisoners' movement.

Articles in either category are welcome. Articles should be 500 to 1000 words in length. We reserve the right to edit articles for reasons of style or space. No substantive political changes will be made except by consultation with the author. Longer articles not suitable for the column will be considered for publication

elsewhere in the Organizer. Contributors should indicate whether or not they wish to be identified as authors of the article.

The following article comes from behind the walls of the Marion Penitentiary and discusses the importance of legal tactics for the prisoners' movement.

One of the most effective and useful means

One of the most effective and useful means whereby prisoners can defend themselves while in prison is by possessing a thorough knowledge of law. This is not readily understood by too many prisoners, especially the politicized elements within the prisoner movement. It goes without saying that no form of struggle is revolutionary or counter-revolutionary or reformist by itself. The main thing depends on how these forms of struggle are used.

The class conscious prisoner must thoroughly learn to utilize the law effectively and correctly to defend the rights of prisoners when it is time to do so, not in a reformist way but in a revolutionary way.

Needless to say, it has become very fashionable among prisoners to dismiss legal forms of struggle or having anything to do with law on the grounds that filing a suit would be playing right into the hands of the man. This attitude is one of the most dangerous mistakes a class conscious prisoner can commit.

The well-studied prisoner is well aware that it was through powerful, racially-united strikes and rebellions which shook prisons throughout the country, coupled with well-publicized legal attacks that the courts were forced to abandon the so-called hands-off doctrine. Political strength can be built through court action and a well-publicized suit can also educate people outside, as well as prisoners, about the class nature of prisons.

It was the great Lenin, himself a lawyer, who revealed and recognized that "all law is an application of an equal measure to different people who in fact are not alike, are not equal to one another," further stating, "law can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby."

The class nature of law can readily be understood in such important cases as *Adams vs. Carlson*, 375 F. 2d 1228 and *Wolff vs. McDonnell*, 94 S. Ct. 2963 (1974) and how prison officials have implemented the so-called "balancing" of prisoners rights in relation to the state. These two important cases outline the amount of due process due prisoners

These two important cases outline the amount of due process due prisoners when confronted with a "grievous loss", i.e., good-time forfeiture or punitive segregation.

Here, for example, the courts deceptively put forth the idea that there can be an "impartial" fact finding committee. In fact, there can be no "impartial" fact finding committee in a prison atmosphere where prisoners and guards form two antagonistic groups. In one way or another, all "impartial" fact finding defends the most stringent authoritarian measures in a prison atmosphere; whereas prisoners strive for a more liberal atmosphere, to lessen the severity of their confinement. To expect a disciplinary committee to be "impartial" in an antagonistic prison atmosphere is as foolishly naive as to expect impartiality from Federal Prison Industries on the question of whether prisoners' wages ought not to be increased by decreasing its profits.

The history of the prison movement and the history of penology demonstrate with perfect clarity that there is nothing resembling "impartiality" in the sense that the courts envision in *Adams and Wolff*. This is even more evidence why all class conscious prisoners should strive to the utmost to know and use the law to defend themselves and their comrades.

This article was written for:
The Marion Brothers Defense Committee
upon request. Address:
6199 Waterman
St. Louis, Missouri 63112

WORKERS' VOICES

10,000 Textile Workers Strike in Lawrence, Mass. - 1912

In 1912, in Lawrence, Massachusetts, after the employers had instituted a wage cut, 10,000 textile workers — the majority of whom were women and many of whom were children, coming from dozens of different nationalities and speaking as many different languages — waged a long bitter and victorious strike.

The workers in their struggle exposed the boss's lies that women won't fight, that workers of different nationalities won't unite and that ordinary workers are too ignorant to conduct their own affairs. The following account of the rank and file democracy that was so much the strength of the Lawrence strike is from Big Bill Haywood, a leader of the revolutionary IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) which led the Lawrence Textile Workers to victory.

It was a wonderful strike, the most significant strike, the greatest strike that has ever been carried on in this country or any other country. Not because it was so large numerically, but because we were able to bring together so many different nationalities. And the most significant part of that strike was that it was a democracy. The strikers handled their own af-

airs. There was no president of the organization who looked in and said, "Howdy do." There were no members of an executive board. There was no one the boss could see except the strikers. The strikers had a committee of 56, representing 27 different languages. The boss would have to see all the committee to do business with any of them. And immediately behind that committee was a substitute committee of another 56 prepared in the event of the original committee's being arrested. Every official in touch with affairs at Lawrence had a substitute selected to take his place in the event of being thrown in jail.

All the workers in connection with that strike were picked from material that in the mill was regarded as worth no more than \$6 or \$7 a week. The workers did their own bookkeeping. They handled

their own stores, six in number. They ran eleven soup kitchens. There were 120 investigating cases for relief. They had their own finance committee, their own relief committee. And their work was carried on in the open, even as this socialist meeting is being conducted, with the press on hand, with all the visitors that wanted to come, the hall packed with the strikers themselves. And when this committee finally reduced itself to ten to make negotiations with the mill owners it was agreed before they left that they must meet the mill owners alone.

You will remember now that when the strike was declared, it was to prevent a reduction of wages of 30 cents. When the strike was organized the strikers demanded the reduction of hours, a reinstatement of the 30 cents, and a general

increase of 15%. In the course of the negotiations the adjustment was finally made on the basis of five per cent for the highest paid, and 25% for the lowest paid, those who needed it most, time and a quarter for overtime, readjustment of the premium system, and no discrimination against any man or woman or kid for the part they took in the strike. You know, at the time of the great anthracite strike of 1902, John Mitchell, "the greatest labor leader that the world has ever known," said that in all great battles there are some soldiers that must fall. That is, he said, in effect, that there can be a limited blacklist established. But the Lawrence strikers, the "ignorant workers", said, "We will have no fallen soldiers, not in this battle." Out of their own wisdom they said there would be no blacklist. And there was no blacklist...



Strikers confront troops in Lawrence, Mass.

Organization- the big question facing nurses

by ANN BILY

In the last two decades thousands of hospital workers have improved their wages and working conditions by joining unions. They have achieved living wages and respectability in jobs where poverty and degradation were the rule. In 1959 the lowest paid unorganized hospital worker received \$40 per week.

In 1977, an employee with the same job title, organized into the National Hospital Union, grosses at least \$181 weekly, enjoys a free comprehensive family health care plan, minimum four weeks vacation, job security with seniority rights and a real grievance procedure, as well as training and upgrading. Nurses, especially aides and practicals, have played important roles in the organizing drives and have forced demands for better patient care onto the bargaining table.

Even though the U. S. economic situation is bleak, the health care industry is booming with record-breaking profits, all at the expense of hospital workers and patients. More and more, nurses, (including RN's) are feeling the squeeze and recognizing the need for collective bargaining to maintain living standards and provide some semblance of quality health care. In the last year 3000 RN's, in two militant strikes taking place in Seattle and Chicago, were on the picket lines for a combined 107 days demanding better wages and power in such areas as job assignments.

SEXISM HURTS NURSES

While awareness of the need to organize is a recent development among nurses as a whole, working conditions and pay have never been good. This is in large part due to the inequality and discrimination against women in our society. 92% of all nurses are women. Nurses with extensive skills, and training, and experience often do not approach the salary of many unskilled male workers. Add the additional burden of racism and its consequences are even worse for practical nurses and aides, the lower level nursing jobs where Black women are concentrated. The typically Black LPN earns 25% less than the typically white RN, and \$10 less than the male practical.

Difficult work schedules have always disrupted the nurse's life: frequent double shifts due to understaffing, shift rotation, doubling back, working weekends and holidays when the family is home; and having vacation time limited to non-peak seasons. The chronic nursing shortage has made the pace of nurses' work similar to the speed-up of a factory assembly line and has caused the practice of "pulling".

Pulling means transferring nurses from their regular unit to a more poorly staffed unit — a practice which at best is disorienting and disrupts continuity of care; at worse it endangers the health of patients as in the case of assigning an un-



trained nurse to an intensive care unit. Nurses are always expected to fill in the gaps and perform whatever tasks are needed — from housekeeping to clerking and pharmacy. Obviously, such an all-purpose, inexhaustible worker is a great asset to the hospital administration, whose interest is in maintaining the minimum number of employees and the maximum profit margin.

FRUSTRATING WORK

Nursing work is full of frustration. No matter how hard she exerts herself, every day the nurse must face and answer to patients receiving low quality health care which must result from a health care system based on profits not people. As far as the range of tasks a nurse can perform, nurses of all levels face a dilemma.

Hospital administrators not only expect nurses to do work beyond human capacity but outside their field, doing tasks for which they are not legally covered or trained. A New York City nurse states: "The difference between RN's and LPN's is that LPN's do at night what RN's do during the day." Yet LPN's don't receive RN wages, and nurses certainly don't get physician's fees.

On the other hand, most nurses are discouraged from functioning at the height of their knowledge, training, and experience, especially when it comes to questions of patient care management and administrative issues such as staffing. Nurses' aides and LPN's face particular frustration from being locked into the more routine, unsatisfying chores and obstructed from moving up the career ladder. To become RN's, LPN's must start from scratch as they can rarely receive educational credit for their training and experience. Although their power is minimal, nursing committees in hospitals dealing with patient care seldom invite the participation of aides and LPN's.

Upwardly mobile RN's are channeled into management positions or into specialty clinical areas (such as primary care, preventive health, and rehabilitation) as practitioners, where they function much like physicians for a lot less money. A Boston sociologist refers to the movement of RN's into management as a "cooling out" tool, offering the RN an avenue of mobility that does not compete with the physician, saves money, and induces RN's to see their interests as similar to those of the hospital administration. Despite all the hospitals' efforts to window-dress the job and appease nurses, the turnover rate is high — almost 60% as compared to an 18% rate for female teachers.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Rigid divisions among workers throughout the health care system play a forceful role in keeping nurses from organizing. Economist Martin Karp noted: "In no other industry is the 'pecking order' more evident." And no other health classification is as divided as nursing. There are three basic levels including subdivisions: nursing aides, licensed practical nurses, and RN's from diploma schools, and two year and four year college programs.

The stratification of nursing is as old as the vocation itself. Florence Nightingale's school trained women in two categories, reflecting the English class divisions — lady probationers (superintendents) from middle and upper class backgrounds and regular students (bedside nurses) "... well educated domestic servants and ... the daughters of small farmers. . . tradesmen. . . artisans. . . used to household work."

Since then, this division has only been reinforced by nursing schools and white racism. Denied the education required for higher positions because of racism, sexism and class exploitation, Black women, suffering this triple oppression, have been kept in the lowest paying, dirtiest and dead-end hospital jobs. In nursing they end up in lower level jobs where taking orders and routine is the rule and decision making power is non-existent.

A '73 government publication dealing with nursing education states that "... nursing students continue to come primarily from the same segment of the population, with economic and ethnic minorities underrepresented." Black graduates from college nursing programs have steadily declined since 1962 from 9.7% to ap-

proximately 7.5%. The consequences for the lives of Black women workers are severe, particularly for those who head households.

Among RN's in Philadelphia, Filipino women traditionally work the worst hours, including more evening and weekend shifts. Racism takes a heavy toll on all oppressed national minorities, especially Blacks, yet it doesn't benefit white workers either. It prevents them from seeing their common interests and building the unity necessary for all workers to achieve their needs. The white nurse cannot achieve much while she ignores her Black sister.

RACISM AND PROFESSIONALISM

Racism also feeds into the false ideas of professionalism among nurses. RN's point to their "professional interests" as the reason why their needs cannot be met through joining with other hospital workers into unions for collective bargaining. Professionalism has two primary fallacies. The first is that professional interests are miles apart from the interests of the other hospital workers.

This idea is based in large part on racism — that mostly white RN's are better than and have little in common with the mostly Black unskilled hospital workers. The truth is that all hospital workers basically aspire to the same goals: to earn a decent living with equitable wages and vital benefits; to deliver the best patient care possible; to have a sense of satisfaction from doing one's work well; being part of the decision-making process; continuing education and advancement.

Barbara Martin, a 25 year veteran unionized RN says: "We're all there to help the patients — we all have the same goals — so we should all be in the same union." These goals are antagonistic to hospital administrations tied to preserving and increasing the profit margins of the health care industry. Directly or indirectly, all of these goals threaten the financial status and balance of power of the health care system.

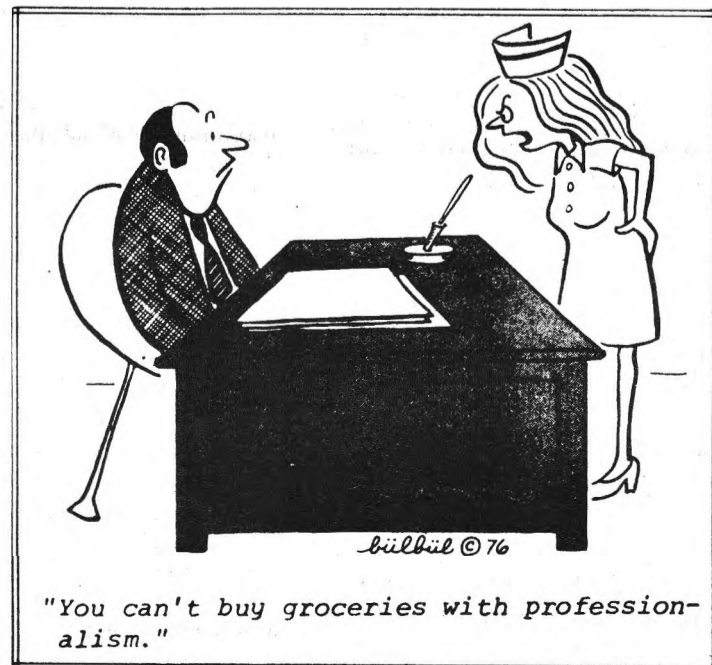
The second fallacy is that RN's can best achieve their needs by "going it alone" and joining professional nursing associations rather than linking up with other workers in trade unions.

CAN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS BEST ADVANCE NURSES?

This idea is based on an assortment of other misconceptions: 1) professional organizations command more respect and therefore are more successful in winning demands; 2) it is unprofessional to be concerned with such mundane needs as wages and benefits; 3) bread and butter issues have no relationship to the quality of patient care; 4) unions cannot or will not take up demands around patient care and professional advancement.

The first principle does not match reality; professional associations have a lousy track record when compared to unions as far as recognition, success in winning

(Continued on next page)



Rank and File Makes Gains

"Gryn Machine" challenged at Budd Hunting Park

by DUANE CALHOUN

The fight for rank and file unionism in UAW Budd Local 813 took a step forward in April, when 17 independent candidates for Executive Board and Convention Delegates challenged the incumbent ticket headed by President Henry Gryn. Although none of the independents were elected, they racked up a sizeable 40% of the in-plant votes.

What really torpedoed the independents, though, was the retiree vote. At least 1200 retirees voted in the election, and it's a safe bet that they went 99% for the Gryn ticket.

RETIREE VOTE PRESERVES DYNASTY

Throughout the UAW, retired members have the right to vote for all local officers, including president, financial secretary, executive board, convention delegates, and in some locals, like 813, grievance chairman. The retiree vote is very handy for the bureaucrats, because it makes it very difficult for anyone not hand-picked by the existing officers to get elected to any position of power in the UAW. The rank and file must bring pressure to bear on the International to remove this section of the Constitution, and *instead give the retirees power to elect their own convention and bargaining council representatives.*

TALLY SHOWS DESIRE FOR CHANGE

If we look at the votes cast by the working members, we can clearly see a large and growing number of Budd workers who want a real change in Local 813. In local elections held three years ago, less than one-third of the working members voted, and about one third of their votes went to the rank and file slate that ran against Gryn. This time, the turnout was nearly 60% and 40% of those votes went to independent candidates.

Among the independents, the "Independent Rank and File Slate" was up front about favoring a complete change in union policy, away from "union-management cooperation". It was this slate — the most "radical" of the independents — that got the most votes of all the insurgent candidates. Taken together, all these facts show that the desire for change is growing among the membership of Local 813.

SKILLED TRADES BECOMING, DISILLUSIONED;

Over the last few years, most of the opposition to President Gryn's half-stepping and sweetheart deals has come from production workers, and the skilled trades have seemed satisfied on the surface. But this election shows the beginning of a new and important trend — many skilled workers are now dissatisfied with the "Gryn method" and are looking towards the militant rank and file movement for an alternative.

Several Die Tryout machinists ran for Executive Board as independents, and they pulled between 300 and 400 votes apiece from both production and skilled classifications. The two candidates on the Gryn ticket from the highly skilled and high seniority Pattern Shop and Machine Shop both got several hundred votes less than the rest of his ticket, partly because of ticket-splitting among dissatisfied skilled tradesmen. Clearly Gryn and his flunkies are losing their influence among skilled workers.

Giant companies like Budd have always

tried, with the support of the labor bureaucracy, to sell the predominantly white skilled trades the idea that they are somehow above the production workers. They have deliberately sought to build up racist and craft-minded "aristocratic" ideas among the skilled workers. The task for the rank and file movement is to convince the skilled trades that their real interests lie in uniting with both Black and white production workers to fight for union democracy, an end to discrimination, and a militant defense of *all* the workers interests.

GRYN STILL HAS MAJORITY

Although independent candidates racked up a sizeable vote, President Gryn's in-plant margin shows that he still has the support of the majority of voting members at Hunting Park. Rank and file activists shouldn't be discouraged by this, because the Gryn machine has had 13 years in office to shake a lot of hands and do a lot of favors. What it does mean is that the rank and file movement must continue to speak to and educate the hundreds of workers who still believe that Gryn offers them more than the rank and file alternative.

The insurgents must prove to these workers that the idea of struggle against the

nurses



(Continued from last page) demands, and the impact of job actions necessary to exert force in negotiating situations. If anything, through harsh experience, nurses have learned of the emptiness of their professional status in confrontations with hospital administrators. Racism and elitism underscore this attitude as RN's rely on their whiteness and sense of self-importance to pull them through. This approach denies the importance and the interdependence of all hospital departments and supports the image of the supernurse who can manage 40 patients singlehandedly (while drawing one salary!).

The second belief — that wage and benefit demands are mundane and secondary — is more the property of the hospital

Company is a better idea, and prove it with daily experience and victories on the shop floor. Rank and file activists can't afford to write these workers off as hopeless, and they can't afford to leave this work of education and organization to the few rank and file leaders who are already active.

DIFFERENT METHODS, DIFFERENT RESULTS

Among the independent candidates, there were three groupings that approached the election in three different ways. The largest, strongest, and best organized was called the "Independent Rank & File Slate". This slate (initiated by the *Concerned Members* caucus and including caucus members plus some others) was the only one to clearly spell out what they stood for in a detailed platform and program. The second group included five candidates who worked together, but were less well organized and did not put out a public program. The third group included those independents who campaigned as individuals and generally weren't organized at all.

The Executive Board vote totals reflected these differences in organization and program. Even though the "Independent Rank and File Slate" had less seniority

administration than that of nurses: RN's want a salary equal to their skill and responsibility. But this thinking prevents nurses from seeing wages as a key issue and the starting point for other demands that are really economic in nature, such as staffing patterns.

PATIENT CARE: AN ECONOMIC ISSUE

Also, it supports the notion that bread and butter demands are totally unrelated to patient care issues. Seattle nurses struck over the threatened loss of first day sick leave pay. Losing this benefit would result in nurses reporting for work in the first stages of illness when their infectiousness and their danger to patients and other staff would be greatest. The connection between bread and butter issues and patient care is obvious if one realizes that an overworked, frustrated nurse cannot function at her best.

The last belief — that unions cannot or will not take up issues beyond wages and benefits is not borne out in reality. The National Hospital Union has negotiated contracts for nurses having clauses on program development, nursing standards and practices, staffing patterns, training and upgrading as well as time off with pay for conferences. The range of demands is determined by the rank and file. In the final analysis, putting forward and winning any demand depends on the strength and unity of the union membership.

that the other independents, and even though they were the victims of a whisper campaign labeling them "communists", these candidates still got the most votes of all the independents.

The *Organizer* believes that this was no accident, and that both organization and program are the key reasons why. Organization made it possible for six people to do what six individuals acting alone couldn't have — produce several pieces of literature, distribute them throughout the plant, work the polls and gates during all three days of the election, recruit poll-watchers for all three days, and so on.

More importantly, the view point and proposals spelled out in their program hit home to hundreds of workers, reflecting in words their thought and feelings about what is wrong with the union and what should be done about it. This sparked the interest and support of the rank and file. The program was public for all to see and pulled no punches, even on controversial issues such as racism in Company hiring and upgrading policy. Such an approach convinced many otherwise disillusioned and cynical workers that the Independent Rank and File Slate were an honest and principled group who stood for a completely different brand of unionism.

A GUIDE FOR THE FUTURE

All in all, these elections marked the growth of the rank and file movement at Hunting Park. The campaign literature, speeches, and conversations throughout the plant sparked a lot of debate over the issues facing Budd workers. Hundreds of workers learned a lot and got more involved in union affairs through these debates and raps, and this can only help the rank and file forces in the future.

The vote count provided a valuable tally of the feelings of most Budd workers, a test of the ideas and program of the rank and file activists, and a guide for choosing the right road for the future. The *Organizer* is confident that when the time comes for the next test, the rank and file movement at Hunting Park will prove even bigger, stronger, and better organized than it is today.

Strength, organization and unity are decisive factors for the future of RN organizing. Should RN's join professional associations (whose membership includes their supervisors) and bargain along narrow skill lines? Or should they join with other hospital workers into trade unions, in recognition of their truly common interests and the strength of a totally united workforce?

In 1974, after five months of negotiating, 4400 RN's represented by the California Nurses Assoc. struck for 21 days with unprecedented militancy and perseverance. However, their settlement was more a holding action than a victory. Support offered by other hospital workers whose contract had also expired was discouraged and no attempts were made to coordinate strategies. Thus tremendous victories for both groups, but especially RN's were sacrificed. **No single category of hospital workers can muster enough force to shut the hospital down and force the administration to capitulate to its just demands.**

Hospital organizing and the organization of nurses will continue. Through democracy, militancy, and taking up the struggles against racism and sexism, hospital workers will improve their working conditions and patient care. Nurses are just beginning to join this movement, but the time isn't far off when the majority of nurses will recognize that this is the road to a better life for them as well.

THE SEPTA STRIKE - an analysis



TWU president Ned LeDonne didn't want to fight.

TWU Leadership Took SEPTA Workers for a Ride

--by JOE LEWANDOWSKI

On May 8th it became clear that Ned LeDonne, president of TWU Local 234, had taken his membership for a long and costly ride. After a 44 day strike, and a loss of about \$1,700 in wages for SEPTA workers, the TWU membership voted to accept an offer that was nearly a carbon copy of the pact that was overwhelmingly rejected on March 23.

The ratified contract provides 60 cents over two years, the same amount as in the rejected offer -- but the up front money was increased a nickel, from 32 cents to 37 cents. An additional cost-of-living raise was added and a holiday was subtracted. It was basically just a case of shuffling a few figures to help LeDonne save face and get a "yes" vote.

No one was fooled by the new contract, but the SEPTA workers had suffered the loss of six paychecks and there was absolutely no sign that the union leadership was capable of fighting for a good contract.

The blame for this defeat must sit squarely on the shoulders of TWU president LeDonne. LeDonne, surprised and shaken by the sound defeat of his initial contract proposal, at first gave some nominal support to the wage and working condition demands of the rank and file. But as the weeks wore on it became clear that LeDonne was just sitting on his hands waiting for the strike to wear his membership down!

LeDonne didn't take on Rizzo. When Frank said that the SEPTA workers could stay out till hell freezes over, LeDonne rolled over and played dead. When Rizzo chewed him out for a city hall rally that was organized by the rank and file, LeDonne practically got down on his knees to beg for forgiveness. The newspapers reported him as saying nervously afterwards, "If we get that guy mad at us, we're through."

LeDonne made no effort whatsoever to rally public support for the strike. Responding to rank and file plans to drum up community support for the strike, LeDonne said, "To get the public

on our side at this point is really a lost cause." But one worker who was active in the Committee for a Decent Contract told the *Organizer*, "The support was there. All he had to do was pick up the phone. We (the Committee) contacted a group of ministers in the Black community and the leaders of many community organizations. They told us that they were with us and would give us public support if LeDonne would just ask for it."

Rizzo was content to sit out the strike because he realized that public transportation serves mostly Black and Latin people, students and the elderly, and the lower income working class -- the groups which are the furthest removed from political power. The key, therefore, to winning the strike was in organizing an alliance of workers and commuters which would combine the demands for no fare hikes, the restoration of previously cut-back service, and clean and safe transportation with the economic demands of the SEPTA workers.

In the last analysis, SEPTA won because its racist practices were successful in dividing both workers and commuters. LeDonne's racism and his fear of Rizzo kept his hands tied and played right into management's game.

LeDonne made no effort to draw on support from other union locals. Whenever a union gets a good contract, it makes it that much easier for other unions to get similar or better provisions in their contracts. By the same token, a defeat like that sustained by the SEPTA workers hurts all trade union locals in the city. It is therefore in the interest of all workers to help each other. This is called labor solidarity and should be a basic principle of trade unionism.

Labor solidarity was sadly lacking in the SEPTA strike, primarily because LeDonne made no effort to build it. For six weeks, SEPTA workers were on the street without a strike fund. Other local union leaders told members of the Committee for a Decent Contract that they would gladly take up plant gate col-

lections for the strikers, but LeDonne had not asked them to do so.

A lot could have been done through the Philadelphia labor movement to aid the strike. Education of the rank and file of other unions was needed to counter the anti-union propaganda that was widespread in the daily newspapers. There could have been joint union marches and rallies held in conjunction with community organizations to support the strikers.

The most powerful weapon would have been a general work stoppage action that could have brought Philadelphia industry to a halt until the buses started rolling again. But LeDonne didn't even take the most fundamental steps to build the labor solidarity his local so desperately needed.

LeDonne failed to organize his own membership for the strike. From the time the initial tentative agreement was reached in mid-March, LeDonne failed to keep his membership informed about the terms of the agreement. When a demonstration by a frustrated rank and file resulted in 15 suspensions, LeDonne gladly sold them down the river as troublemakers and political enemies. Despite widespread support for the suspended work-

ers, he never really made their reinstatement a contract demand.

When the membership finally did vote to go out, LeDonne retreated into his favorite taproom with his cronies and yes-men instead of running a strike. After about a week, picket lines fell apart. There was no effort to inform the membership about the progress of negotiations. The union called no rallies on its own and only participated in a city hall rally when it was forced to do so. Without leadership from the union, the members were left without a unified political direction and were left to endure the hardships of the strike the best they could as isolated individuals.

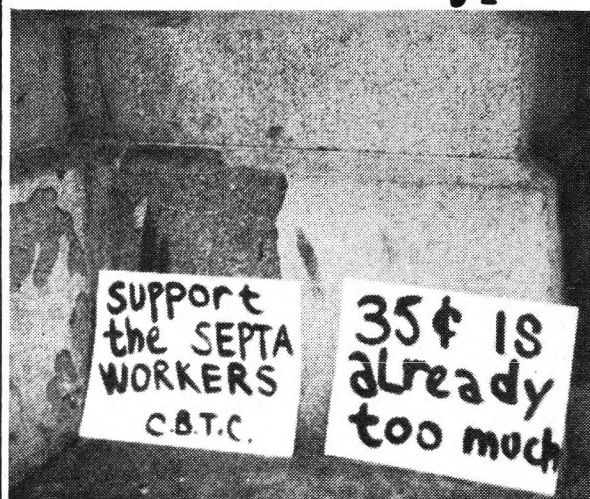
Ned LeDonne's days are numbered. This strike will be fresh in the minds of SEPTA workers when they go to the polls in a few months to elect their new leadership. Merrill Cooper, the present Secretary-Treasurer of the local, has indicated that he will probably oppose LeDonne. Joe Donato, a past officer of the local, has been running for the office since he learned to walk.

Many of the rank and file workers active in the strike aren't too happy about their choices. One member of the Committee described Cooper as, "not much different than LeDonne, but slicker" and said that Donato is "just an opportunist, he used the strike for his own political future."

The Committee for a Decent Contract is probably still too young to capture executive board or officer spots in the coming election, but it could run a campaign on strong rank and file program and therefore influence the political direction the new leadership will take no matter who is chosen. The Committee may be more successful in winning some section officer positions which could increase and broaden their influence throughout the union.

This contract puts SEPTA workers in the worst position in memory. Not only are their wages far below the standard for transportation workers in large cities, they are also under Frank Rizzo's thumb. No leadership will be capable of releasing them from that position unless it is willing to fight city hall, build strong alliances with commuter and community forces and other labor unions, tackle the issue of racism both on the part of SEPTA and within the union, and make the TWU a democratic and fighting union.

The 45¢ Hike Hype



Did the recent SEPTA strike cause the fares to be increased from 35 cents to 45 cents? No, SEPTA actually made money on the strike. During the course of the strike, SEPTA saved somewhere between \$3 and \$4 million. The additional cost of the final settlement was about \$1.25 million. So SEPTA came out of the strike with \$1.75 to \$2.75 million more than it had before the strike began.

The real reason for the fare increase is that the city, state and federal governments aren't committed to funding mass transit.

SEPTA never has paid its own way through fare box revenues. It depends on the various levels of government to make up the difference between its operating costs and what it takes in. In recent years, that difference or deficit has become

Rank and File Needs Program, Organization, and Tactics to Beat the System



Rank and file SEPTA workers and supporters marched to City Hall for a rally during the strike. The union never really tried to mobilize its membership.

--by JOE LEWANDOWSKI

The days between the strike vote on March 23 and the final settlement 44 days later were dark days for most SEPTA workers. One driver described the situation as "... being between a rock and a hard place. The money they offered wasn't enough to live on, yet the union leadership wasn't doing nothing to win the strike."

The only bright spots in the strike were provided by the rank and file SEPTA workers who played an independent and influential role for the first time in years. The principal centers of rank and file discontent were a rank and file organization called the Committee for a Decent Contract, which drew supporters from most of SEPTA's eleven depots, and the supporters of Joe Donato, a rival of TWU Local 234 president Ned LeDonne, most of which come from the Frankford depot.

Of these two centers, only the Committee for a Decent Contract offered a program that could unite workers with the commuter and community groups which were willing to support the strike.

The Committee called for \$1 up front, no fare hike, re-instatement of 300 laid off workers and the restoration of service cutbacks, and improved vehicle maintenance for safety as well as other demands.

The Committee was formed when the members of Driving Force, a small rank and file group with several years history, combined forces with independent rank and filers who were interested in uniting to fight for a good contract.

larger and larger while government support has failed to keep pace.

At the same time, the annual state support for road building and repair is more than ten times the amount devoted to mass transportation. Does this make sense when the nation is supposed to be conserving energy and thus placing a high priority on better mass transportation?

You figure it out. Who stands to profit from more roads? The giant auto manufacturers, the giant oil companies, the trucking industry and the big highway construction companies. Who stands to gain from better and cheaper mass transportation? The people -- national minority peoples, working class people, students, and the elderly.

Or maybe you could get Jimmy Carter to explain it all.

DEALING WITH RED-BAITING

As soon as it was formed, the Committee had to deal with red-baiting. Because of its sectarian practices, Driving Force had isolated itself from the masses of TWU's rank and file and had become further isolated by red-baiting from LeDonne and other union officials. The active members of the Committee who were not Driving Force members understood that red-baiting was a weapon to divide their ranks and most stood firm against it.

On a TV show aired during the strike, members of Driving Force failed to deal with the issue very well, however. When accused of being a member of the Socialist Workers Party, Driving Force leader Roger Tauss denied any such affiliation instead of attacking the issue of red-baiting head on and exposing the role it plays for the entire TV audience.

Red-baiting will continue to be an issue for the Committee if they continue as an ongoing caucus within the union. Some members confide that they would like Driving Force members to continue in the caucus, but are critical of some of their past practices. One measure of the success of the Committee in transforming itself into a caucus will be how well Driving Force members take these criticisms to heart, and how well the Committee remains firm in its principled opposition to red-baiting in any form.

CDC MUST STRUGGLE AGAINST RACISM

Another problem yet to be dealt with openly in the Committee is racism. The Committee draws most of its support from the southern depots and 80 or 90% of its supporters are Black SEPTA workers, while the leadership of the Committee is mostly white. The Committee has been unable to attract support from the predominantly white northern depots. The reason for this division is racism and anti-communism, fears that frequently go hand-in-hand.

The only way to deal with this division is to recognize that it exists, to frankly deal with it within the Committee and to find ways of winning more white workers to the Committee by winning them to the fight against racism. The Committee also has to develop more rank and file leadership, particularly from the ranks of the Black workers.

During the contract struggle, the Committee made some mistakes but generally played a positive role in fighting for a better contract. The lessons of this struggle

are ones that may be of benefit to many new rank and file organizations.

On March 23, when the strike vote was taken, the situation looked like this: the contract was initially turned down because the rank and file was angry at the leadership for not providing them with enough information about the contract and 60 cents over two years was just not enough. Fifteen rank and file TWU members including some Committee for a Decent Contract activists had been given 30 day suspensions and put on final notice for shutting down the Frankford depot a week earlier.

The sentiment of the rank and file was in favor of the suspended workers and most felt that the union should make their reinstatement a condition of any new contract. LeDonne was surprised and shaken by rank and file militance. Rizzo vowed that the SEPTA workers wouldn't get a dime more. Some community organizations were already fighting Rizzo and SEPTA about the proposed fare increases and the commuter tunnel.

The fight was obviously going to be a difficult one. Rizzo was following the pattern emerging around the country of coming down hard on public service unions. Ned LeDonne had neither the brains nor the heart for this fight.

Yet on the positive side, the rank and file was displaying a lot of heart and there were sympathetic commuter and community forces which could be enlisted into the struggle.

QUESTIONS OF RANK AND FILE TACTICS

The key to winning this fight was in forcing the union leadership to do its job -- do depot by depot strike organization, get community and labor support, broaden the issues so that the entire Philadelphia working class would bring its pressure to bear on Rizzo.

The Committee was not able to do this. There seems to have been some confusion in the Committee as to how much emphasis should be placed on forcing LeDonne's hand and how much should be placed on going it alone, playing an in-

dependent role and pressuring the union only indirectly. The balance of the activity seems to have come down on the last strategy.

The Committee held several rallies, tried to drum up financial support for the strikers, tried to organize a food buying cooperative, put out a leaflet urging a second "no" vote and organized poll watchers for the final voting day.

In a strike situation, workers are usually rightfully wary of following the lead of competing political factions within a union. They understand that a union's strength is in its unity, and are suspicious of actions which may just be based on opportunism.

Most community organizations and commuter groups and all of the sympathetic labor unions, groups whose support was critical to any sort of victory, were also wary of splitting the union's ranks by giving support to a dissident faction within the union. The Committee approached a number of union locals and community leaders -- all said that they were willing to lend support if it was requested by the union leadership.

A rank and file caucus has to tread the tightrope of unity within the union combined with principled independent action of the rank and file. If this strategy is executed correctly, a rank and file can move an entire union along the path to victory rather than just mobilizing a handful of the most militant and advanced workers.

The Committee for a Decent Contract has to take a hard look at its experience during the strike as it makes plans to continue as a caucus in the future. It should take particular care to put together a program that can unite the majority of SEPTA workers and at the same time build alliances with progressive forces in the community. In bringing about this unity, the Committee has to deal seriously with racism -- racial divisions within the SEPTA workforce and the racism in SEPTA's plan for fare hikes and service cuts which are part of an overall attack on the living standards of the national minority and working people of Philadelphia.



Strikers received support from a number of community organizations including the Consumers Education Protective Association (CEPA).

Is community control the answer to segregated education?

by OWENS

"Community control originated as an education movement when integration no longer seemed a reasonable probability. Since the Supreme Court's desegregation decision of 1954, more Black segregated schools have come into existence than ever before." . . . (from the prologue to Confrontation at Ocean Hill-Brownsville)

Community control or desegregation? Which strategy serves to advance the movement for Black equality and win improvements in the education of all our children?

Many people, from the mid-60's to today, have been drawn to community control as the answer, but experiences like that of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville (OH-B) district in NYC have shown us that community control, when counterposed to the struggle for desegregation, narrows our perspective and serves, not to unite, but to divide Black and white people in our common struggle for quality education.

HOW THE DEMAND FOR COMMUNITY CONTROL AROSE

Although the immediate stimulus to the demand for community control was the upsurge of militancy in the Black Liberation Movement in the mid-60's, the roots of the demand lie in 300 years of racist oppression which has left Black people poor, unemployed, unhealthy, under-educated, and powerless. It is no wonder that Stokely Carmichael's first cry of "Black Power" touched a raw nerve among Blacks -- a nerve rubbed even rawer by the headlong retreat from the Civil Rights Movement by many of its former white allies when the struggle began to hit a little too close to home.

Politically, this new movement demanded that Black people take control over the racist institutions playing havoc with their lives -- with segregated, deteriorating schools chief among them.

The call for community control of the schools was a direct result of the failure to implement school desegregation -- a failure painfully evident in Philadelphia today as we continue to wait for the school desegregation plan, first called for in 1968 when the Pa. Human Relations Commission declared 240 of Phila.'s 280 public schools to be segregated.

LIMITED SUPPORT

The Organizer supports many of the movement -- increased attention to Black and other minority history and culture; bilingual programs; more special and remedial programs; and increased accountability of school officials. BUT... it is a dangerous illusion if community control is counterposed to desegregation and Black-white unity as an overall strategy.

PITFALLS OF COMMUNITY CONTROL

The demand for local community control ignores the hard fact that finances are controlled NOT in the local community, but in a city-wide school system. The competition between small local units for scarce resources serves only to increase divisions in the working class. It under-

cuts the struggle to win white people over to taking up the fight for equality as their own.

It raises the spectre of a poor working class Black community in West Philly fighting a poor working class white community in Kensington for a few crumbs, while richer white areas consolidate segregation in their schools and wield their greater economic and political strength to rake in a larger share of meagre school board dollars.

Furthermore, community control in white neighborhoods has no particular progressive content and has in fact been linked to efforts to defend segregation in the guise of preserving neighborhood schools.

And -- it will play into the hands of some separatist-minded Black nationalists whose approach is yet a further obstacle to achieving Black-white unity.



Photo: Suzanne Szasz, Children's Community Workshop School

Underlying the concept of community control in the Black community is the idea that Blacks can and must go it alone because whites, for whatever the reasons, are incurably racist and will never accept integrated schools. The unquestionable strength of white opposition to busing and desegregation generally makes this sentiment understandable and gives it a surface plausibility.

But this go it alone separatism is nevertheless a dangerous illusion. Only a united Black-white movement can achieve lasting and substantial change. A politically isolated Black community will remain vulnerable to "benign neglect" and worse.

RULING CLASS JUMPS ON THE BANDWAGON

It is not surprising that the same corporate and political big-wigs who opposed school desegregation suddenly became avid supporters of community control. They saw its potential for coopting militant Black leaders; for defusing the rising anger of the Black masses; and for further cleaving the working class along racial lines.

It was no accident then, that one of the chief proponents and financiers of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville experiment was the Ford Foundation and its president -- McGeorge Bundy, one of the architects of the racist war in Vietnam.

COMMUNITY CONTROL IN ACTION -- OCEAN HILL-BROWNSVILLE

The year-long struggle in OH-B was a complicated and tragic affair which shattered the fragile alliance in NYC between white liberals and the minorities; placed teachers and their union (the United Federation of Teachers, UFT) in direct conflict with the minority communities; and strengthened both racism and narrow Black nationalism.

In 1966, following a demand for community control and a subsequent school boycott by Black and Latino parents in East Harlem after the collapse of a voluntary desegregation plan, the NY Board of Education, with help from the Ford Foundation, established three demonstra-

tion areas for the implementation of community control -- the Intermediate School District 201 in East Harlem; the Two Bridges district in the Lower East Side, and the OH-B district in Brooklyn.

In OH-B, as in East Harlem, desegregation had been undermined and defeated. Previously, 4000 Black children from OH-B had been bused to predominantly white schools where they were segregated into separate classes and harassed by white parents. It is no wonder that under these circumstances, many of these children soon begged to be sent back to their inadequate neighborhood schools, and that community control was the next demand on the agenda of frustrated and angry OH parents.

Although the United Federation of Teachers was initially represented on the OH-B board, UFT president Albert Shanker had opposed the plan from the beginning as a threat to the power of the union. The disastrous break between the OH-B board and the UFT came when the board -- angered by a racist demand to allow teachers to expel "disruptive" students, refused to support the Sept., 1967 teachers' strike.

UNION VS. BLACK COMMUNITY

The increasing tension between the Black community and the OH-B board on the one hand and the Central Board of Education and the UFT on the other, climaxed in May, 1968 when the board ordered the transfer out of the district of 13 teachers (including some union offi-

cials) accused of undermining the OH-B board and community control. This move led to a walk-out of the districts' 350 teachers and the military occupation of OH-B by thousands of police placed there supposedly to "prevent violence."

The division between the teachers and the community was aggravated by the blatant racism of Shanker and the UFT officials who, in their propaganda, characterized the OH-B community as a "mob... controlled by vigilantes," and who consistently accused the OH-B board of "reverse racism" and "Black anti-Semitism."

Tensions mounted over the summer. The next fall saw the city's educational apparatus paralyzed by three separate city-wide UFT strikes between Sept. and Nov. over the continuing refusal of the OH-B board to reinstate the transferred teachers. The drama was concluded in Nov., 1968 with the suspension of the OH-B board; the placing of the district into state trusteeship; and most importantly, NO improvement in the education of the children of OH-B.

Who really profited from the confrontation over OH-B? The community ended up with no real gains in the quality of their children's education. The rank and file teachers saw their union isolated and weakened. The Board of Education, on the other hand, managed to simultaneously divert the attention of the masses away from the underfunded, segregated schools throughout the city over which the Board presided.

The possibility of a united fight against the ruling powers in the city for quality, integrated education was averted. Instead, the various working class and oppressed nationality communities were pitted against each other for bigger pieces of a shrinking pie. Minority students and parents were pitted against teachers, aided and abetted by the intransigent racism of UFT leader Albert Shanker and secondarily by anti-union sentiment on the OH-B board, encouraged by the Ford Foundation and the NY Board of Education. The ruling class got off the hook and New York city schools have continued to slide downhill ever since.

DESEGREGATION -- THE ONLY STRATEGY

Community control as a tactical demand for increased accountability of teachers and administrators and for programs to meet the needs of specific communities is supportable -- BUT ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF AN OVERALL STRUGGLE FOR DESEGREGATION AND THE BUILDING OF MULTI-NATIONAL UNITY. In an era of slashed school budgets, fire-trap schools, and increasing segregation, we must avoid an isolated and divisive local focus and launch a unified Black-white movement that demands equal and quality education for all.



"We must be fair. We must ask equal sacrifices from every region, every class of people, every interest group."

Carter's Energy Program

Bite the Bullet... again

-by JIM GRIFFIN

"We must be fair. We must ask equal sacrifices from every region, every class of people, every interest group."

from Jimmy Carter's Energy Speech

On April 20th, Jimmy Carter went on TV to sell the American people his package of proposals for dealing with the "energy crisis." This was not the Jimmy Carter of the fireside chat and the town meeting. He left his cardigan sweater home, and put on a suit. He traded in his ultra-brite smile for a somber frown. After all, it's bad politics to smile and look casual when you're planning to tell the American people to tighten their belts once more and accept another cut in their standard of living.

CARTER'S PROGRAM: WE PAY MORE

Higher fuel prices for consumers and bigger profits for the energy monopolies is Carter's energy program in a nutshell. Gasoline prices will be affected most drastically. Carter wants the authority to raise the federal tax on gasoline (presently five cents a gallon) another fifty cents over the next ten years, with the first five cent increase due in January of 1979.

The increases are tied to gas consumption. Carter argues that if we use less we will pay less. But all the experts agree that fuel consumption is inevitably going to go up. What Jimmy's logic really amounts to is that we will sooner or later use less because we won't be able to afford gasoline any more!

On top of the tax increases, Carter wants to end the ceiling on gas prices and allow the price of newly discovered domestic petroleum to rise to world market prices by 1980. What this amounts to is ending all government restraints on the oil companies and allowing them to charge whatever the market will bear. This policy is expected to produce another nickel price increase in a gallon of gas by January with greater increases in store for the future.

PAY OR FREEZE

Home heating fuel will also be going up. Those who heat with oil will feel the sting of the rising costs of domestically produced crude oil. The ceiling on natural

gas sold interstate is being raised from \$1.42 per 1000 cubic feet to \$1.75 per 1000 cubic feet (Carter actually wanted to remove all controls on natural gas). This of course will drive up the costs of gas heat.

Those who heat with electricity won't be exempt either. Costs of conversion from oil to coal by the electric utility companies, another Carter proposal, are bound to be passed along to consumers in spite of tax credits the power companies will receive from the government.

Finally, if you plan to buy a car that gets less than 13 miles to the gallon, you get hit with yet another tax. This tax on "gas guzzlers" will increase each year until by 1985 you will pay a tax of \$2,488 on a car that gets less than 27 miles to the gallon.

THE FARCE OF EQUAL SACRIFICE

Carter talks about "equality of sacrifice" but as usual it's the working class and the oppressed nationalities who are going to really feel the pinch. A few more cents at the gas pump is no big deal for a \$50,000 dollar a year fat cat. But it is a matter of survival when a working family has to stretch an already straining budget to squeeze out more money for gasoline and heating fuel.

While Carter is making it tougher for us to drive cars, he is not forking up another dime for the decaying mass transit systems of the cities. This brings home his contempt for the Black and Spanish-speaking people who form the majority of the inner city population in most urban centers and are especially dependent on mass transit.

The same inequality holds true for the "goodies" in Carter's plan. It will be real nice to get a \$15 tax rebate. (Gee, wonder whatever happened to the \$50 rebate?) But will it really make up the difference? And as for the tax credits for home insulation and conversion to solar heat, who but the rich can afford these projects? Priced a solar heating system lately? They start at \$6,000. Another nice break for the big executive on the Main Line who already has tax loopholes to burn.

BIGGER PROFITS FOR THE ENERGY MONOPOLIES

But it's the energy monopolies who are going to make the biggest killing on Carter's plan. The Oil Companies have gotten rid of price controls on gasoline and newly discovered domestic crude, something they've been fighting for for years. But still they're not happy. They claim these bigger profits are still not enough of an "incentive" for them to explore for new sources of oil.

They want to get rid of Carter's tax on gasoline and allow the market to regulate consumption. In other words they want all the increases in the price of gasoline to flow into their coffers instead of having to share the loot with the federal treasury. The natural gas interests are going to make out too from the raising of the price ceiling on gas sold interstate. But like the oil companies, they're crying all the way to the bank because Carter didn't eliminate price controls completely.

And the coal companies (many of whom are owned by the oil companies) are plenty excited about Smilin Jimmy's plan to increase coal production by some 66% to one billion tons a year by 1980. But the coal barons are griping too. It takes five million dollars to open up a mine, and they just can't afford it all by themselves. They want the government to help them over the hump with a multi-million dollar subsidy. It's going to be the biggest thing since the gold rush for these monopolies, but still they cry for more.

IS THE ENERGY CRISIS FOR REAL?

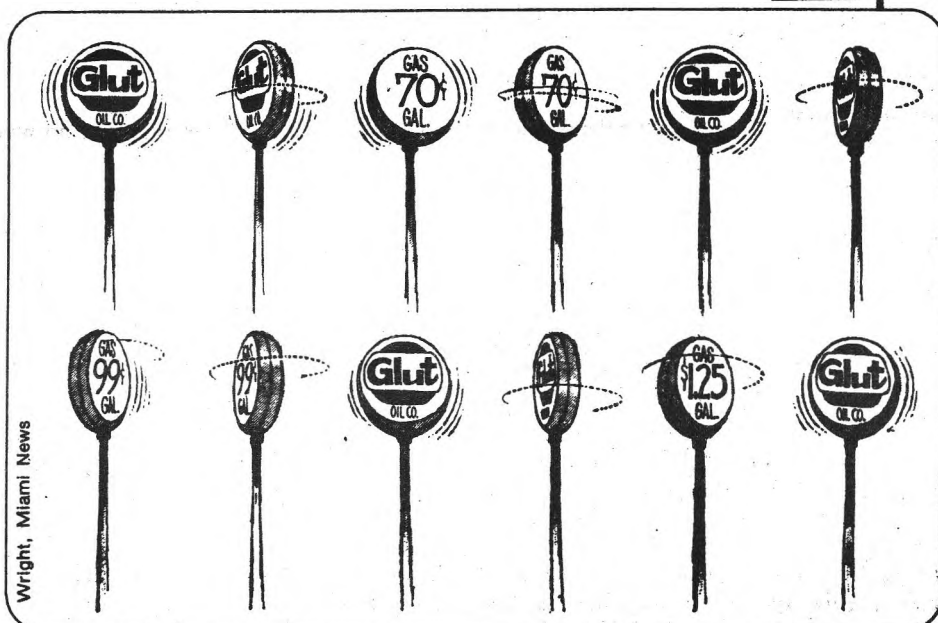
Polls have consistently shown that the American people are sceptical that there really is an energy crisis. They suspect that they're getting ripped off and they're right. Carter's doomsday predictions of the oil drying up as demand exceeds supply in the year 1985 are based on a CIA report which in turn relied on information provided by none other than the oil companies.

The oil companies are notorious for underestimating the size of existing oil reserves. The CIA report for example puts the remaining reserves in Saudi Arabia at 170 billion barrels while Saudi government officials privately estimate their reserves at 300 billion barrels.

A recently released UN study estimates that oil reserves are sufficient to meet the world's needs for at least the next fifty years. An earlier Yale university study put the figure at 70 years. Alternative sources of energy like coal, oil shale and uranium exist in far greater abundance and the technology for harnessing and developing them is rapidly advancing.

If there really is such a terrible crisis, then how can Carter justify allowing the energy monopolies to make huge profits at the expense of the rest of us? If oil, coal and natural gas are scarce and vital natural resources, how can they be left in private hands to be exploited for profit? The answer is obvious enough. Carter, as the hireling of the monopolies, is not going to risk his job by telling his employers they've got to stop feeding at the trough while the rest of us go hungry.

But we don't have to sit back and let them get away with it. We have to organize to oppose the passage of this latest energy rip-off. We must demand nationalization of the energy monopolies without compensation and their operation by and for the people's interests. The real crisis is the rape of our natural resources and our pocketbooks by the monopolies. Jimmy won't deal with that. He can't. We can and we must.



the lessons of the wildcats

RANK & FILE ORGANIZATION NEEDED AT SUN SHIP



Just recently Sun Shipbuilding workers were forced to stage the second wildcat strike in less than a year to protest the company's flagrant disregard for workers' lives. Both wildcats began when the company risked workers' lives by eliminating a needed worker from a job.

Last July the company took one of two men off a combination boring mill and lathe, a job which had killed one man working it alone several years ago. The remaining machinist was fired for refusing to work the unsafe job and workers walked out demanding the fired man be reinstated and the helper returned to the job.

This March the company refused to give a crane operator a needed signal man, endangering the lives of several workers on the job. Three nights the crew was disciplined for refusing this job which had also resulted in the death of a worker three years ago, and again Sun Ship workers walked out.

UNION LEADERS IGNORE CONTRACT VIOLATIONS

A leaflet put out by a group of workers during the July strike explains how the safety incident was the last straw in a series of blatant contract violations in the course of the past months. Forced job combination, "hiring off the street with workers on lay off, disciplinary slips appearing left and right are only a few of the problems which, in addition to deteriorating safety conditions, have been largely ignored by the present union officials.

After ramming a contract agreement down the throats of the membership in January 1976 (ballot box stuffing was charged by the rank and file when approval was gained by a slight margin for the same contract turned down three to one only a few days before), the local officials let hundreds of grievances pile up. So it wasn't surprising when pleas by the officials to return to work and let the grievance go through channels were met with jeers and boos by the rank and file, who

were forced to walk out because their lives were, in fact, threatened.

NEED FOR RANK AND FILE ORGANIZATION

During the first strike the presence of an organized group of workers called "The People Who Care" with a specific set of demands including an end to job combining and the company's violations of the contract, helped keep the wildcat strong for five days. But the rank and file was not organized enough to hold out for all the demands when Judge Fogel ordered the helper returned to the job. During the second strike there was no organized group of workers and the wildcat was significantly weaker giving in to the leadership's pleas to return to work without even winning the initial demand. The strikes show that the present union leadership is unwilling to take up the most urgent concerns of the rank and file and more importantly that the rank and file must organize if it is to win.

Building the kind of rank and file organization that can turn things around is no easy task. Experience of the rank and file movement both past and present shows there are many pitfalls. Some errors that must be avoided were illustrated in a leaflet put out by the *Call*, newspaper of the October League.

The *Call* was right when it said the major weakness of the last strike was lack of organization. But then they go on to say that Sun Shipbuilding, the big labor leaders, and our local leadership are all the same — the enemy: "unions. . . are in the hands of a small group of misleaders bought and paid for by the rich. Both the Wilson-Strohl gang and the Orio-Fine 'opposition' are defenders of the bosses' right to keep on exploiting us."

OUR MAIN ENEMY: COMPANY OR UNION?

First of all, it must be made clear that the owners of Sun Shipbuilding and the local union leadership are *not* in the same camp. The local union officials have

done a bad job of defending the workers against the company's attacks, but it would be dangerous to let that blind us to the fact that it's the company which makes those attacks in the first place. It's the company which gives the workers unsafe jobs, forces them to combine skills, and passes out pink slips!

It is also wrong to equate labor bureaucrats like George Meany with Local 802's leadership. Meany brings home \$100,000 a year, has no contact with the rank and file, and is not directly elected or responsible to the workers. While Local 802's leadership has failed miserably in fighting for the workers, it's important that they are not kept in the lap of luxury by the government and the corporations. This makes an important difference in our daily strategy to fight the misleaders: **The local leadership is directly elected and responsible to the rank and file; it depends on their support in running for office, and most importantly, is subject to the pressure of a strong and organized rank and file while in office.**

And were both slates running in the recent local elections really exactly the same? The incumbents are running on the minimal economic gains they have made in the past, never addressing the most important problems facing Sun Ship workers. The opposition slate, while it has overlooked important issues such as job combination, discrimination and safety, has campaigned for increased union democracy and rank and file participation and increased militancy in fighting contract violations.

RANK AND FILE NEEDS A PROGRAM

Whether or not they live up to these promises is going to depend first and foremost on the rank and file. A strong, organized rank and file movement that knows what it wants can pressure the leadership into acting, regardless of which

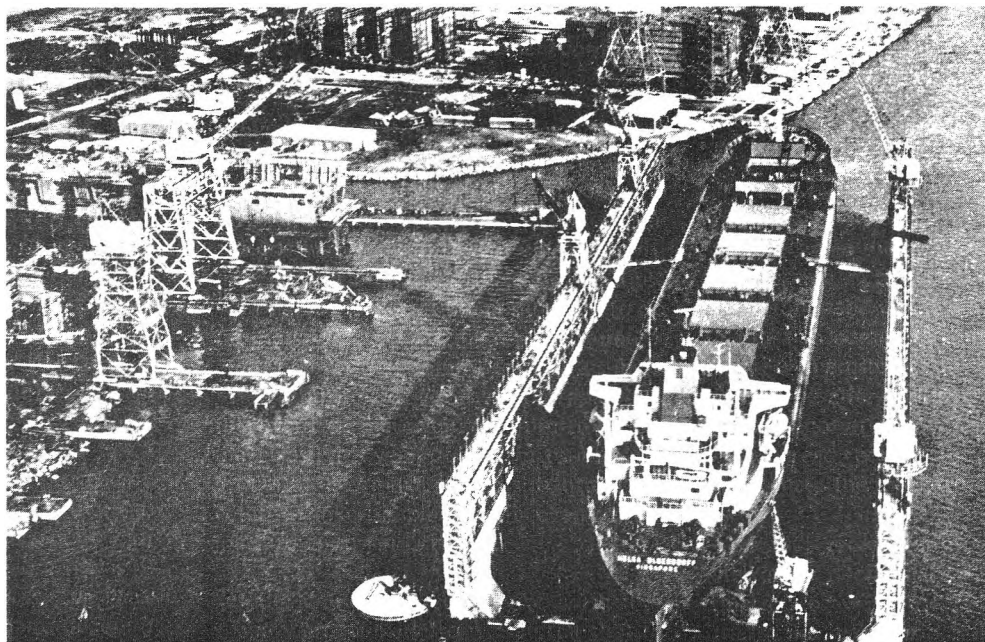
slate wins. In choosing between the different slates, the key thing is to what extent each slate commits itself to a program that really represents the interests of the rank and file.

Rank and filers have to come together to formulate such a program, and demand that candidates for union office run on such a platform and implement it once elected. The militant defense of the worker's wages, working conditions, and general economic interests, the fight for union democracy and the struggle against racism and all forms of discrimination are the minimal elements of such a program, in our view.

The *Call* talks about how "we have to bring forward leaders who will fight for the interests of all the workers" but they don't say how to do it. Reading the *Call* is not a strategy for regaining rank and file control of the union. As Marxist-Leninists, we agree wholeheartedly with the *Call* that the working class needs organized, advanced, political leadership, a Communist party made up of the most class conscious fighters guided by the theory of scientific socialism.

But real leadership cannot cut itself off from the broad masses of the workers. The *Call* — October League, has shown by its practice that this is precisely what they do, as in the recent Sadlowski campaign in the Steelworkers Union. Sadlowski and the rank and file movement wasn't pure enough for the *Call*. So they opposed it and tried to draw the workers out of it. This sort of counsel the workers movement can do without.

The way forward at Sun Ship is for the workers who have been active in the fight against the company to unite into a rank and file organization that will pursue the fight for a real fighting democratic union 1-day in and day out.



Unsafe working conditions, forced job combination, on the job harassment -- the rule at Sun Ship.

bell workers

(continued from p.1)

"The Company is only interested in how fast we work, not how good we work. Out of 180 operators, they allow only one of us to go at a time to the bathroom. It could take all day for your turn to come up," the Operators stated.

Another Black Operator spoke of how doubly frustrating it is for her at Bell. "Even if I work myself silly, producing way over the quota and maintain a good attendance record, they still won't upgrade me into a better-paying job. Some of my friends have been sitting here "Being constantly persecuted by customers, spied on by management, and my every word monitored by the bosses, is what really makes me nervous", said one Operator. "About 90% of our callers hate the phone company and they take it out on us!" Handling 800 to 900 of those calls a day is enough to test anyone's sanity." Operators can be fired for being discourteous to a customer. "I am screamed at and called every racist name imaginable by customers and I'm not allowed to defend myself."

for 8, 10 years and they don't move cause they are Black." The Operators stressed that a number one priority demand for their upcoming contract is ending Bell's racist hiring and upgrading practices.

WORKERS — FIGHT BACK!

The Operators are calling on all workers in Philadelphia to support them in their struggle to save their jobs and improve their working conditions. "It's time we take a stand against these giant utilities who continually rob us of our jobs and our paychecks."

The Operators urge all workers to attend the next scheduled PUC hearings in Philly, on June 8, 9, and 10, at the State Office Building. By July the PUC will make the decision whether to give Bell the right to increase phone bills. The PUC is supposed to be a "public" agency which should be protecting the public's interests. Higher telephone bills are certainly not in our interest!



Police Threaten MOVE...

What Stand Should Community Take?



Bulletin Special Photo by Eric R. Crossan

--by SARA MURPHY

It was one of the first hot days of this summer when members of the MOVE organization appeared on the catwalk over their front porch, dressed in khaki jumpsuits and carrying pistols and rifles. Beginning at noon on May 21, and continuing for several days, MOVE members denounced police brutality loudly over their speaker system.

By late evening, a crowd of several hundred had gathered, police surrounded the West Philadelphia house for blocks, tactical police stood with pointed weapons on surrounding roofs. MOVE declared openly its commitment to defensive tactics, and did in fact maintain a defensive posture throughout the confrontation.

When the police presence quieted down after a couple of days, the rifles were put aside, and members stood armed with baseball bats. At this writing, the national guard armory on 33rd street, just a few blocks away, is still filled with battle-ready troops, Powelton is still crawling with plain clothes and under-cover police.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS MOVE AGAINST COPS

MOVE, a predominantly Black organization which professes revolution through rejection of technology and non-coopera-

tion with the system, has historically been very isolated in the Powelton/Mantua communities. However, their bitter and graphic harangues against police abuse and their standing up to police repression brought them considerable support from the community, particularly among young Blacks, most often the victims of police abuse and harassment in the city.

During the days of the confrontation, the media -- particularly the daily newspapers and the three local TV stations, played a miserable role in the situation, helping to polarize an already tense community in an explosive situation. TV interviews and newspaper stories reflected only the views of neighbors who denounced MOVE's lifestyle. The denunciations of MOVE's lifestyle in the press at that time gave legitimacy to police, and helped provide a cover for whatever action Rizzo decided to take.

Those who supported MOVE's right to self-defense, and opposed a police invasion, while still retaining criticisms of MOVE's tactics and analysis, found no voice in the media.

It is understandable that neighbors of MOVE have a long list of grievances against them. First and foremost are the living conditions which their anti-technology lifestyle leads them to

impose on their neighbors: garbage, herds of fat rats, dozens of dogs -- all giving rise to intolerable filth, odor, and health hazards.

RESIDENTS FALL PREY TO RACISM

However, these problems between MOVE and the community ought to have been set aside in the face of the clear and present danger of a police invasion. It was racism pure and simple that led a predominantly white group of Powelton residents including the Powelton Homeowners, some members of East Powelton Concerned Residents (EPCR) and other individuals to go before the press, as police weapons stood aimed at a predominantly Black community, and call Frank Rizzo "gutless" and demand that he "do something" about MOVE.

It is to the credit of EPCR that it recognized the reactionary role some of its members and neighbors were playing and later came out with a public statement saying that they didn't want to see blood shed in their community in spite of disagreements with MOVE.

There is more to the issue, however, than the question of bloodshed. The main question being raised by MOVE, being demonstrated by the police presence, and being discussed by onlookers, is the question of racism and police abuse. This was not an issue that could be side-stepped as "none of our concern", particularly by white members of the community. It was in fact, the central issue at hand, and needed to be addressed as such.

In spite of their offensive lifestyle and lack of respect for their neighbors, MOVE is not an enemy of white or Black residents of Powelton and Mantua, as those who sided with or ignored police abuse and potential police invasion implicitly believe. MOVE is in no way a threat which compares to the threat of the racist police and city administration, as those who say, "We don't like MOVE but we don't like bloodshed either," are saying.

ANTI-RACIST STAND DEMANDED

In the situation as it developed in Powelton, the only principled position is to take a clear anti-racist stand, which means to support the right of the MOVE organization against police brutality, racism and repression, including the right to self-defense. As several Powelton residents have put it, "If it means the police coming in and blowing them away, or us putting up with the rats, we're just going to have to put up with the rats."

The police intervention is not simply a question of morality. The results of police repression of MOVE in the present situation -- particularly when the city can claim that it acted on behalf of "the (white) community" -- would be a disaster for most Powelton/Mantua residents.

This community -- traditionally liberal or radical middle class whites and poor and working class Blacks -- would be divided into two hostile racial camps. The police would have a green light for escalating what it has already been doing for years -- harassing and abusing the Black community, especially the youth.

However, white people in the area would also be living in a drastically changed environment. Police harassment, and eventually repeats of what happened in the 1960's in this neighborhood -- Police and FBI dirty tricks, break-ins and intimidation -- would fall next on both Blacks and whites active in the movement for social change, whether it's working to oust Rizzo as mayor or struggling to build a new communist party in the US.

COMMUNITY STRUGGLES IN POWELTON

There have been many struggles going on in this community in recent months. These include fighting evictions in the face of expansion by Drexel University, getting rid of "kiddie porno" publishing on Spring Garden street, funding and building -- then defending from racist vandalism -- a children's community playground, fighting cutbacks in the school system -- first childcare facilities, now threatened loss of both kindergarten and alternative school programs, and more.

We recognize that in order to be successful, these struggles must become more multi-national, and must unite Black and white around anti-racist programs for the community. However, after an incorrect handling of the MOVE situation, the struggle against racism would be set back for years, and the community would be incapable of uniting to fight repression or reaction in any form.

At the present time, Powelton residents need to take a strong anti-racist stand, which in this situation demands support of the rights of the MOVE organization to defend itself from police abuse and potential police invasion. For the good of all in this community, we must demand: Empty the Armory! No police invasion of Powelton! End racist police abuse and harassment!



MOVE men stand with some of group's women and children outside N.33d St. house

Photography by Vicki Valerio

DOGMATISM and the



by J. REED

The police rarely look favorably on demonstrations. But a few years ago, in Atlanta, they did adopt a strangely supportive attitude to a supposed anti-imperialist rally. The officers tried to accommodate the demonstrators in every way possible. Some even expressed support for the slogans raised by the handful of activists present. The police apparently thought that the rally was called by the neo-fascist John Birch Society. Actually, however, it was a cleverly concealed demonstration against Soviet "imperialism" organized by the October League.

How could it happen that the police could confuse two organizations which are on such opposite ends of the political spectrum, that on the basis of the slogans they could mistake a supposedly revolutionary organization with a neo-fascist one? Modern dogmatism has produced stranger phenomena. It would be difficult however, to find another question on which unity with the John Birchers is so damaging to the long run interests of the U. S. proletariat as the question of proletarian internationalism.

This is not just because proletarian internationalism and collaboration with one's imperialist ruling class are diametrically opposed policies. Even more importantly, U. S. imperialism is the leading and foremost imperialism in the world. It is the main impediment to the worldwide struggle of the working class and oppressed peoples for national liberation, democracy, peace and socialism. And as the world's peoples' main enemy, it must be the target of our main blow.

AGENTS OF U.S. IMPERIALISM

To collaborate with the main enemy of the world's peoples, to fail to direct one's main blow against it, particularly inside its citadel where its soft underbelly is exposed, is to become its agent—unconscious, perhaps, but its agent nevertheless.

And yet this is exactly what the dogmatist trend in the party-building

movement has done. Consider the following:

Both the OL and the RCP aligned themselves with U. S. imperialism in Portugal by calling for the overthrow of the Goncalves government and supporting the attacks mobilized by the fascist underground against the PCP.

Both the OL and RCP aligned themselves with U. S. imperialism's main objective in Angola: achieving a tri-partite government which would be two thirds neo-colonialist (FNLA and UNITA) and one-third anti-imperialist (MPLA).

Both the OL and the RCP are presently aligning themselves with U. S. imperialism in Zaire by supporting Mobutu's attempt to suppress the popular uprising in Shaba.

Both the OL and the RCP have made explicit attacks on one socialist country, Cuba, calling it an agent of the Soviet Union and, by implication, attacks on Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Laos.

Both have branded legitimate national liberation movements as 'fifth columns' or tools of the Soviet Union. For example, consider the MPLA, the Congolese National Liberation Front, and again by implication SWAPO and the Patriotic Front.

Needless to say, such "proletarian internationalism" could only warm the cockles of a Bircher's heart.

THE DOGMATIST ARGUMENT

The dogmatists argue that while they may seem to have unity with U. S. imperialism, this is only a superficial view. They argue that we must look below the surface reality and "probe the depths of the real forces at work in the world". They argue that while the facts seem to indicate that the U. S. is the main enemy of the world's peoples, in actuality there are two main enemies—the U. S. and the Soviet Union.

The essence of the dogmatist argument runs as follows: The Communist Party

of the Soviet Union exercises state power in the Soviet Union. It is a revisionist party and Lenin said revisionism represents the interests of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, it is quite simple: the bourgeoisie holds state power in the Soviet Union.

The bourgeoisie in power means that the dictatorship of the proletariat has been smashed (never mind that this happened without armed struggle) and capitalism has been restored.

Now in a country as centralized economically and politically as the Soviet Union, capitalism restored can only mean imperialism plus a "fascist state of the Hitler type". Since as Lenin said imperialist countries have imperialist foreign policies, Soviet foreign policy must be described as "social-imperialist".

Since the Soviet Union is qualitatively more powerful than the capitalist countries of Western Europe, and relatively speaking, roughly equivalent to the U.S.—and is an imperialist country—it must be seen along with the U. S. as one of the two main enemies of the world's peoples.

Here the RCP and some other dogmatists stop. The OL, however, is not content to rest its considerable reasoning powers. It goes on to point out: Since U. S. imperialism is in decline and that Soviet "social imperialism" is a "newcomer to the imperialist feast", the Soviet Union has the greatest hunger and boldest appetite, and therefore the main blow internationally must be struck at it.

Stripped of its backhanded appeals to flunkeyism towards China and of Cold War hysteria, this is all there is to the dogmatist argument.

But a Marxist arrives at truth not from such superficial argumentation combined with appeals to petty-bourgeois sentiment, but from facts. And when the dogmatists strive vainly to buttress their hollow arguments with the facts, they have always come up short. They have had to resort to the most contriving reasoning and outright fabrication in order to confirm their wishful thinking.

Angola provided a recent example. Faced with overwhelming evidence of the popular support for the MPLA, the dogmatists fabricated MPLA "massacres and terrorism" in order to explain away that support. Faced with overwhelming evidence of U. S.-South Africa-FNLA-UNITA collusion to provoke a civil war once the Portuguese had left, they invented "massive Soviet intervention to foment civil war". And faced with clear evidence that Cuban troops did not enter Angola until several months after the South African invasion, the dates on Cuban and South African involvement were merely reversed. This is how the dogmatists "go beneath surface reality".

RESTORATION OF CAPITALISM?

The bottom line of the dogmatist position is, of course, their contention that capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union. But here also the real facts demolish RCP-OL and cohorts.

While there are occasionally people out of work in the Soviet Union, unemployment is demonstrably *not* a structural feature of the Soviet economy. While there is definitely a privileged elite in the Soviet Union, it is demonstrably *not* the case that this elite has property rights to the social surplus produced by the Soviet working class.

While the Soviet managers have been allotted a certain portion of the profits of their enterprises for direct reinvestment (about 13%) the overwhelming portion of social capital is allocated according to a central plan in which profit is *not* the key determinant. While there is stagnation in the Soviet economy it is *not* the case that this stagnation results from a business cycle. And a business cycle is, of course, a structural feature of a capitalist economy.

And finally, while there is definitely export of money from the Soviet Union it is demonstrably *not* the case that this export of money results from a situation in which capital is overripe. It is therefore, properly speaking, not the export of capital, which must become predominant in the imperialist stage. And of course, only the export of capital provides the necessary foundation for an imperialist foreign policy.

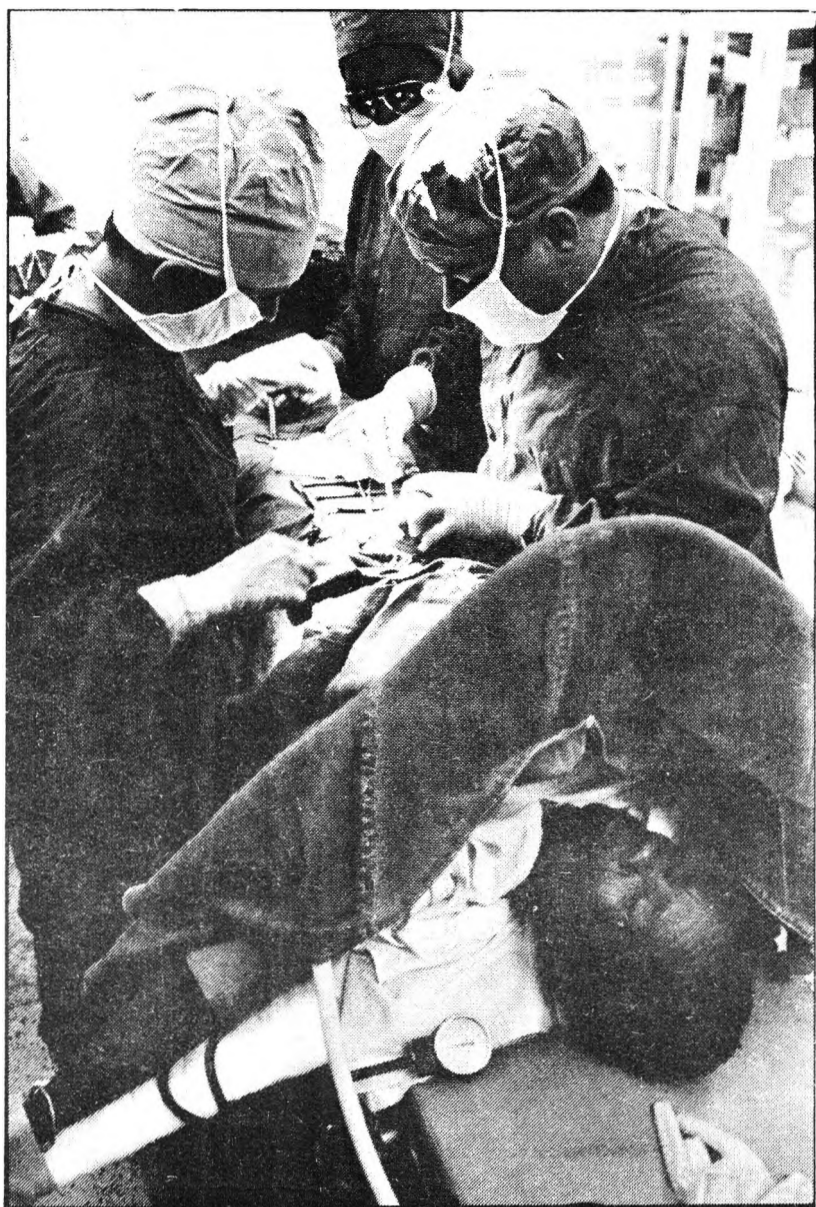
DOGMATIST INFLUENCE A DANGER

To the extent that it gains influence, the effects of the dogmatist perspective are significant. In the first place, it leads to a split between those workers who embrace dogmatism and some of those socialist countries which are suffering constant harassment at the hands of U.S. imperialism.

For example, consider the case of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The DPRK, which is striving to bring about the peaceful re-unification of its country, is faced with a corrupt military dictatorship that maintains a barbarous rule over nearly half the Korean people. The main prop for this government is a U. S. military force of some 50,000 troops. Only last year these troops sought to provoke an armed conflict with the North Koreans.

The Korean Workers' Party of North Korea is of the opinion, naturally enough, that US imperialism is not only its main enemy, but also the main enemy of the peoples of the world. The Workers' Party

INTERNATIONAL QUESTION



Mercenaries? Cuban doctors operate on a man in eastern Angola. (LNS photo)

also accepts aid from the Soviet Union which, they argue, is still a socialist country. Given that the RCP-OL argue that the Soviet Union is an imperialist country, that US imperialism is not the main enemy of the world's peoples, and finally that they have been willing in the past to attack socialist Cuba, our Korean comrades cannot feel too confident that in the case of armed conflict with US imperialism, they would find support among the Dogmatists.

Dogmatism also drives a wedge between its adherents and the national liberation movements. In the February 21 issue of *the Call*, the October League wrote: "Those who cover up for Soviet social-imperialism by painting it as an 'ally' of the world's peoples -- whether this is done from within the ruling class or from within the people's movement -- are only serving the interests of imperialism."

In a recent interview published in the *Guardian*, Sam Nujoma, leader of SWAPO which is presently locked in an intense struggle with the South Africans, had this to say: "Certainly, the USSR and the Republic of Cuba are both countries that have been and continue to be in the forefront of support for the liberation movement. . . the USSR and Cuba are our allies in the struggle against imperialism." Apparently Sam Nujoma is not aware that by making such statements he is "serving the interests of imperialism."

DOGMATISM AND CLASS COLLABORATION

A third feature of dogmatism in the US is that it necessarily leads to class collaborationism. The fact that US imperialism is the main enemy of the world's peoples, means that the US government will necessarily be at the forefront of reaction's attempt to block every advance towards democracy, national liberation, peace and justice. This means that wherever the bourgeoisie ruling class and oppressed peo-

ples are attempting to advance the cause of human kind, US imperialism will be the main force barring the way.

This fact places special responsibilities on revolutionaries here in the US. Since it is the obligation of any Marxist-Leninist in an imperialist country to pursue a most well-defined policy of opposition in deeds to its imperialist ruling class, and since US imperialism is the world's foremost imperialism, Marxist-Leninists in this country must be the world's foremost anti-imperialists.



MPLA Freedom Fighters: Pawns of Soviet Social-Imperialism?

(LNS photo)

A policy which targets two main enemies in the world necessarily makes such an aim unrealizable. For at least part of the time, it must come in to alliance with US imperialism. And in fact, as far as the RCP and the OL is concerned, it is a lot more than part of the time.

This is not to argue that there are not differences between the RCP and the OL. Since the OL has argued that the Soviet Union is the main danger in the world they have taken their class collaborationism to unusual lengths. They have even begun to criticize the imperialists for being soft on the Soviets!

In the same *Call* article mentioned above, the OL wrote: "Certain powerful forces in the (US) ruling class are clearly trying to cover up this growth (of Soviet military strength) and appease Soviet social-imperialism." Who these appeasers are, the OL explains further on in the article: "it is the Pentagon itself which has done much of the covering up for the Soviet Union." Class collaborationism is not a strong enough word to characterize such treachery; this is social-imperialism in the classical sense of the word.

The RCP has not gone quite this far in their collaborationism. They have understood that they have some responsibility to struggle against their own ruling class and occasionally do. Their willingness to support demonstrations by the Iranian students against arms for the Shah is a case in point.

But Angola, Portugal, their attacks on Socialist Cuba and their most recent article on the situation in Zaire demonstrate the dominant side of their policy. They characterize the popular uprisings led by the Congolese National Liberation Front as an "invasion by an imperialist backed mercenary army" and as "Soviet backed aggression." They express support for the aid that China has provided to the

Mobutu dictatorship and call for the rebellion's suppression. Such propaganda dovetails neatly with the lies of the US imperialists.

CAN'T FIGHT REVISIONISM WITH DOGMATISM

But the worst feature of the Dogmatist international line is that it is advanced in the name of the struggle against revisionism. But instead of offering real principled opposition to Soviet great power chauvinism, hegominism and meddling in the internal affairs of other countries, instead of exposing the unstable character of Soviet struggle against imperialism, the RCP-OL only provide the revisionists with cover to advance their aims.

Because of the incorrect policies of the Dogmatists, the revisionists have been able to argue: "Look at the real deeds of these 'anti-revisionists.' Their 'anti-revisionism' sounds very revolutionary but look what it leads to in practice. In practice it leads to attacking socialist countries like Cuba, to attacking legitimate national liberation forces like the MPLA and by implication SWAPO, and to criticizing the Pentagon for being soft on militarism! This is the essence of 'anti-revisionism.'"

Of course, the revisionists will continue to argue that way even in the face of the growing strength of the anti-revisionist and anti-dogmatist trend. They will continue to strive to lump all anti-revisionists with the Dogmatists and thus escape the exposure of their bankrupt political line.

This underlines the urgency of all genuine Marxist-Leninists to draw clear lines of demarcation with both dogmatism and revisionism. Only if we do this can we advance the cause of proletarian internationalism and move toward the foundation of a vanguard party that will carry out its internationalist duty.