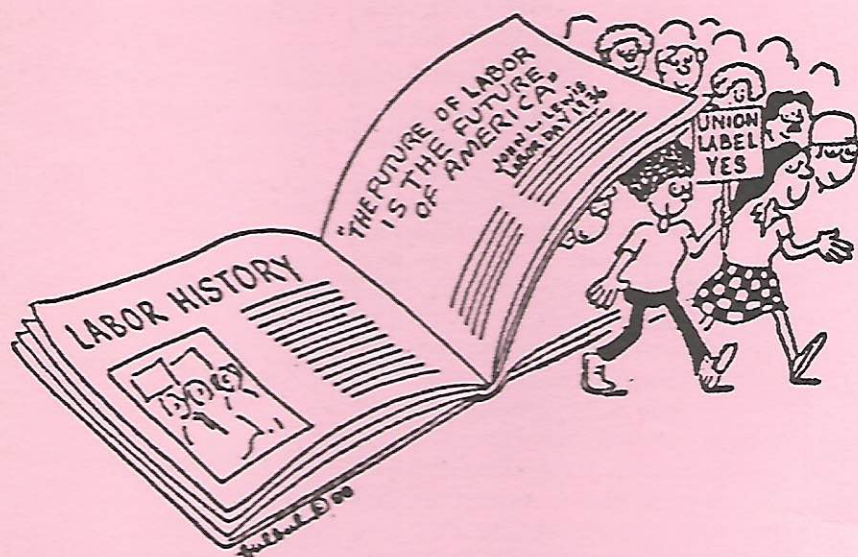


Veteran Revolutionists Jean Tussey and Miriam Braverman Discuss The History of Workers Struggles



Jean Tussey on the Cleveland Labor Movement

Miriam Braverman on Child Labor in U.S. Industry

Also:
Teamsters Re-Elect Ron Carey
Strikes in Detroit and South Korea
The "Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act": A New Threat to Civil Liberties

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From the Managing Editors

This issue focuses on aspects of U.S. labor history, with major articles by Jean Tussey, on the history of the labor movement in Cleveland, and by Miriam Braverman, on the exploitation of child labor, which lay at the very foundation of the factory system in the United States from its early beginnings. (More on the issue of child labor below.)

Jean Tussey's article first appeared as a three-part series in March, April, and May 1995 in *The Cleveland Citizen*, "America's oldest labor newspaper," now published by the Cleveland Building and Construction Trades Council. The article was reprinted in pamphlet form in 1996 as a joint publication of the Greater Cleveland Labor History Society, the United Labor Agency, AFL-CIO, the Cleveland Building and Construction Trades Council, and District 4 of the Communications Workers of America, in connection with the Cleveland bicentennial.

The articles by Tussey and Braverman provide specific information about cities in Ohio and New England, giving a clear picture of conditions workers faced generally, and how they organized themselves as industrial capitalism grew in North America. The attitude of employers toward workers, and the difficulties workers faced in seeking to assert their rights and needs, are not that different from today — if we think of the travesties the employing class has inflicted on workers just in the last decade and a half: PATCO, Phelps Dodge, Hormel, Staley, Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone, and the Detroit newspaper strike, not to mention the less-publicized persistence of sweatshops and similar super-exploiting operations in most U.S. cities.

These are only the worst examples of current practice in this society "ruled by avarice," as labor agitator Seth Luther put it in 1832 (quoted in Miriam Braverman's article). Labor's history of difficult battles, only rarely successful, is also reviewed in these pages in the speech by David Sole of UAW Local 2334 (a document of great value that we are pleased to carry in these pages).

Related political struggles, and what's on the agenda for workers to defend their own interests today, are described in David Montgomery's speech at the Columbia labor-university teach-in, in Abdeen Jabara's article about the 1996 "Anti-Terrorism Act" passed by the bipartisan employers' government in Washington, and in the related articles by Michael Steven Smith and James P. Cannon on the U.S. govern-

ment's past use of laws, courts, and the judicial system to engage in political repression.

While such repression may claim to be directed only against radicals, "extremists," and "terrorists," in the long run it is aimed against the democratic rights and needs of workers, the right to free speech, a free press, and freedom to organize.

Two men who fought back against the system of avarice are memorialized in this issue: Tom Giunta, a sturdy supporter of this magazine who will be greatly missed; and Robert F. Williams, about whom we wish to say a few words to add to the tribute reprinted here from *Justice Speaks*.

Robert F. Williams

Williams contributed in a major way to the radicalization of the Black freedom movement in the late 1950s and early '60s. To build the NAACP in his home town of Monroe, North Carolina, he turned to working-class Blacks, not just the "talented tenth." And he was one of the first in that era to firmly uphold the right to self-defense against racist terror — methods and ideas carried further by Malcolm X and, after him, by the Black Power movement.

In the early 1960s many of us then in the Socialist Workers Party collaborated with Robert Williams not only in support of the civil rights movement but also in defense of the Cuban revolution through the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. We also worked to defend him and his fellow activists through the Committee to Aid the Monroe Defendants.

It has recently been revealed that the late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, who had been a top officer of the NAACP before his appointment to the Supreme Court, had functioned as an FBI informant. In particular he gave the FBI inside information from the national office of the NAACP concerning Robert Williams as head of the NAACP in Monroe, N.C. This is just one more example of how the U.S. government targeted Black leaders, as in the cases of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and Black Panther leaders.

Child Labor Not a Thing of the Past

Child labor is still a burning issue facing the labor movement internationally. In fact, with "free market" economics running rampant over the globe, child labor is on the increase. Pakistan is an example.

On Easter Sunday 1995, just two years ago, 12-year-old Iqbal Masih was gunned down in his village in Pakistan as he was riding his

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"What World Revolution?"

by George Saunders

"What world revolution?" a speaker asked at a recent conference in Moscow discussing ideas that grew out of the Russian revolution. That revolution, the first time in history that the working class took power and held it for a prolonged period in any one country, highlighted the need for socialist revolution everywhere in the world. (See Marilyn Vogt-Downey's report on the Moscow conference elsewhere in this issue.)

During the discussion at the Moscow conference, the point was well taken that the worldwide socialist revolution is a *process*, not a single action.

As Mikhail Korolyov said at the conference: "World socialist revolution consists of all the currents of the revolutionary movement everywhere — working class, peasantry, the national liberation movements...having decisive strength in various ways at various times, and only in the long run and with the unification of all these currents will the victory of the world revolution be possible."

This approach was underlined by both Marx and Trotsky with the concept "permanent revolution." The term suggests that the process of human emancipation involved in the worldwide struggle against capitalism cannot be completed in just one country or one phase. It must continue, with all sorts of ups and downs, until finally all forms of exploitation and oppression are eliminated. (The alternative to a worldwide revolution that will ultimately liberate all human beings, making "the full and free development of each the condition for the full and free development of all," is a relapse back to barbarism, the "common ruin of the contending classes," possibly the destruction of life on earth as we know it through nuclear or environmental catastrophe.)

The simplest, most "straight line" form we can imagine for the worldwide socialist revolution would be for mass working-class movements to take power in several of the most advanced countries of industrialized capitalism at more or less the same time. That has not happened. Yet...

But we have a whole new century before us.

International Outlook of Bolsheviks

The hope and expectation of the Bolsheviks in taking power on the basis of workers councils (Soviets) in backward Russia in 1917 was that working-class movements in the economically more advanced European countries would do likewise, and the beginnings of international cooperation among workers' governments would lay the basis for a worldwide planned economy to replace the global capitalist market. Such a system of world socialism would place the needs of the majority before the greed of the

wealthy minority, the owners of the great capitalist fortunes and conglomerates, which would be socialized.

The Bolsheviks' hopes were not realized, although in the aftermath of World War I they might have been. (That world war, we must remember, was a crisis for all of humanity created by the capitalist governments of Europe and North America.) In 1919, workers in Hungary did briefly establish a Soviet government. Mass workers' movements in Italy, Germany, and Austria also headed in that direction but were unable to overcome inadequate, mostly Social Democratic, reformist leaderships who were intimidated by threats and pressures from

their capitalist classes. They were afraid to take the bold step into the new world of international workers' rule — and so condemned their working class constituencies and the people of their countries to the alternative (after a few years of instability) — fascist barbarism.

In 1927 socialist revolution (that is, the overthrow of the old order and establishment of a workers and peasants government) became a possibility in China. But again there was a failure of leadership (reinforced at that time by the Stalinist bureaucracy, which had emerged as a result of the international isolation of the Russian revolution). In 1936–38 there was the possibility of a workers revolution in Spain, and in France there was a mass upsurge of the workers movement. Neither of these succeeded in establishing a workers government, and soon the shadow of fascism fell over both countries, just as it had earlier over Italy, Germany, and Austria. (The rule of Franco was consolidated in Spain beginning in 1939 and lasted into the

South Korean General Strike

A Powerful Example of Workers Fighting Back

A general strike of South Korean workers went into its fifth week in late January. Workers were protesting changes in labor laws passed by South Korea's ruling party in a semi-secret, seven-minute session early on the morning of December 26.

The new laws make it easier for companies to dismiss workers and replace strikers with scabs; they also ban public-sector unions and keep South Korea's militant new unions illegal for at least another three years. At the same time they strengthen the powers of the political police, the former Korean CIA, which has been used to repress workers and other dissidents in the past — usually by smearing them as "agents" of the Stalinist Kim Il Sung regime in North Korea.

The "illegal" Korean Confederation of Democratic Unions (KCDU), which was founded in 1995, brought out over 100,000 workers the day the laws were passed, shutting down auto, shipbuilding, and other heavy industries that are South Korea's main sources of export earnings. By December 31 over 400,000 workers were out. To the government's surprise the strike was joined by the officially recognized, more conservative Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU). The FKTU, which is reported to have cooperated with authorities in the past, claims 1.2 million members, but mostly organizes smaller work places.

The newer, more militant union federation, the KCDU, is reported to have 500,000 members and is concentrated in heavy industry (Hyundai, Daewoo, Kia Motors, etc.). The new federation was apparently formed by militants who successfully led strikes over the last 10 years that brought wages up an estimated 15 percent each year. (The end

of rule by military dictators in 1987 helped make such successes possible.)

The unions are demanding that the laws passed December 26, a step back toward dictatorship, be annulled. They vowed to continue striking until that was done. The government declared the strike illegal and issued summonses for over 150 KCDU officials. The KCDU defied the summonses and called for the ruling New Korea Party of President Kim Young Sam (a former "democratic" opponent of military rule) to resign.

As of this writing, the government has not yet used massive force to try to break the strike or imprison its leaders. Widespread public sympathy for the strike has caused the government to hold back out of fear that it might provoke even more massive protest. "The strike movement has been endorsed by virtually all of the pro-democracy and social movement organizations in South Korea," reports Kim Moody in the February *Labor Notes*.

By January 23, the government was offering to modify some of the newly enacted laws. But the strikers insisted all the lousy laws had to go!

Unions from all over the world, including the AFL-CIO, have sent messages of solidarity to the Korean strikers and protests against the South Korean government's policy. The February *Labor Notes* reported: "An international labor delegation arrived in Seoul on January 11 to meet with both union leaders and government officials. It was composed of representatives from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and other international trade union groups."

— G.S., January 23, 1997

1970s. In France, the pro-fascist Pétain government emerged in 1940, after Hitler Germany had overrun the class-divided land of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*.)

In World War II the defeat of Hitler's armies by the Soviet armed forces; the growth of Mao's guerrilla armies in China in the fight against Japanese occupation; the overthrow of Mussolini's fascist government by a popular uprising in Italy in 1943; powerful, armed resistance movements in many European countries (usually under Stalinist leadership, unfortunately) — all this represented a shift in the course of world revolution. The postwar establishment of workers governments (though deformed by Stalinist bureaucratic leaderships) in Yugoslavia, then in seven other countries of Eastern Europe, and the coming to power of Mao's peasant guerrilla armies in China, as well as anticapitalist governments in North Korea and North Vietnam, marked an end to the isolation of the Soviet Union as the only workers state in the world.

However, the end of World War II also marked the powerful expansion of U.S. imperialism as it attempted to establish the "American century," to impose itself on the world as self-appointed policeman under the guise of "fighting Communism." The Stalin government's attempts, first to make a postwar deal with U.S., British, and French imperialism, and then to oppose them, not by mass mobilization, but by military-bureaucratic means, resulted in the Cold War and the danger of nuclear war.

The world revolutionary process, however, was not frozen by this imperialist-Stalinist impasse. The colonial peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America successfully continued their battles to win political (if not economic) liberation from Western European and North American imperial rule. Anti-bureaucratic movements and rebellions kept reappearing in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union itself. And in the center of imperialism, the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, the women's liberation movement, and continued trade-union battles showed that Cold War hysteria had not succeeded in freezing revolutionary impulses.

In 1960 the Cuban revolution extended this worldwide process to the Western Hemisphere and broke new ground by putting a non-Stalinist leadership at the head of a workers government. The Castro leadership has lasted for decades without succumbing fatally to bureaucratic degeneration.

The May-June 1968 general strike in France revived the workers movement throughout Western Europe, rekindling the struggle for socialism there.

The defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, the result of a worldwide mass movement, created conditions in the 1970s in which Portuguese colonial rule was overthrown in Africa and the possibility arose of socialist revolution in Portugal itself. The apartheid regime of South Africa was isolated, and by now apartheid has been dismantled, although capitalist rule remains.

In the late 1970s revolutions in Iran and Afghanistan, although they did not develop in positive socialist directions, showed the great potential for such development in almost every Third World country. Revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada, and mass guerrilla struggles in El Salvador and Guatemala, were ultimately overthrown or set back by U.S. economic power and "low-intensity" counter-revolutionary war — not to mention insufficient international solidarity (including insufficient aid from the "Soviet bloc").

Nevertheless, the rise of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, the deep economic crisis in Mexico, and the rise of mass democratic, working-class movements in that country show how persistent the pressure is in that part of the world for a revolutionary solution to the inhumanity of "Third World" capitalism.

Does "New World Order" Mean No More Revolution?

A look at what's going on now, in the strange world that has emerged since the end of the Cold War, shows that the history of class struggle has by no means ended. What is going on in this "new world order" from which the "Soviet bloc" has disappeared?

Events in different parts of the world in just the past few months graphically illustrate that the process of world revolution, the impulse of workers and their allies ("all currents of the revolutionary movement") to fight for their own interests against the worldwide system of capitalist rule, is very much alive.

Anti-Imperialist Victories: Chechnya, Zaïre

After almost two years of terrible destruction by the army of Yeltsin's Russia the Chechen resistance fighters, based on the massive mobilization of the Chechen people as a whole (and opposition to the war within Russia), *retook* Grozny, their capital city. Moscow was forced to agree to a peace, promise to withdraw its forces, and allow the Chechen people to elect their own leaders and decide their own policies for the future. Those elections are under way now, in late January.

In eastern Zaïre, imperialist attempts to use genocidal elements of the former Rwanda regime to destabilize the new *non-chauvinist* Rwanda government were thwarted by anti-Mobutu rebels, who overthrew the power of the terrorist bands in the Rwandan refugee camps. The Hutu refugees made a mass return to Rwanda, showing confidence in the humane policies of the revolutionary government there.

Meanwhile the Mobutu dictatorship, installed by U.S. and European imperialism back in the early 1960s, faces a stronger rebel movement in eastern Zaïre, whose leaders include some who fought side by side with Che Guevara (one of the most outstanding practitioners of international revolution in our era). The presence of a Workers and Peasants Party in the region allows us to hope for positive leadership elements to emerge within the anti-Mobutu

movement. (See the interview with Serge Mukendi in the October 1994 issue of *BIDOM*.)

Mass Movement vs. Milosevic in Serbia

The monstrous Milosevic regime in Serbia transformed itself in the early 1990s into a militarist police state based on Serbian chauvinism. Now, after years of engaging in genocidal expansionist war in pursuit of the illusion of a "Greater Serbia" (which at bottom reflected the desire for a larger market for a restored Serbian capitalism), it faces a mass movement for democracy. Among the initiators and supporters of this movement are Serbians who opposed the chauvinist wars against Croatia and Bosnia.

Observers are agreed that the Serbian *workers* hold in their hands the key to the fate of Milosevic and his regime. But so far they have been hesitant to act, seeing no clear way in which their own class interests will be advanced — since both Milosevic and the political parties opposing him favor capitalist restoration.

The Serbian workers, as with the workers in other parts of the former Yugoslav federation, need to establish their own political party, which will articulate and fight for their needs.

Independent Workers Parties Lacking in All of Eastern Europe

Today, this same lack of an independent party of the working class, speaking for the workers' needs, makes itself felt throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (in Chechnya, too, unfortunately).

This absence of independent working-class political parties is one of the heaviest legacies of the disorienting heritage of Stalinism. While masquerading as "Marxist-Leninist," the official ideology of the Stalinized Soviet party, government, and Comintern erased from consciousness the idea that workers need their own political vehicle. It promoted the idea of subordinating working class interests and supporting the political parties and politicians of other classes.

(Thus, from the mid-1930s on, in France, Italy, Spain, and elsewhere, the parties of the Stalinized "Communist International" supported Popular Fronts that essentially defended and protected capitalist interests and the capitalist system. In the same way, in the United States the "Communists," just like the Social Democrats, supported the crafty "New Deal" politician Franklin Roosevelt, who, through partial concessions to insurgent workers and then a turn to world war, saved American capitalism from revolutionary upheaval.)

Resistance to IMF Austerity Policies: Haiti

Today U.S. imperialism tends to dominate the worldwide capitalist economy — although conflicts and rivalry with the capitalist ruling classes of other countries, especially France, Germany, and Japan are on the increase. Through the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. capitalists and their junior partners from

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Third Conference on Trotsky's Legacy Held in Moscow

by Marilyn Vogt-Downey

The following article scheduled for the February issue of *International Viewpoint*, monthly publication of the Fourth International, was posted on the Internet January 16. To contact IV, write PECEI, BP85, 75522 Paris cedex 11, France, fax +33-01 43 79 29 61, or send e-mail to R.1443@compuserve.com (Free electronic subscription available on request.) For special low rates (for new subscribers only!), in the USA send check for \$35 to IV, PO Box 1824, New York NY 10009.

Scholars and activists from Russia, Japan, the U.S., and Western Europe gathered in Moscow November 22–24, 1996, to mark the 60th anniversary of the publication of *The Revolution Betrayed* by Leon Trotsky. The conference program consisted of more than 31 presentations, half by Russians.

While most speakers agreed with Trotsky's general analysis, there were disagreements over aspects of it. Several speakers, including conference co-organizer Aleksei Gusev, held that the Soviet system was state capitalist. Other Russian participants argued that Trotsky knew that capitalism could no more be restored in the Soviet Union than feudalism could be restored in France, but that Trotsky held out the threat of capitalist restoration as a means of mobilizing a fighting spirit among militants for the necessary battles against the Stalinist blight. Some argued that the isolation of the Soviet economy from the pressures of the world market during the Stalin period was a necessary stage.

The remarks of Boris Slavín, formerly a member of the official Communist Party of the Soviet Union, prompted a particularly useful exchange. Slavín, in his report, "Trotsky on the Material Prerequisites and Criteria for Socialism," argued that the market reforms of the period of the New Economic Policy, when the Soviet government allowed certain market mechanisms to take effect, should have been continued but with more state controls. It was the Stalin repression, Slavín maintained, that not only suppressed discussion, research, and initiative, but led to the isolation of Soviet society from technological advances abroad. "We slept while the West developed the technological revolution," he said. All this led to the current breakdown: Soviet society, on its own, starting from such backwardness, could not catch up with and overtake the capitalist system in labor productivity.

Slavín concluded, however, that Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky were wrong in relying on the world revolution. "What world revolution?" Slavín asked. Instead, he insisted, the working class in any particular country should not over-

throw capitalism until its level of labor productivity has exceeded that of the rest of the world, thereby giving it the capacity to isolate itself from the pressures of the world market and go it alone. In that way, socialism can be built in one country.

Mikhail Voeikov, professor of economics at the Russian Academy of Sciences, refuted Slavín's argument. The most technologically advanced capitalist countries, he pointed out, depend totally on innumerable international economic links, and thus even such a technologically advanced society could not survive on its own. On the other hand, any society that could possibly survive on its own in our epoch - if one could be found today - would have to be one with a very primitive level of technology, such as that of the peoples of the remote rain forests. Thus, neither of Slavín's preconditions for socialism in one country are conceivable; the revolution is by nature international.

Slavín was also challenged by Nikolai Korolyev, former editor of the Moscow "Science" publishing house, which in 1990 published Trotsky's *Stalin School of Falsification*. "The world revolution did not happen?" Korolyev asked Slavín.

The world revolution began in October 1917 and has continued and will continue until the full victory of the world socialist revolution in the entire world...

Revolution is not a primitive one-moment act, which either happened or didn't. World socialist revolution, as Lenin and Trotsky (and Marx and Engels before them) understood, is an epoch that consists of a series of revolutionary advances and counterrevolutionary setbacks...

World socialist revolution consists of all the currents of the revolutionary movement everywhere — working class, peasantry, the national liberation movements...having decisive strength in various ways at various times, and only in the long run and with the unification of all these currents will the victory of the world revolution be possible.

October 1997 Conference

The next conference sponsored by the International Committee for the Study of Trotsky's

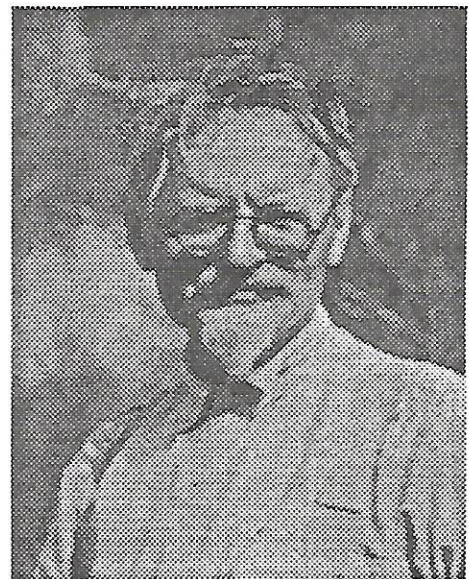
Legacy, "Trotsky and the Russian Revolution," will be held in Moscow on October 10–12, 1997, marking the 80th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. The Committee recently published a Russian-language collection of papers from its first conference in 1994. Preparation has begun on a Russian edition of *The Case of Leon Trotsky*, the record of the hearings held by the Dewey Commission set up to investigate the charges put forward in the Moscow trials of 1936–38.

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Tupac Amaru Gate-Crashes Cocktail Party in Lima

by B. Skanthakumar

The following article, and accompanying interview with Tupac Amaru's representative in Europe, dating from late December 1996, were scheduled for the January 1997 issue of *International Viewpoint (IV)*, monthly publication of the *Fourth International*. To subscribe to *IV*, see the subscription blank on our inside back cover.

Audacity is the watchword of a revolutionary movement, Che Guevara once remarked. And the guerrillas of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) have been supremely audacious.

It is uncertain for how much longer the MRTA commandos in the Japanese ambassadors residence in Lima can hold out and whether the Peruvian Government of Alberto Fujimori can be trusted not to kill them even if they do release all their remaining hostages and lay down their arms as he demands.

The MRTA usually operates hundreds of kilometers from Peru in the forested regions of Chanchamayo province. Their occasional forays into Lima and other cities have been for high-profile actions like kidnappings and bank robberies.

Within Peru they are less well known than the larger and more feared Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) movement, whose ruthless and nihilistic methods propelled it into international fame in the 1980s.

Sendero Luminoso's base is in the poor indigenous peasantry of the rural provinces, but its leadership was drawn from students and intellectuals recruited by the movement's leader, Abimael Guzmán, a former university professor. His unique ideology claimed to be based on Marxism-Leninism of the Maoist variety but included heavy doses of his own "thought."

The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, on the other hand, is closer to the classic guerrilla movements in Latin America of the 1960s and 1970s, drawing inspiration from the Cuban revolution and having an internationalist character.

It would seem that many years after Regis Debray abandoned focoism (and in his case socialism), the MRTA has pursued its lonely course of struggle even with the end of direct military rule and the introduction of elections in 1980.

However, its actions on this occasion reflect a revised strategy, of focusing on a specific and narrow demand, the freedom of 400 MRTA members held in Peruvian jails in return for the freedom of the 47 hostages left of the 500 it had initially captured.

While the international media called them "terrorists," fuming over their invasion of diplomatic property and making protestations over the safety and health of the hostages, commander Nestor Cerpa drew parallels between the fears and trauma of the families of the hostages and that of families of political prisoners languishing in Peruvian jails.

The Embassy commando have treated their hostages more humanely than the prison

authorities do MRTA militants. Mrs. Otilia Polay, mother of jailed MRTA leader Victor Polay, describes her son's cell as "more like a tomb." The cell is only 6 feet by 6 feet in dimension with a small hole in the ground for a toilet. The prisoners are allowed out of the cell for a mere half hour every day and are deprived of telephone contact or even regular visitors. Mrs. Polay is only permitted to visit Victor once a month and that too for half an hour.

These outrageous and unbearable conditions violate international human rights standards and reflect the hypocrisy of Western governments which turn a blind eye to the human rights records and antidemocratic abuses of capitalist regimes like that of Fujimori.

Isaac Velazco, MRTA spokesperson in Europe, recently claimed that MRTA prisoners in Peruvian jails have been on hunger strike since December 16 and have been joined by other prisoners in their protest against prison conditions.

This has not been investigated by the international press. Neither has it been widely reported that it is the Peruvian government that poses the greatest threat to the lives of the hostages. The authorities have cut electricity and water supplies to the residence compound and even cut telephone links which permitted the hostages to communicate with the outside world. Even the supply of food is irregular and in inadequate quantities. Without fresh water, toilets were unavailable for use until the Red Cross provided the portable variety. Without electricity the remaining hostages, mainly business people, politicians, and military figures associated with the administration and more accustomed to easy living and sleeping, must be in discomfort.

The MRTA has planned and executed this operation brilliantly even if the odds are stacked against it achieving its ends.

Peru's President Alberto Fujimori has traded on his Japanese immigrant origin, using it within Peru to portray himself as an outsider in politics and not beholden to the traditional political system and the rich white elite it has served so well. Outside the country, especially on regular visits to Japan, he has used his ethnic roots both to attract Japanese investment to Peru and as "proof" that he has the cultural attributes and work ethic to transform the country into a Latin American "tiger economy," like Chile.

A related message he has peddled within Peru are his admonishments to the poor to work harder, be more self-reliant, save more, develop entrepreneurial skills, and rely less on the state

while making the free market their friend in this enterprise.

This message is music to the ears of the new right ideologues. In 1989 Peruvian businessman Hernando de Soto published his influential neo-liberal tract *The Other Path* in which he characterized the 20th century Peruvian (indeed Latin American) economy as mercantilist and gushed with enthusiasm for the virtues of a true market economy liberated from the fetters of legal regulation and state intervention.

In 1991 Alberto Fujimori was elected to the Presidency, defeating the novelist and candidate of the right, Mario Vargas Llosa. But far from following a social democratic program, the "man of the people" Fujimori embraced his rival's program of economic liberalization and privatization and made Peruvians swallow the bitter medicine of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In return, both organizations resumed loans and credit to Peru and encouraged foreign investment.

In 1992 in an "auto-coup" (*autogolpe*), Fujimori dissolved Congress, dismissed the judiciary, and appropriated greater powers for the Presidency. So much for the often asserted claim that free markets are associated with freedom and democracy.

"Fujishock" policies tested the claims of the neo-liberal right and were found wanting not only on social criteria but even on crude economic indicators.

The government removed basic labor standards, and introduced large-scale redundancies by halving the public sector payroll. It has privatized most of the state-owned assets, reduced tariffs for imports, and removed foreign exchange restrictions.

It has been increasing the proportion of annual income spent on debt servicing without an overall decrease in the size of the foreign debt. The resources for this drain come from reduced health and education budgets. The poor are forced to pay user fees to have access to these services. Meanwhile, private insurance, loans, and self-help schemes are touted as alternatives to state funding.

Consequently, over half of Peru's 22 million people live below the poverty line, a factor singled out by MRTA guerilla leader Nestor Cerpa, "The MRTA entered this country's political life to fight a system that deprives the majority of Peruvians of their most vital needs. The situation has not changed at any time under Alberto Fujimori's administration. In fact it has worsened, with a dramatic rise in the number of poor in Peru."

The opening of the internal market to transnationals has driven many Peruvian companies out of business. The sol, Peru's currency, is trading at artificially high levels, which is good for importers but bad for exporters. Banks have pegged interest rates high, attracting foreign capital but making it expensive for local capitalists to borrow for investment. The only alternative for Peruvian capital is to play second fiddle to foreign transnationals by entering into joint venture schemes as junior partners, and this is precisely what is happening.

The Peruvian economy has been growing in the 1990s not because of Fujishock which, with its deflationary mechanisms, threatens a recession, but because it has been a desirable destination for portfolio investment capital drawn by the high interest rate and the fortunes to be made on the stock market through the purchase of grossly undervalued public assets. Wealth is concentrated in fewer, mainly foreign hands. And Fujimori, while denouncing the hostage taking by the MRTA, is holding the entire country hostage to the whims of finance capital: a notoriously nervous and fickle gunman.

The bulwarks of the Fujimori administration are the international financial institutions and also the military. His hand-picked loyalists in the armed forces hierarchy are intensely and personally loyal, and enjoy carte blanche to pursue a counter insurgency campaign against anti-state forces without fear of punishment for abuses and excesses.

Under the June 1995 amnesty decree, no military personnel can be tried for offenses relating to human rights violations or drug trafficking committed after 1980, when the Sendero Luminoso insurgency began.

The terror of the state continues in the rural communities and in working class and poor neighborhoods. The roots of Sendero Luminoso lie in the real impoverishment of the poor, the marginalization of the indigenous campesinos (peasants) who face land shortages and starvation, and the exclusion of the majority from a political and economic system in which they simply do not exist.

However, the tactics of Sendero (which operated on the basis that "if you are not for us, you are against us") backfired. They murdered many progressive activists, from feminist leaders to militants of the Fourth International. They would not tolerate any opposition or debate as to their ideas and strategies. The capture of their leader Guzmán in 1992 has weakened and split them, but they have not gone away.

Their struggle and the military campaign against them consumed the lives of 35,000 people. The revulsion at this waste, and growing disdain for armed struggle, increased popular support for Fujimori's authoritarian efforts to curb Sendero, and was a major factor in his re-election victory of 1995. Another reason being his blow against hyperinflation, which fell from 7,659 percent in 1990 to 139 percent in 1991 and a historic low of 10 percent in 1995.

The Peruvian electorate are representative of a continental trend. Even with deeply unpopular austerity measures, they prefer the reality of economic stability associated with low inflation to vague promises from the left. In Brazil, this was one obvious lesson of the defeat of the Workers Party (PT) by Collor de Mello and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. (The other continental lesson is the short-lived effects of such anti-inflation measures.)

Unfortunately for the MRTA, in the popular imagination, even in the barrios of Lima, they are seen as little better than Sendero Luminoso. There is little popular support and sympathy for them in a country weary of violence, which longs to believe in the Fujimori promise of prosperity for all.

The MRTA as a legal party may have better prospects, but that path is fraught with dangers too. The group could go the way of the Colombian M-19, a left-wing guerrilla movement later co-opted into supporting the neo-liberal economic program. Or the URNG in Guatemala, which recently signed a peace accord with the government, including a clause guaranteeing immunity from prosecution of the army personnel responsible for tens of thousands of "disappearances" and the genocide of entire indigenous village communities.

Peru's traditional "left," the populist APRA and the United Left (IU), fared badly in the 1995 elections and are seen as part of the discredited political establishment. They have the opportunity to rebuild their support in the months ahead by leading the anti-privatization campaign which the left-wing daily *La República* is spearheading, combined with assaults against the authoritarianism and corruption of the present government.

The events of the last six weeks may be the stimulus to a reawakening of the popular movements. But this depends on future events, and the practical interventions of the radical left.

The MRTA members are prepared to be martyrs in their struggle, ready to die for the brief spotlight on their imprisoned comrades. We must hope that they will live to participate in the reconstruction of the Peruvian left and the rekindling of alternatives to neo-liberal ruin. □

Is the MRTA's Action Weakening Fujimori?

Interview With Isaac Velazco

Isaac Velazco has been active since 1984 in the Peruvian Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru, whose commando "Oscar Torre Condesú" is presently occupying the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima. In February 1988, Velazco was arrested and tortured. Had he not been able to escape, he most likely would have died in prison. When statements by a traitor led to a raid on his family's home in 1993, the MRTA decided to send Velazco to Germany. In November 1994, he was granted political asylum. Following a decision by the National Leadership of the MRTA, Isaac Velazco was chosen to act as European representative of the MRTA. Isaac Velazco was interviewed by Darrio Azzellini for Junge Welt. This interview was first published on December 30, 1996. Translation by Arm The Spirit.

Q.: Why did the MRTA choose the Japanese ambassador's residence as the target of its action?

A.: Japan today is a major economic power, which has the luxury to be able to afford to purchase parts of Wall Street. Many major U.S. corporations are made up largely of Japanese capital. That's why Japan will play an increasingly important role in Latin America, and Japan regards President Fujimori as its primary supporting figure. Now, there is a conflict of interests in Peru between the U.S. and Japan.

Japan, in order to strengthen its position there, has financed the dirty war. The Japanese government was even partially to blame for the fact that two of its own citizens, who worked for an aid agency, were murdered by a paramilitary group. Japan is deeply involved in supporting this murderous regime. That's why the National Leadership of the MRTA decided to attack this location — a place which would deeply hurt the dictatorship.

Q.: Will this occupation help Fujimori to consolidate his base, under the motto of

"joining ranks," or will it lead to splits within the government?

A.: The Fujimori government has its back against the wall. All those who collaborate with the government — businessmen, politicians, and military figures — know very well that their integrity is in danger. If one day they, too, should become prisoners of war of the MRTA, the government won't do anything to help them. This is extraordinary, within the context of Latin American history. On three occasions, the comrades of the FSLN in Nicaragua captured

politicians and businessmen with ties to the Somoza regime. Each of these incidents ended with their demands fulfilled. Fujimori, on the other hand, has a complete disregard for human life, even for the lives of his partners. Businessmen who support the government ought to think about that.

Q.: What about the relationship between the military and the Fujimori regime?

A.: The support which they have given to one another in the past has only served to act as a cover for state terrorism and corruption. The government and high-ranking military officials are very corrupt. They have usually been granted immunity from prosecution by the Fujimori regime. But there is a struggle for drug profits taking place between the military and the intelligence agency. Sometimes they work against each other. That's why the transport of 170 kilograms of cocaine in the president's plane was publicized, as was the discovery of navy ships being used to transport coca paste. Nevertheless, all of this goes unpunished. And the government never talks about the dirty war, the torture, the violations of human rights, the murder of elderly persons, women, and children.

Q.: Why did the MRTA take up armed struggle?

A.: The MRTA formed in the early 1980s as an alliance of various political groups. In the late 1970s, there were 60 or 70 political organizations which approached one another. Two tendencies developed. One sought solutions to the nation's problems through the democratic process. The other felt that the path of political dialogue was blocked and the time was right to resort to other means. This development continued into the 1980s, and the MRTA became an important crystallization point for many armed organizations.

Q.: How many activists did the MRTA have at that time?

A.: During the First Conference of the MRTA as a political-military organization, which was still legal at that time, 300 activists took part. Of course the total membership was much higher than that. Following this conference, the organization took its work underground and the first units were formed to carry out armed propaganda actions. For example, they occupied radio stations, attacked arms depots, confiscated trucks full of food and distributed these goods in poor neighborhoods, in addition to a series of actions designed to provide funds for the organization.

The first military clashes were in the south of the country in 1984. The military surrounded one MRTA unit which was in the area to help establish a rural guerrilla. Following a long

battle, 12 of our activists were arrested and many weapons were confiscated. They were then thrown into prison and tortured. Another unit was able to break through the military's lines and link up with other MRTA forces elsewhere in the country. The deployment of the Peruvian military was marked by massive attacks on the civilian population.

Q.: And how strong is the MRTA today?

A.: For security reasons, I cannot say. But our forces are present throughout the country. The MRTA is present at many levels and is organized in various fields. There are rural units, special units, commandos, and militias. In accordance with our outlook, our members are active in a variety of fields, such as propaganda, union organizing, social movements, and the guerrilla.

Q.: The Peruvian government and President Fujimori in particular have declared victory over the guerrilla.

A.: Yes, the Fujimori government claimed a great victory over the armed movement. Two factors played a role in this. First of all, the leader of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), Abimael Guzmán, signed a peace agreement with the government. Secondly, there was tactical retreat by the MRTA. As a result of several military offensives by the Peruvian military, the repression against the population, and the neo-liberal policies of the government, our social base was narrowed. We decided to concentrate our political and military structures in the rural areas of central Peru, in the central forests. In the rest of the country we only had commando and militia structures, which carried out intensive political and organizational work in city neighborhoods, with farmers, and with workers.

The government lied to itself and even made itself believe that the guerrilla, in particular the MRTA, had been defeated. Now the government is faced with a new situation. We have continued our political work over the past few years and given political-military training to a new generation of fighters and cadre. We were never as weak as the government supposed. The number of actions carried out by the MRTA across the country, which dealt heavy blows to the army, are evidence of this. The government has tried to cover all this up, but they have failed. The people know that the government has not defeated the guerrilla and they know that the government's neo-liberal policies are making poverty worse.

Q.: Two months ago, there were three days of riots in Lima's historic district, because the police tried to force all vendors off the streets. Hundreds of people and police were injured. Have protests against the government increased?

A.: Yes. Since the end of 1995, the people are slowly rebuilding their organizational and mobilizational capacities. There are more riots, where the people defend their right to existence. But the repression has changed as well. Before, police and soldiers were everywhere in Lima. Today, you don't see as many. They have been replaced by secret police and plainclothes forces. A German friend of mine recently had his briefcase stolen on the street in Lima. Within seconds, at least 20 plainclothes police officers were on the scene and brutally beat up the thief.

Sendero Luminoso has also reorganized, is active militarily, and seems to have altered its line...

The peace deal with the government signed by a large part of the group led to deep divisions within Sendero. The faction which wished to continue the armed struggle has carried out armed propaganda and has taken to interacting with the people in a way which Sendero used to criticize the MRTA for doing. But despite some corrections in its political methods, Sendero is still the same. For example, in March of this year, labor activist Pascual Arozda was murdered. They have continued to attack all those who stand in their way or don't share their views.

Q.: How would you describe the relationship between Sendero and the MRTA? In the past, Sendero has attacked the MRTA.

A.: Sendero is a very domineering force. They claim to be the sole possessors of the truth and the only standard-bearers of revolution in Peru. That's why they have never accepted the existence of other revolutionary organizations in Peru. At the least, they have described us as "armed reformists" and "traitors." But Sendero has also, in the past, described us as their main enemy and murdered many MRTA activists. They have even ambushed MRTA units. These are crimes which cannot be justified in any way; they contradict the values of revolutionaries.

Q.: How do you envision the MRTA's future?

A.: The MRTA arose as a movement. Many social sectors are represented within the MRTA: men and women from the cities and rural areas, intellectuals, religious people, indeed the whole society. Of course, to transform society we must tear down the old state and build a new one. That means we must seize power. But seize power for whom? For what? And to what end? That is the central question. The answer is: Power must be in the hands of the workers in the cities and the countryside. There must be a participatory democracy. Mechanisms for people's power must be advanced. And we have been doing that for years. □

Blockade of Cuba Unjust, Immoral

U.S. Intent: Restrict Humanitarian Aid

by William T. Whitney, Jr.

The following is based on op-ed articles by the author that appeared in two Maine newspapers, the Lewiston Sun-Journal (on January 12, 1997) and the Bangor Daily News (on December 27, 1996). William T. Whitney, Jr., is a doctor at Western Maine Pediatrics in Norway, Maine.

When people we know are in trouble, they usually get help. Within hours after a nearby family's house burned last week, neighbors had found them a new home and were stockpiling supplies.

But when those who suffer are many and far away, indifference may be the rule. For example, 20 percent of U.S. children live in poverty, and now, through bipartisan consensus, one million of them may soon lose welfare support, an insult added to the injury of, for many, wretched schools, inadequate diets, and high rates of infant mortality.

As for Cuba, rather than indifference, planned suffering is the order of the day. Grief visited upon the Cuban people by means of the 36-year-old U.S. economic blockade of that small country has long been suspected of being intentional.

Why else does this embargo restrict food, drugs, and medical supplies? None of the other U.S.-led embargoes since World War II placed restrictions on food and medicines. All of them allowed for humanitarian exceptions? If in fact one purpose of the embargo is to deny people the basic goods they need for survival, then that part of Washington's Cuba policy lacks even the facade of moral justification.

Blockade's Anti-Humanitarian Aims — British Medical Journal Prints Evidence

Now clear evidence is available that the United States government did indeed intend in 1992 to restrict imports by Cuba of humanitarian supplies. The British medical journal *Lancet*, November 30, 1996, features an article by Anthony Kirkpatrick showing clearly that the Cuban Democracy Act (CDA) of 1992 was designed for that purpose. The same issue of *Lancet*, which has a worldwide following, contains an editorial that takes the U.S. to task for violating humanitarian standards.

The harmful effects of the embargo on health had not previously been presented to the international medical community. Dr. Kirkpatrick is a Florida physician, and the *Miami Herald*, aware of the importance of his article, reported it on its front page on November 29.

"On-Site Inspections" Required for "Medical Exceptions"

Kirkpatrick notes that the CDA contains a "medical exception" that ostensibly allows foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies to seek a license from the U.S. government to allow them to sell drugs, food, and medical supplies to Cuba. But the law requires that the exporter monitor usage of its product in Cuba and carry out on-site inspections there. After 1992 these companies rarely applied for a license because, faced with such requirements, they anticipated penalties for noncompliance.

Kirkpatrick believes that architects of the CDA realized at the time that provisions for monitoring and on-site inspections would greatly hamper sales to Cuba. In fact, the number of foreign subsidiaries actually obtaining licenses has fallen to only 4 percent of pre-1992 levels. American linkages with foreign manufacturers of medical products are so extensive that most of them are affected by the CDA.

According to Kirkpatrick, those companies that did apply for licensing have been so harassed by demands for multiple applications and for resubmissions that waiting periods have been interminable. And recently the 1996 Helms-Burton Law has begun to put pressure on those foreign medical suppliers that have no U.S. connections.

Prior to the *Lancet* article the CDA was known to have contributed to the painful shortages of food and medical supplies which accelerated after 1992. Subsidiaries with more than 10 percent U.S. ownership were prohibited from selling to Cuba. By 1992 food and medical products were making up 90 percent of all sales by the subsidiaries to Cuba; therefore, this was the category of imports most affected by the CDA. Although we have long been aware of the effects of the CDA, only now do we learn with certainty that making the Cuban people suffer was its intended purpose.

Nevertheless, to deny Cuban citizens access to goods essential for their survival is cruel and unprincipled. In a letter to the U.S. State Department in February 1995, the Organization of American States (OAS) charged that the embargo violates international law. The OAS noted that even in war, combatants are supposed to attend to the humanitarian needs of innocent

people. The OAS action, ignored by the media in the U.S., was taken in response to a complaint brought by Kirkpatrick and others, including myself, "on behalf of the Cuban people."

Unfortunately, much of the American public shows little interest in Cuba and generally seems uninformed about Cuban affairs, even those who in the past have been critical of U.S. policy toward other Latin American countries. The hour is far too late to hope for redress from debate, electoral politics, and legislation. That elaborate process (manipulated and controlled by moneyed interests) continues to provide support for the embargo.

What if one's notion of injustice does not square with that of society (as expressed in laws passed in Washington)? In different eras strong societal consensus supported the Nazis in Germany, slavery in the United States, and Jim Crow laws. The Nuremberg trials taught the world that to acquiesce in governmental crimes, to remain silent, is to share complicity.

In 1849, Henry Thoreau dissociated himself from a government that was then supporting both slavery and an expansionist war against Mexico. He refused to pay his poll tax and spent a night in jail. "Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience [decides]?" Thoreau asked in *Civil Disobedience*.

In 1996 Rev. Lucius Walker of Pastors for Peace, and four others, had to fast for three months to persuade the U.S. government to allow donated computers to reach Cuban hospitals.

Seventh Friendshipment to Cuba Coming in May

Soon people in Maine (and throughout the U.S.) will have an opportunity to say "no" to the immoral policy of embargo, to dissociate themselves from the U.S. government. In May 1997, trucks from Maine with donated medical supplies and other humanitarian items will join the Seventh Friendshipment organized by Pastors for Peace. The caravans will cross into Canada and Mexico, and from those countries the donations will be sent to Cuba. Lucius Walker has announced that this Friendshipment is dedicated to the children of Cuba.

Cuba receives millions of dollars worth of donated medical supplies each year from programs that, as required, obtain licenses from the U.S. Treasury Department. Pastors for Peace will not request a license for the upcoming Friendshipment. Rev. Walker maintains that to comply with any embargo regulations leads to complicity and grants some legitimacy to the embargo.

The Friendshipment, therefore, will be challenging the authority of "our" government. Many Maine people will be donating school supplies, clothes for children, and medical supplies for pediatric hospitals in Cuba. In a small but important way they will be joining their neighbor Henry in not paying his poll tax. □

Chinese Regime Continues to Persecute Dissidents

by Zhang Kai

The following article appeared in the December 31, 1996, issue of *October Review*, a Chinese-language magazine published by Fourth Internationalists in Hong Kong.

Latest Acts of Repression

Wang Dan's case marks the climax of a series of recent acts of repression. Wei Jingsheng, one of the best-known dissidents, was sentenced to another term of 14 years after he was temporarily released in the last years of serving his 15-year sentence since 1979. Guo Haifeng was sentenced to 7 years on a charge of "hooliganism." Liu Nianchun, putting his signature to an open appeal for democracy and law, was sentenced to 3 years' re-education through labor. Zhang Zhongai from Xian, Shaanxi Province, was sentenced to 5 years on a charge of "counter-revolutionary instigation." Liu Xiaobo, publishing the October 10 Declaration this year together with Wang Xizhe, was sentenced to 3 years' re-education through labor.

Yao Zhenxiang, who fled China in 1994, but returned to Shanghai on a pledge from the Shanghai police promising non-persecution, was arrested together with his brother Yao Zhenxian, initially on a charge of entering China illegally, his brother being charged as an accomplice, but later the charge was changed to "spreading pornographic videos"; they were each given 3 years and 2 years of reformation through labor.

Li Wenming, on the staff of *Shenzhen Youth*, and Guo Baosheng, student from the People's University, were both charged with conspiring to overthrow the government, the evidence being that they had set up an independent "Workers' Club" and published a magazine called *Workers' Forum*.

Not only are the dissidents put behind bars for their exercise of the freedom of speech and association; they are also tortured physically and mentally. Many of them are barred from proper medical treatment and from meeting with their families.

According to Wei Jingsheng's sister, Wei Ling, who managed to visit Wei Jingsheng in prison last September, his health had seriously deteriorated, with serious heart disease and hypertension, and having to resort to oxygen inhalation very frequently. Wei has been refused hospital treatment or parole.

Liu Nianchun's wife, Chu Hainan, told reporters in early October that Liu was in very serious condition, sometimes excreting blood 6 or 7 times a day. He might possibly have intes-

tinal cancer, but still he has been forced to labor in farming. He was refused treatment in hospital.

Wang Dan's mother met with him only eighteen months after he was arrested, and found Wang Dan in bad health, constantly coughing, and with prostatitis and stomach aches. Wang Dan's father reported that the food allowance in jail was a mere 2 yuan (US 22 cents) per day, so the malnutrition added on to the health problem.

Tong Yi, a former secretary to Wei Jingsheng who was jailed in 1995, was released in October. She commented that her 30-month re-education through labor was "inhuman." Though the regulation was 6 hours of labor a day, the actual labor was over 12 hours a day. Reading of books or newspapers, watching TV, or listening to the radio were all forbidden. Prisoners were totally cut off from the outside world. The allowance for the labor was 5 yuan (U.S. 55 cents) a month, food was very bad, and there was some meat only during festivals.

Chen Ziming, having published an open letter in 1995, was thrown back into jail despite his cancer. Without adequate treatment, Chen Ziming's testicle cancer has reached a critical stage, and he also has hepatitis and acute diarrhea. When Wang Dan's sentence caused international condemnation, and when China was negotiating with the U.S. and German governments for trade deals, Chen Ziming was allowed to go home on parole for medical treatment. However, he was under house arrest, and his family said that the jail had simply moved to his home.

The Wang Dan Case

Wang Dan's case is most illustrative of the persecution of the regime. In the prosecution's bill, Wang Dan was charged with writing over 30 articles and publishing them in journals and newspapers in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Wang Dan was quoted as having said that "given the seal of news from the people by the Chinese government, freedom of speech is reduced to empty words in the Constitution," that "the disoriented party under the leadership of the government and party leaders will not abandon any vested interest; to ensure that its power not be restrained, it will go so far as to sacrifice the future of the country." These words were used as evidence of Wang Dan's slanderous smearing of government leaders. Wang Dan was also accused of conspiracy with dissidents in exile

in the United States. One "evidence" was Wang Dan's "setting up of a self-study program through which, while remaining in China, he promoted [the idea of] China's democratization." The self-study program referred to was a correspondence course on Western Civilization offered by the University of California at Berkeley in which Wang Dan was able to enroll and for which he received some tuition fee sponsorship from overseas Chinese. Resorting to such an absurd charge illustrates that the authorities could not find much other "evidence."

Two other charges were brought against Wang Dan. One was his appeal to put words into action. This referred to an appeal letter entitled "Proposal for guarantee of basic human rights and defense of social justice," and another appeal letter that Wang Dan wrote together with Bao Zunxin, Liu Xiaobo, Liu Nianchun, and others, entitled "Learning a lesson of blood, promoting democracy and law." The former was submitted openly to the National People's Congress in early 1995, in which Wang Dan argued for his own constitutional rights under Article 41: "a citizen of the People's Republic of China has the right to criticize or make proposals to any state institution or state official," "and to any report, complaint, or accusation made by a citizen, the state institution concerned should investigate the facts and assume responsibility; there should not be any repression or revenge."

The other charge was that Wang Dan had set up a "mutual aid scheme in which funding was provided to Kang Yuchun, Wang Guoqi, and Liu Jingsheng, etc." This was used as evidence of Wang Dan "networking with reactionary forces in China." Wang Dan's mother pointed out that Wang Dan was simply gathering some money to help send to school the children of jailed dissidents. The amount was only 10 or 20 yuan (U.S. \$1 or 2) for each child.

The whole trial of Wang Dan took just 3 hours, during which Wang Dan had only 30 minutes to plead not guilty, and Wang Dan's mother, serving as his defense, had only a dozen minutes. The hearing of Wang's appeal took only 10 minutes to reaffirm the original sentence.

A Context of Unrest

This latest wave of repression took place in a context of general unrest. Take simply the reports in Hong Kong's *Ming Pao*, November 8, the same day that Chen Ziming's parole was reported.

First, in Qidong County, Hunan Province, tens of thousands of peasants from five townships petitioned the township governments between the end of August and mid-September, requesting reduction of the heavy tariffs. In one instance, 8,000 peasants clashed with the officials, and the police fired tear gas at peasants who dashed to pieces the furniture in the township government office.

Second, tens of thousands of electronics workers in Beijing carried out mass strikes around October 1, the National Day. They requested the municipal authorities to come up with concrete

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“Rabochaya Demokratiya” Reports

Russian Paper Tells of Founding of Labor Party in U.S.

The following article in the October 1996 issue of Rabochaya Demokratiya (Workers Democracy), publication of the Moscow-based Committee for Workers Democracy and International Socialism, was translated by George Saunders. It is accompanied or followed by commentary on factual errors in the article and an exchange of opinions on the question of the Labor Party's running or endorsing candidates immediately.

The founding convention of a Labor Party in the United States was held on June 6-9, in Cleveland, Ohio. [More than] 1,200 voting delegates and some 800 guests took part in the convention. Nine American trade unions were among the founders: the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (whose leaders Robert Wages and Tony Mazzocchi were the most active proponents of the founding of the party), the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers Union, the United Mine Workers of America, and others.

This event taking place in the U.S. cannot be considered just the run of the mill. On the contrary, it may be numbered among events having a determining effect on the course of development for the working-class movement throughout the world — considering the role of the United States in the world economy and the potential power of the American working class.

American workers have strong traditions of fighting for their rights. We recall, if nothing else, the famous strike by workers in Chicago in memory of which we honor May 1 every year as the international day of workers solidarity.

The line of continuity of these traditions passes through the formation and active work of the Communist League of America (CLA) in the first quarter [sic] of our century; and the formation and active work of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the second half of the century. [See below for corrections on the CLA and SWP.]

[*Rabochaya Demokratiya* continues its article with a fairly accurate description of the setbacks suffered by the workers' movement in the United States in the post-World War II era. The articles by James P. Cannon and Michael Smith, and the speeches by David Montgomery and David Sole (elsewhere in this issue) help to round out and fill in the picture of what happened since the great strike wave of 1945-46. Today the struggle traditions of the American working class are being revived and the founding of the Labor Party is indeed a part of that revival.]

After the end of World War II there was a sharp deterioration in the circumstances American workers' organizations had to work in, with the onset of the Cold War and anti-Communist hysteria. The U.S. government developed a full-scale witch hunt

against workers' leaders and Communists. [Of course the “no strike pledge” heavies of the Stalinized Communist Party could hardly be called “workers' leaders.” — G.S.] They were fired from their jobs, without any hope of finding work in the future, and [many] were thrown in prison. All this took place against a background of generally rising prosperity for American workers, the result of the prolonged postwar economic boom and the opportunity the U.S. capitalists enjoyed of fattening up workers in their own country through increased exploitation of workers in Third World countries.

All this led, in the end, to an extreme weakening of the independent working-class movement in the U.S., and the proletarian parties that still tried to voice the interests of the workers degenerated into tiny, warring sects.

The present era, when the prolonged postwar boom has exhausted itself, was inevitably bound to pose the question of a revival of an independent working-class movement in America. And that is what has happened. Discussion on the need to found a Labor Party did not begin just yesterday in the United States, but perhaps one of the most important steps on the road to the founding of this party was a conference held in Detroit in [December] 1992 by Labor Party Advocates. [This is a reference to an educational conference co-sponsored by the Detroit and Cleveland LPA chapters, many of the materials from which were printed in *BIDOM* in 1993 and 1994.]

Now the long road has been traveled, and the Labor Party has been founded. It cannot be said that this party has been established on the principles of revolutionary Marxism, nor that in its present form it can take upon itself the task of leading the revolutionary struggle. It has a long way to go still for that. Only the first steps have been taken on the road to the rebirth [of organized labor] and not everything is going smoothly.

One of the most important questions that the party will have to confront in the near future is the question of its attitude toward the 1996 elections. (Let us recall that these elections are not only for president of the USA but for part of the Congress, too.)

[*Rabochaya Demokratiya* apparently did not grasp the reasoning of the majority at the Labor Party founding convention. They decided that for the time being it was not feasi-

ble to run or endorse candidates, that before it could run its own candidates, hundreds of thousands of workers — or at least something closer to a majority of the organized labor movement — have to be won over to an understanding of the need for their own, independent labor party.]

Tony Mazzocchi is inclined to oppose the party's fielding its own candidates or endorsing the most progressive candidates of the traditional [!] parties. [A lack of understanding is revealed here by a publication concerned with “principles of revolutionary Marxism.” Those “traditional” parties are *bosses'* parties. To endorse even their “progressive” candidates is to fall into the very trap of subordinating the working class politically to the class which exploits it socially and economically. The whole point of establishing the Labor Party is to break out of that trap.]

Another section of the party (these are above all the revolutionary Marxists [sic], who also participated in the founding of the Labor Party) insists on the party's running its own candidates.

There is no question that the second position is the more correct one, because it makes it possible to bring the party's program more fully to the masses and to mobilize the masses on a positive platform.

We wish the members of the Labor Party success in their struggle to build a mass working-class party in the USA, as well as in their struggle to transform this party into a truly revolutionary vanguard of the workers.

[In regard to the Communist League of America and the Socialist Workers Party, *Rabochaya Demokratiya* has its facts and dates wrong. The CLA was formed by supporters of the Trotskyist Left Opposition, led by James P. Cannon, who were expelled from the Communist Party of the United States. It existed, not in “the first quarter of our century,” but from 1929 to 1935, when it merged with militants of the American Workers Party (led by A.J. Muste) to form the Workers Party. That core of anti-Stalinist revolutionaries and worker activists, who supported the International Left Opposition and the Russian Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky, soon merged with leftward-moving elements in Norman Thomas's Socialist Party to found the Socialist Workers Party in 1938, in sympathy with the Fourth International, founded that same year.

[*Rabochaya Demokratiya* is right that the CLA and SWP participated in and continued the great struggle traditions of the American working class, as illustrated by the account given by James P. Cannon in his article on united working-class action against capitalist repression, reprinted elsewhere in this issue.

[Unfortunately, the Socialist Workers Party suffered a degeneration in the early 1980s. It was taken over by younger “New Left” forces who had little or no grounding in working-class traditions. They turned in a semi-Stalinist direction, expelled those who remained loyal to Trotskyist traditions, and finally, in 1990, broke from the Fourth International, which Cannon and his associates had helped to found.] □

Teamsters Rank and File Give Carey "Five More Years!"

by Charles Walker

This is not a victory for one man or a slate of candidates. It's a victory for all working people who want strong, honest unions.

— Ron Carey, December 14, 1996

The good news is that James Hoffa, Jr., won't be taking victory laps inside the cavernous Teamsters headquarters, often called the "Marble Palace." The elation, joy, and profound relief felt by Teamster reformers is sure to resonate throughout the labor movement.

Moreover, General President Ron Carey indicated in a recent campaign speech that there's been a sea change in his thinking about the Teamsters bureaucracy. The implication is that Carey intends to open a necessary new stage in the fight to democratize the union from top to bottom. In November, Carey said, "At the 1992 inauguration I offered an olive branch to the officials. It didn't work. I was wrong, and I was naïve. At the next inauguration, I'll be carrying a two by four!"

Early on in Carey's first term, it was clear that the newly elected Teamsters president didn't want so-called political considerations to disrupt the orderly functioning of the nation's largest private-sector union, now at 1.4 million members. It was only after the bureaucracy's leaders successfully campaigned to defeat Carey's proposal to create a large strike fund by raising dues, publicly attacked Carey during national freight negotiations, and scabbed on the United Parcel Service (UPS) strike that Carey took the historic step that stripped the bureaucracy's leadership of \$15 million in bloated salaries, lavish pensions, and extravagant perks.

Even so, Carey kept on or appointed many of the old guard's supporters to positions in the international union's apparatus, including trade division heads and members of the very important grievance panels that can limit employers' ability to interpret contracts and discipline or fire workers. Despite the "non-political," or olive-branch appointments, many of Carey's appointees straddled the fence during the fierce July convention fight, disappeared into the woodwork during the bruising election campaign, or openly attacked him. One Carey appointee even joined the Hoffa slate!

Carey may not have a clear idea how to create a counterweight to the local and regional die-hard bureaucracy, but surely any successful plan must be based squarely on the increased participation of the rank and file in the daily life of the union. For several years, Carey has encouraged the ranks to join the union's organizing drives. But he weakened his own program by leaving much of the recruiting and education of volunteer organizers up to the local union

officialdom, who have a vested interest in *not* mobilizing members. So a second requirement for mobilizing the ranks would seem to be the creation of an internal Teamsters organization of activists that can't be stymied by any official opposed to rank-and-file activism. Such an organization must be open to all Teamsters based on labor's traditional democratic ideals. Top

Statement by IBT General President Carey

I'm proud to say that our reform slate has won. This is not a victory for one man or for a slate of candidates. It's a victory for all working people who want strong, honest unions.

Our slate now has a solid lead, and there is nothing unusual about the remaining locals and challenged ballots that should change the outcome. I want to talk not about the technical issues, but about what this result means.

This is a victory for continued reform of the Teamsters union. We beat the Mob; we beat corporate America, and we beat the old guard officials in our union.

It's a victory for bringing new energy and new strategies into the labor movement. It's a victory for thousands of members who worked night and day to make sure Teamster reform continues. They are the real heroes of this election.

This victory sends a message to every greedy employer who is trying to cut good, full-time jobs and benefits — we are not going to let you destroy the American dream!

This victory sends a message to every Mob boss in America — our treasury and our pension funds will never again be the piggybank for organized crime!

This victory sends a message to every Teamster official who has tried to undermine reform in the past five years — it's time to get on the reform train or get out of the way!

I'm proud, not only that we came out ahead, but that we won on the issues before the votes were even counted. Because of our reforms of the past five years, we forced the officials supporting [James R. Hoffa] Junior to adopt our platform.

Just two years ago, they opposed striking to stop the freight companies from shifting full-time jobs to low-wage, part-time positions. They refused to support our one-day strike to demand safe handling of heavier packages at UPS.

TDU leaders now talk of the need for "a corps of 10,000 volunteer organizers, working in local unions and linked through the IBT Organizing Department."

The final election results have not yet been certified by the federal election officer. However, the Carey coalition, which includes former Carey opponents and the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), appears to have a 52 percent majority, surpassing Carey's plurality of 48.5 percent in 1991, when he first scored a stunning upset win over two feuding old-guard factions. Carey's local union gave him a lopsided vote of 3,475 to 175. Vice President Diana Kilmury, the prominent TDU leader, was the top vote-getter in a field of eleven at-large vice presidential candidates. Vice President Sam

They stood outside our headquarters to protest elimination of the area conference bureaucracy which paid outrageous extra salaries and pensions to union officials.

They tried in court to stop me from letting members vote on the future of Teamster finances and services.

At our 1991 convention, Junior's backers opposed the right of Teamster members to elect top officers and convention delegates. They said that "25 & out" pensions were out of the question — were "pie in the sky." But by 1996, you would have thought that Junior Hoffa and his backers *invented* all these reform issues.

Of course, Junior's "Jimmy-Come-Lately" convention reform was not real — but the fact that he had to copy our platform showed how far we have moved the debate in this union.

Our victory is a remarkable upset when you consider the advantages that Junior had. His slate raised \$3.7 million as of the end of November — more than twice the \$1.6 million we raised. They had the support of many local union officials and many employers. They were assured of news coverage because of Junior's famous name. But they didn't have a vision of how to make this union stronger.

We've raised many members' expectations and encouraged them to speak out. I view that as a success — even though it puts me on the hot seat at times — and I will continue to urge our members to know their rights and to get more involved at every level of the union.

It's time to put the election behind us and unite to keep building a strong, honest union. I want to say to every Teamster member and local union official who is ready to support reform — no matter how you marked your ballot — you are an important part of the Teamster team — and I welcome your suggestions, your cooperation, and your hard work to build this union in the years ahead.

Theodus, who turned on Carey in 1994, failed to carry his large Ohio freight local, and Hoffa lost there, too, 1,746 to 754.

The Hoffa slate carried the central states by a wide margin and won five (possibly six) positions out of twenty-seven seats on the General Executive Board (GEB). That won't diminish Carey's constitutional authority. However, Carey will face the possibility that Hoffa's candidates might make common cause with Carey's candidates on the GEB who supported his rivals' slates in 1991.

To win again, Carey overcame a reunited old guard, entrenched in local unions and regional joint councils and leading a majority of the union's officials. They were fortified with a reported \$4 million war chest, and were nominally led by Hoffa, Jr., the son of the "legendary" Jimmy Hoffa. The son demagogically traded on his father's deserved reputation as a tough Depression-era organizer and later a negotiator who brought home the bacon during the postwar boom years. On the other hand, the father seemingly had ties to labor racketeers, approved pension fund loans to mobsters, and owned a trucking company under his wife's name. Jimmy Hoffa disappeared in 1975, presumably murdered to keep him from challenging his successor atop the Teamsters union, following his release from federal prison for jury tampering.

Carey had to overcome an attempt by Hoffa supporters to steal the election by collecting (possibly buying) blank ballots in Chicago. But mostly, Carey had to overcome a five-year effort by old-guard local union officials to vilify him and at the same time to outflank him from the left by posing as reformers. Hoffa denounced "outrageous officer salaries and perks," though many on his slate have multiple local and regional salaries of over \$100,000 each yearly. Hoffa touted a plan to double strike benefits, without a dues increase, by gutting the

international union's programs. Buried in the plan's small print is a two-tier proposal to pay strike benefits according to workers' wages, even though all Teamsters pay the same dues into the general fund that pays out strike benefits.

Old Guard Tried to Exploit Problems in Freight

Hoffa boasted that he could have negotiated a better 1994 national trucking contract than Carey and could have avoided the 24-day strike that temporarily emptied the strike fund. If elected, Hoffa said he would reopen the freight contract, but he did not spell out why the trucking bosses would agree to reopen the contract, unless they had more to gain than lose. Hoffa said that Carey was responsible for losing members. Hoffa skipped over the devastating impact of the 1980 freight deregulation that created enormous trucking companies and ended the relatively insulated labor market that freight Teamsters had enjoyed. After deregulation and before Carey's first election, the Teamsters membership dropped from 2.1 million to 1.5 million.

Many officers of freight locals have been bad-mouthing the current freight contract, even though it was ratified by a 4-1 margin. Carey and his staff erred when they failed to repeatedly answer the local officers' charges and falsifications, *on their own turf*. The contract did limit overtime opportunities, opening up jobs for unemployed drivers and loaders, and that did cost some high-seniority workers thousands of dollars. While their feelings are understandable, the contract blocked the trucking companies from turning full-time jobs into part-time jobs, Carey's prime objective. Hoffa's oversimplified cry, "To Restore the Power," certainly appealed to many insecure freight workers, whose industry continues to merge companies and slough off union jobs. Nevertheless, Carey did better than Hoffa in locals representing 1,000 or more

freight workers, who tend to vote in proportionately higher numbers than the other large Teamsters crafts.

Hoffa blamed Carey for dividing the union into warring factions, but Hoffa never mentioned that the gulf between the members and the officialdom widened precisely because of the bureaucracy's business unionist adaptation to the hard times that followed the end of the postwar economic boom. For example, in the 1980s freight and carhaul majorities repeatedly rejected national contracts negotiated by old guard officials; and in 1994 several hundred officials scabbed on the UPS strike. The responsibility for the divided union was starkly illustrated again in 1994 when the bureaucracy sided with the struck freight companies, and the freight bosses said that they would prefer to bargain with the "more responsible Teamster officers," not Carey.

In the last days of the campaign, both sides said that the turnout would exceed that of 1991, and that it would be a close race. Both sides were right. Preliminary figures show that 486,000, or 34 percent, of Teamsters voted, up from 424,000, or 28 percent, in 1991. Nevertheless, more than 900,000 other Teamsters didn't see a stake for themselves in the outcome and failed to mail back their ballots. Although Carey led the count from the first, his lead never exceeded 54 percent of the vote. On the next to the last day, Carey's lead dropped to just above 50 percent. By the next day, his lead lengthened, and the outcome was no longer in doubt.

As in 1991, Teamsters elected an international leadership at odds with the majority of convention delegates, the union's highest body. Despite the dilemma, the Teamsters union will continue to be the hopeful beacon for democratic reform throughout organized labor for five more years. □

December 26, 1996

Chinese Regime Continues to Persecute Dissidents

Continued from page 8

ideas and proposals for the reform of state enterprises. It was reported that work stoppages had been serious in state enterprises, that discontent among workers in state enterprises had been surfacing, and that it was not unusual to see workers besieging party or government offices with petitions, especially in the North-eastern provinces, where state enterprises are more predominant.

Third, a scholar working in the Party Cadre College pointed out that the "Resolution on the building of spiritual civilization" adopted by the 6th plenary meeting of the 14th Central Committee had evaded the main contradiction in society today, namely the problem of economics, with the reform of state enterprises lying at the heart of the problem. As for the question of the building of spiritual civilization, the main contradiction is the concern of the masses over graft and corruption on the part of

party and government officials, with subsequent lack of confidence in the party and the government.

It is with this context of massive unrest that high-handed repression of dissent is seen as a necessary measure of containment: the potential of the handful of dissidents linking up with mass discontent is too fearsome for the authorities. □

November 15, 1996

Background to Strikers' New Call for National March on Detroit

Reprinted from *Labor Notes*

The following article is reprinted for the information of our readers from the January 1997 issue of *Labor Notes*. The author, Kate DeSmet, is a member of The Newspaper Guild (TNG) in Detroit and a leading strike activist.

Detroit's 2,000 newspaper strikers entered their second holiday season on strike hoping that among the gifts they receive will be a strong response by the labor movement in support of a national labor march on Detroit.

Strike activists and supporters, along with the presidents of the six striking locals, kicked off a campaign in early December to lobby AFL-CIO President John Sweeney for a national mobilization of labor's forces in Detroit. The event would be called Solidarity Day III (previous Solidarity Day marches were held in Washington, D.C., in 1981 and 1991). The campaign has been endorsed by the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO Executive Board and by the Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues.

"A national labor march on Detroit will show Gannett and Knight Ridder [owners of the two struck Detroit newspapers] that all of labor supports this struggle — physically as well as financially," states the appeal. During a one-week period, the appeal was signed by some 900 workers on strike against the *Detroit News* and *Detroit Free Press*.

"And it can help spur united labor actions in cities around the country directed against Gannett and Knight-Ridder facilities, including *USA Today* [which is owned by Gannett]," the appeal continues. "We believe we must act now because the future of the labor movement will be critically affected by the outcome of this strike. After all, if corporations like Gannett and Knight-Ridder can break unions in a labor stronghold like Detroit, what union anywhere is safe from similar union-busting?"

The Action Coalition of Strikers and Supporters (ACOSS), an independent group of activists and strikers, who meet weekly, initiated the December appeal. When ACOSS first proposed a national march in July, Sweeney and the AFL-CIO Executive Council turned it down, in part because of the Federation's heavy involvement in the national elections. A committee of strikers and supporters will soon mail and fax the appeal to union locals and activists across the country urging them to contact Sweeney with their support for the national mobilization. (For copies of the appeal, call 810-447-2716.)

Conference

Among the first to endorse the appeal was the National Union of Journalists in Paris. The NUJ faxed its endorsement in time for ACOSS's December 7 conference, "How to Win Strikes in the 1990s." The one-day conference featured panelists from the newspaper strike and other labor struggles, including the Pittston coal miners strike, Caterpillar, Bridgestone/Firestone, and the Canadian Days of Action. Juan Gonzales, a columnist for the *New York Daily News*, offered strategies from his newspaper strike and announced he will write about the national appeal to Sweeney in his widely-read *Daily News* column.

The conference, attended by more than 200 people, discussed strategies for winning the strike, including increasing public awareness of

corporate violence, mass civil disobedience and direct actions, and efforts to educate unions across the country about the ongoing struggle.

There was also discussion of recent lobbying by Linda Foley, international president of The Newspaper Guild, to convince Detroit Guild strikers to make an unconditional offer to return to work. Her plan is supported by a handful of the Guild's 269 strikers, but it was roundly criticized by Guild activists at the conference. Letters will soon be circulated to TNG executive board members from rank-and-file Guild strikers, as well as local Guild leaders, detailing their opposition to the plan. In addition, the elected leaders of the six striking unions have publicly opposed such an offer and remain united in staying out to fight the strike.

Circulation Drops 37 Percent Other strike developments:

- Paid circulation continues to drain away from the scab papers. Audit Bureau of Circulation figures show a decline averaging 37 percent, with various individual communities reporting declines of as much as 70 to 90 percent.
- A decision on the unfair labor practice charges filed against the newspaper owners by the National Labor Relations Board is not expected until spring. The NLRB recently filed complaints against the unions for engaging in "illegal secondary boycotts" after strikers walked through stores which advertise in the scab papers wearing T-shirts saying, "Please Don't Shop Here."
- Nearly 300 strikers have been fired for offenses ranging from picket line name-calling to blocking driveways.
- Friends of Labor, another independent group of strikers and supporters, is sponsoring an ongoing series of direct actions and civil disobedience. These have included the recent takeover of the lobby of a state office building to pressure Gov. John Engler to get the companies back to the bargaining table; Thanksgiving caroling at the homes of company executives; occupation of suburban news bureaus (which caused the *Detroit News* to shut down its mainframe computer system at deadline); and the blocking of driveways at a *USA Today* printing plant in Port Huron, Michigan, resulting in 27 arrests.
- The International Brotherhood of Teamsters sponsored a week-long series of actions in Washington, in late November, with a busload of strikers who lobbied Michigan congressional leaders, leafleted the headquarters of Gannett in Arlington, Virginia, and showed up outside Vance Security headquarters in Oakton, Virginia. Vance guards, dressed in full riot gear, were positioned in driveways and on rooftops, and were joined by 35 Virginia police officers in helmets with face-shields

Continued on page 17

How to Help

Here's how to help Detroit newspaper strikers:

- Urge AFL-CIO President John Sweeney to call for a national labor action in Detroit. Write to him at: 815 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20006; fax to (202) 508-6946; phone (202) 637-8000; e-mail 71112.53@compuserve.com. Please send a copy of your message to Claudia Pearce, Detroit Newspaper Guild, 3300 Book Bldg., Detroit, MI 48226.
- To obtain a copy of the appeal signed by 900 strikers, or for updates on strike activities, call the ACOSS 24-hour hotline at (810) 447-2716. To help organize support in your city, please write to the Appeal Committee, c/o Newspaper Guild of Detroit, 3300 Book Bldg., Detroit, MI 48226.
- Subscribe to the *Detroit Sunday Journal*, \$15 for three months or \$30 for six months: 3100 E. Jefferson, Detroit, MI 48207.
- Boycott *USA Today*.
- Send donations to the DN Striker Relief Fund, 2100 E. Jefferson, Detroit, MI 48207.
- Call the Speakers Bureau at (313) 877-9018 to arrange for a striker to talk to your group.

Newspaper Strikers' Appeal to All of Labor to Support the Call for a National Labor March on Detroit

The following appeal was issued by Detroit Local 22 of The Newspaper Guild.

We are newspaper workers who have been on strike since July 13, 1995, against the *Detroit News*, owned by Gannett, and the *Detroit Free Press*, owned by Knight-Ridder. We were forced to strike by these greedy billionaire newspaper chains, who are out to bust our unions and deny us and our families a decent livelihood.

Gannett and Knight-Ridder are demanding the elimination of hundreds of our jobs as well as takeaways that would gut our contracts. In a public statement made a month after the strike began, Robert Giles, Editor and Publisher of the *Detroit News*, said: "We're going to hire a whole new work force and go on without unions, or they can surrender unconditionally and salvage what they can."

That has been the publishers' position from the beginning, and it has not changed in all these months. They are taking heavy financial losses in Detroit as a result of the strike, but they are prepared to absorb such losses to achieve their main objective: bust the unions.

We believe the labor movement can stop them, that the Detroit newspaper strike can be

won through labor solidarity and strength demonstrated in a massive national mobilization of the entire labor movement.

At its August 1996 meeting, the AFL-CIO Executive Council considered a proposal for a National Labor March on Detroit. Although the proposal was endorsed by the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO and the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions (made up of all striking Detroit newspaper unions), the AFL-CIO Executive Council did not issue a call.

Now that the national election campaigns are over, we are appealing to the unions around the country and supporters of our strike to join us in urging AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and the Executive Council to reconsider. A national labor march on Detroit will show Gannett and Knight-Ridder that all of labor supports this struggle — physically as well as financially. And it can help spur united labor actions in cities around the country directed against Gannett and Knight-Ridder facilities, including *USA Today*.

We believe we must act now because the future of the labor movement will be critically affected by the outcome of this strike. After

all, if corporations like Gannett and Knight-Ridder can break unions in a labor stronghold like Detroit, what union anywhere is safe from similar union-busting?

It's time for Solidarity Day III, this time in Detroit. Please send a message to AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington, D.C., urging a national labor march on Detroit in support of striking newspaper workers. And please send a copy to us. We deeply appreciate your continuing support.

Write, fax, call, or e-mail:

John Sweeney
President, AFL-CIO
815 16th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
Fax: 202-508-6946
Phone: 202-637-5000
E-mail: 71112.53@compuserve.com
Internet: <http://www.aflcio.org>

Copy to:

Dia Pearce
Newspaper Guild of Detroit
3300 Book Bldg.
Detroit, MI 48226

AFL-CIO Urged to Call for Solidarity Day III in Detroit

Dec. 10, 1996
John Sweeney
President
AFL-CIO

Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear President Sweeney,

Enclosed is an appeal for a national labor march on Detroit that has been signed to date by more than 900 of our rank-and-file strikers and endorsed by the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO Executive Board, the Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues, and our council composed of the elected leaders of the six striking newspaper unions.

We are urging you to call this national labor march on Detroit in support of our strike, now in its eighteenth month, the same struggle you have referred to as the most important strike in America.

But this march stands for much more than our spirited battle here. It would mobilize labor in a place known as the most pro-union city in the country. It would spark actions against the nation's two largest newspaper

chains in cities across the United States, as well as educate all who attend about other labor struggles being waged in such industries as farm work, poultry, garment, and service work.

We expect such a march — connected with actions we will plan leading up to and occurring afterwards — will also re-energize labor throughout southeastern Michigan to continue this historic strike through to the bargaining of fair contracts and a high-profile, much needed victory for labor. It would also draw attention of the national media to a strike that has directly involved the goal of media owners to destroy union rights for their workers.

As some of our strikers have said to us in support of the march: If not now, when? If not Detroit, where? We share their passion and concern, and we hope you will call for Solidarity Day III, so we can march on Detroit together, showing the nation's corporate bosses that labor can win when it puts its foot

down — this time, on the union streets of Detroit.

And thank you for all the support you have already given us — we are deeply grateful.

In solidarity,

Ed Scribner, President, Metropolitan Detroit AFL/CIO

Al Derey, Chair of Council and Secretary-Treasurer IBT Local 372

Sam Attard, President, Detroit Typographical Union #18/CWA

Jack Howe, President, Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU) Local 13N

Lou Mleczo, President, Newspaper Guild Local 22

Wilfred Strole, President, GCIU local 289M

Alex Young, President, IBT Local 2040

Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions
1249 Washington Boulevard, Suite 3300
Detroit, MI 48226

Union Busting in the 1990s — What We Can Learn From the Past to Fight It

Text of Speech by David Sole, President of UAW Local 2334

These remarks by David Sole opened the December 7, 1996, ACOSS conference "How to Win Strikes in the 1990s," held at Wayne State University, Detroit. The text was posted on computer networks by Detroit striker Daymon Hartley.

It is an often repeated statement in the labor movement that strike-breaking and union busting began with PATCO and the Reagan presidency in 1980. This is not really correct. Resigning from the top-level Labor-Management Group in 1978, UAW International President Douglas Fraser issued a remarkable statement giving his reasons for refusing to sit across from the CEOs of the biggest corporations. Before PATCO; before Phelps-Dodge; before Hormel, Caterpillar, or the Detroit Newspaper Strike, Fraser wrote:

Leaders of the business community... have chosen to wage a one-sided class war today in this country — a war against working people, the unemployed, the poor, the minorities, the very young and the very old... The leaders of industry, commerce and finance... have broken and discarded the fragile, unwritten compact previously existing during a past period of growth and progress... Where industry once yearned for subservient unions, it now wants no unions at all... I cannot sit there seeking unity with the leaders of American industry, while they try to destroy us and ruin the lives of the people I represent... We... intend to reforge the links with those who believe in struggle: the kind of people who sat down in the factories in the 1930s and who marched in Selma in the 1960s...

Already by 1978 it was becoming quite clear that there was a change occurring among the corporate bosses, so much so that for the first time in a long time a top labor leader was talking about class war! What is it about the 1930s that attracts so much attention? There have been many big strikes both before and after.

From the growth of industry after the Civil War until the 1930s American workers made heroic efforts to organize into unions. There were some successes, but most of those decades were strewn with the blood and bodies of labor's martyrs.

In 1877 a nationwide railroad strike turned into a mass labor uprising that was crushed by the National Guard in many states. Remember the Homestead Steel strike, the Pullman railroad strike, and the hanging of four leaders who fought for the 8-hour day. The great Industrial Workers of the World, the IWW, had a militant 15-year history of strikes in mass industries. It ended in jailings and mass deportations. Racism, lynchings, and segregation kept the labor movement divided along racial lines for generations. And the tremendous 1919 steel strike ended in defeat.

The 1929 crash of the stock market and the Depression drove the living standards of all workers down. Millions of unemployed, desperate for work, were used by the bosses as a threat against those still working. Yet the driving force behind the great struggles of the 1930s was not the leadership of the established unions. The old AF of L was very conservative, based on the skilled trades. The battles that we all remember today were organized and led by militant rank-and-file workers along with radicals, socialists and communists. This came together in a new formation the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the CIO, that succeeded in building the industrial unions we know today.

The Toledo Auto-Lite strike of 1934 was a milestone in the organizing of auto workers. Confronted with scabs, police, and injunctions, the picket line was saved when thousands of unemployed workers, organized into the Lucas County Unemployed League, joined the strikers. Together they defied injunctions and battled cops and the National Guard, until victory was won.

The Minneapolis Teamster strike of 1934 saw the workers, at times, virtually in control of the city. They had a daily strike newspaper, food kitchens, unemployed committees. When police violence threatened the strike, the Teamsters organized a workers' militia that battled hand to hand with the cops, guarded strike headquarters, and protected union leaders.

The dock workers in San Francisco, also in 1934, saw two of their members shot dead on the picket line by the police. The entire labor movement of San Francisco rose up in rebellion by holding a two-day general strike, almost unprecedented in U.S. labor history.

The greatest battle of all, the Flint sit-down strike of 1937, again, was one that came from below. The top leadership of the UAW and the CIO did not make the plans. If anything, they were fearful of so great a challenge to the bosses and the government. But the seizure and occupation of the GM plant electrified workers across the country. They came from everywhere to help out. Women organized their Emergency Brigade which started with cooking meals and ended with women carrying two-by-fours battling the cops.

With the victory at GM there immediately followed hundreds and hundreds of sit-downs in factories and offices. The tide had turned. When the Steel Workers Organizing Committee threatened to lead a national strike, the steel

bosses, undefeated in union busting for 60 years, gave up without a fight and recognized the union!

The workers of the '30s knew that the laws had all been written by the bosses. They knew the cops, the judges, the politicians, and the military were all working for the bosses. To win a measure of justice, they said to hell with the cops! To hell with the judges and injunctions! To hell with the National Guard! And to hell with unjust laws! Many went to jail; many were beaten and gassed; many were injured; and many workers were killed. But their iron determination, their unity, and their creative energy created a political crisis for the entire ruling class of this country. In the end the bosses decided they would rather live with unions than face a full-scale civil war, a class war.

For forty years there was, as Doug Fraser called it, "a fragile, unwritten compact." Sure, there were still strikes, sometimes long ones. There were still struggles and contention. But outright union busting, with scabs, injunctions, and mass police attacks, were rare.

Starting with the 1971 Nixon wage-freeze has come the steady decline in the living standard for the average American. It has taken various forms. Contract concessions was one. Inflation, another. Co-pays and benefit reductions. Unfortunately, even though Doug Fraser saw it coming in 1978, the unions soon caved in to the pressure and bought into concessions, labor-management cooperation, and supporting the Big Three's downsizing plans. This led to the disaster of the loss of half a million auto workers' jobs over the past 15 years.

But this is a different era than the 1930s, when mass industries were expanding. We are in the era of the scientific-technological revolution. We are witnessing the restructuring and downsizing of American industry. Profits rise to record levels while wages decline and millions of union jobs have been lost. Work can be shifted from one plant to another. Entire factories can be shipped overseas. American labor cannot simply look to the past to reclaim its power. We must come to grips with the issues of international competition, multinational corporations, and restructuring. Are we, the hundred million workers of America, any less capable or intelligent than the workers of the 1930s? Do we lack their resolve? Their determination? Their courage or inventiveness?

No. If anything, we, the workers of today, are more numerous, more educated, more orga-

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“It Is Time to Remake Our Economy and Our Politics”

Text of Speech by David Montgomery

David Montgomery, one of the leading U.S. labor historians, teaches at Yale University and is a member of the Executive Board of the Connecticut chapter of the Labor Party. The following speech was given at the final plenary session of the labor-university teach-in at Columbia University, on Sunday, October 6, 1996.

For more on the Columbia teach-in, see the previous issue of our magazine (November-December 1996), where we incorrectly identified David Montgomery as the president of the Connecticut chapter.

We have come together for mutual defense. I hope that when we leave, we can launch a new offensive. We need to turn our minds toward what it is that we are fighting for — toward a vision of the kind of social and intellectual life we want for ourselves and our children — for our places of work and residence — for our country — for the world, of which we are all inextricably a part.

By now it is clear what we oppose. For a quarter of a century the material rewards most Americans have derived from their daily work have been in decline. A glance around us at the decaying streets, schools, and subways makes that clear. If family incomes have held steady, it is because more and more of the time of family members has been devoted to earning money. Beggars and gunplay in the streets, the menace of epidemic children's diseases, and the touting of gambling casinos as the way to revive our bankrupt municipalities all remind us of life before 1940.

Executives now find their way to the top of the corporate world, not by directing the production of the goods we all need, and not even by guiding their firms toward secure futures with experienced work forces. Neither of those old-fashioned objectives sends stock prices soaring upward or yields million-dollar salaries and perks for transient chief executive officers. What does rake in quick and bounteous returns is the practice of downsizing, subcontracting, and hiring on a temporary basis. So, the prospect for working people has become that of more and more casualization.

I encounter this prospect where I work every day. The administration of my university has enthusiastically joined the campaign to replace experienced, knowledgeable men and women who have a claim to seniority and benefits with temporary employees and work crews hired by subcontractors. It is out to create ValJet University.

This casualization of our work is accompanied by an all-out political and ideological assault against the public sector and against the opening of the American mind.

The Gospel of the “Free Market”

That assault crystallized in the Contract on America and in the rapid growth of well-endowed foundations whose explicit purpose is to capture the public mind for the gospel of the free market — the doctrine that every activity in life should be a source of generating profits. We are reassured every day that other ways of organizing social life have proven to be abysmal failures. Only by racing around the marketplace with credit cards, vouchers, and flex-dollars can we find happiness.

If we happen to disagree, we may still be able to publish an article in some magazine, as a token “Voice from the Left.” But if we should act together on our disagreement, we can expect ruthless retribution. That was the message of the air traffic controllers' strike, of P-9, of Caterpillar, of International Paper. That is the fear that haunts every worker going into bargaining sessions or deciding whether to join a union. It haunts every student wondering what the future will bring.

But today we also hear in the factories, offices, streets, and classrooms all around us clear indications that the magic appeal of the free-market mania has already burned out. Political life remains in the doldrums because of the absence of a realistic and compelling vision of what else is possible in today's world. Our mission, here and when we go home, is to open the discussions that will answer that question and to organize men and women in every walk of life to translate that answer into collective power — into real life.

When we turn our thinking toward the questions of how we got to this point and how to get out of it, we can find some guidance from history (mine is not a useless profession) — from our country's experience during the last half century. We need to think about much more than just the impact of Reagan and Gingrich on our lives and our way of thinking.

The Last Half Century

Those of us who were alive and active in 1945 and 1946 cannot forget the high hopes we then harbored for a world without the hunger, book-burnings, wars, and murderous racism that had

blighted our youth. The touchstone of our post-war hopes was the industrial union movement, especially the youthful CIO. Massive picket lines in every industrial center won major across-the-board wage increases, turned back employers' concerted efforts to restore authoritarian rule in the factories, expanded the boundaries of trade unionism into the office and the department store, and laid the foundations of comprehensive health care for coal miners and their families.

Union membership reached all-time peaks in the movement's historic strongholds, such as construction (87% of all workers), mining (65%), and railroads (76%). In manufacturing, where “open shop” policies had long cultivated the “loyal employee,” 77% of the 805,000 workers who voted in NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] elections during the year beginning with June 1946 cast their votes for unions (more than any other year since enactment of the Wagner Act). Millions of men and women had won a voice in the conditions under which they earned their livings. They no longer faced giant corporations alone and trembling.

That same movement formulated a vision for our country's future, which was very different from what we ultimately got. In 1943 the CIO had demanded a Down-Payment on the Four Freedoms, beginning with democracy in the American South. At its 1946 convention it expanded that vision to demand federal legislation that would end racial discrimination in jobs, public accommodations, and political life — that would establish single-payer national health insurance and a national network of childcare facilities — that would make a meaningful job for everyone the foremost objective of economic policy — that would place public power projects and all nuclear facilities under national ownership, and bomb-building capacities under international control.

President Philip Murray also called for the continuation of wartime economic agencies to guide the shaping of a postwar economy. To leave social priorities up to the marketplace, Murray warned, would mean that those with the

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Kick Out All the Bosses' Parties

Liberals Are Tories, Too

by Barry Weisleder

Barry Weisleder is the editor of the Canadian newspaper Socialist Action.

With so much public attention focused on reactionary provincial governments, the federal Liberal regime of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien has been getting away with murder — the mass annihilation of jobs, social rights, and public services. In many ways, Chrétien's cuts are the cruelest.

With the introduction of the Canada Health and Social Transfer, the Liberals slashed billions from Canada's health system. The result has been a predictable closure of hospitals across the country, job losses, speed-ups and intensification of work, contracting-out of work, and other tactics to cut labor costs. This gave the green light to provincial governments, which obligingly "de-listed" medical services and imposed more user fees. With more outpatient surgery, longer waiting lists, and privatization, we're sliding quickly down towards a two-tier health system—one for the rich, another for the poor.

In the past three years, Ottawa has cut \$2 Billion in transfers to the provinces for education — in the wake of a full decade of federal cuts that cost the provinces over \$35 billion. The impact is all too clear: provinces are waging war against teachers and support staff; tens of thousands of jobs are disappearing in this sector; post-secondary tuition costs soared by 140 percent between 1985 and 1995 (while inflation rose by 34 percent), which means less access to education for working-class youth, and more debt for those who enroll.

Job Killers, Promise Breakers

The Liberals have contributed directly to the official statistic of 1.5 million unemployed, 10 percent of the work force jobless (and much more if all the underemployed and those who've stopped looking for work are included). The feds have terminated over 40,000 public service jobs, and now, with Chrétien's blessing, Canada Post Corporation is sending 10,000 ad mail workers out the door — the biggest single layoff in Canadian history. So much for jobs being "the number one priority of a Liberal government" (*The Liberal Plan for Canada*, the "Red Book," 1993).

Other Liberal promises have fared no better: they pledged to create 50,000 new child care spaces each year; renegotiate NAFTA; curtail the corporate lobbyists in Ottawa; and that ol' chestnut, abolish the Goods and Services Tax — all lies! Of course capitalist parties have to lie; otherwise they'd never get elected. Once in office, you see their real program in action.

Instead of progressive tax reform there are more breaks for the rich. Liberal Finance Minister Paul Martin's plan to "harmonize" the GST with provincial sales tax schemes would

see the 35 percent paid by business rebated back to them, thus shifting another \$6 billion in taxes onto the working class. Instead of plugging corporate tax loopholes, services to working people, seniors, and the poor are cut. A full 73 percent of federal budget spending reductions in fiscal year 1996-97, and 83 percent of these reductions in 1997-98 will come from cuts in transfer payments for social programs.

A major source of the debt and deficit is corporate tax avoidance. Since the Liberals were elected in October 1993, \$50 billion in profits made by big corporations have gone untaxed.

But Paul Martin is happy to see his friends do well — like the big banks which raked in over \$6 billion in profits. Martin is also pleased to see unemployment high and wages low; the high lending rates charged by banks help see to that. No, in the marble halls of high finance, the times they are not a-changing.

Thus, the dramatic rise in child poverty (up 46 percent since 1989), growth in the number of poor seniors, the double digit "official" unemployment figures, and the crisis afflicting women, students, and minorities can largely be traced to Liberal federal government economic policies designed to give capital free reign.

Bosses' Parties: Different Names, Same Program

Chrétien and Martin's Liberals, by their own admission, have cut more deeply than either Ralph Klein or Mike Harris [Conservative Party leaders]. But this is not about weighing their relative demerits. It's about recognizing that Liberals are Tories too. And likewise Reform, Bloc, and Parti Québécois, and usually also, the New Democratic Party. Except for the NDP, these parties were created by Big Business. But in all cases, they are loyal to the capitalist system. Capital prospers only at the expense of Labor. The only thing that holds them back is the mobilization of the working class and its allies. Today, Big Business has one program, with several parties vying to carry it out: drive down workers' wages and benefits; bolster profits for global corporate repositioning.

And the working class has one interest: to resist and to overthrow this cruel and irrational system. However, lacking is a mass political party to advance this class interest. Nonetheless, the struggle continues. It must be waged under existing conditions, however unfavorable. This includes the next federal election, which will be held in 1997.

The first step is to launch a fight to kick out all the bosses' parties, and win the NDP to a Workers' Agenda. To start, workers need to

build on the experience of the Ontario Days of Action: mobilize mass opposition to the Liberal cuts cross-country.

CLC Ponders "National Days of Action" in May 1997

Canadian Auto Workers' President Buzz Hargrove reported to the CAW Council meeting in Toronto, on December 6, that "The CLC (Canadian Labour Congress) Executive Committee and Council have discussed the idea that the first week of May 1997 be the National Days of Action across Canada. A committee has been established to work with the affiliates on this."

In fact, this was the direction given by the last CLC convention, held in Vancouver in May 1996 — but the leadership is still "discussing the idea." No doubt, the split between the neo-liberal/NDP-loyalist "pink paper" group of unions, and the more action-oriented majority led by the CAW, CUPE, CUPW, and affiliates of NUPGE, is the reason the CLC heads are still "discussing the idea." Unfortunately, the governments of the ruling class are not waiting for the culmination of this dialogue of the deaf. The quickening pace of the cuts testifies to that. Clearly, the time has come for a cross-country general strike, the first since the CLC challenged Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's wage controls in October 1976.

NDP on the Rebound?

NDP leaders are used to grasping at straws. The latest "good news" from the federal NDP newsletter *On Your Mark*, is offered as evidence: re-election of the NDP to government in British Columbia, and its return to office in Yukon territory; improved vote results in recent Ontario and Newfoundland by-election defeats; and the first seat ever won by the NDP in Prince Edward Island, at the provincial election on November 18.

What the newsletter neglects to mention is that, according to a *Globe and Mail/Enviro-nics* poll on federal party strength in November, the NDP still wallows in last place at 11 percent, tied there with Reform, just back of the Bloc Québécois (which fields candidates only in Québec) at 13 percent, the Conservatives at 14 percent, and a great distance behind the Liberals at 50 percent.

What these numbers remind us is that while the NDP is not dead, it is not seen by the working class as a political alternative. Perhaps the Liberal Party in Ontario did the NDP and its provincial Leader Howard Hampton a big favor by choosing Dalton McGuinty, a debt and deficit-fixated small-c conservative, as their standard-bearer. But the NDP isn't out of the woods by a long shot, on a good day still running a distant third in Ontario.

The struggle to create a political alternative is the challenge before us. The best bet is that it will grow out of mass working class action against the rulers' offensive, along with a struggle for a Workers' Political Agenda, within but not limited to the feeble NDP. □

Tories Target Teachers, Quality of Education

by Barry Weisleder

Barry Weisleder is president of Local 595, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, representing over 1,000 substitute teachers at the Toronto Board of Education.

The Mike Harris Conservatives are ready to table far-reaching legislative change aimed at remaking the education system at the expense of the rights of teachers, students, and the public at large. Nearly \$1 billion is slated by the Tories to come out of the Education Ministry budget, on top of previous cuts totalling \$400 million. But the government needed a political framework and the pretense of public consultation in order to proceed.

Ontario education "czar," Minister-without-secondary-school-graduation-diploma John Snobolen, asked an old Tory friend of his, Windsor lawyer Leon Paroian, to write a report recommending changes to school board labor relations. In a take-off on Snobolen's infamous "invent a crisis" justification for drastic change for the worse, Paroian responded to public submissions that the school system isn't broken, suggesting that it might *have to be broken* in order to put teachers and expenditures in their proper place.

Paroian's recommendations are so extreme that many educators and political observers tend to discount them. But to discount the extremism of the Harris Tories would be a cardinal sin.

Paroian's proposals include: changing the Education Act to eliminate preparation time and to force teachers to perform voluntary services; removing from the realm of collective bargaining such crucial issues as class size and staffing, the length of the school day and school year, and

the assignment of teacher responsibilities on a day-to-day basis; banning teacher strikes; forcing teacher unions to merge (limiting teachers to one bargaining agent at each school board or region); excluding principals, and simply giving teacher federations jurisdiction over all substitute teachers, regardless of our present union affiliation and history of collective bargaining.

Taken together (along with Tory plans to abolish school boards), such measures would cause more than a crisis; they would set off outright chaos as collective agreements went into limbo, teachers, students, and the public had no political or legal defense against drastic budget cuts, and unions battled one another for representation rights in new and uncertain institutional settings.

But it sure would empower arbitrary cost savings as positions were eliminated, wages slashed, unqualified personnel brought in, class sizes sent skyrocketing, and physical resources cut to the bone. What more fitting promotion could there be for user-pay private schools, for those who can afford a higher quality education?

Education workers, and our allies among students and communities across Ontario, such as in the Education Alliance and local coalitions like Toronto's People for Education, are determined to fight back. Removal of the right to bargain key issues and the right to strike is a direct attack on the quality of education. There

is widespread discussion of a province-wide education strike, not just by teachers, but by unionized support staff workers who fear the Tories' plan to contract out tens of thousands of maintenance, cafeteria, and clerical jobs to the lowest private sector bidders.

To carry this out Snobolen will seek to foster divisions and to undermine solidarity, in accordance with Paroian's advice. Teacher federations have disagreed with exclusion of principals, vice-principals, and other management types from their bargaining units for totally opportunistic reasons — they want to keep their dues money. Yet the same federations want to take over substitute teachers, a group they refused to organize in the early 1980s when asked, and a group for whom they've done very little, while OPSEU has led in collective bargaining, political action, and strike activity to set the pace for substitute teachers' wages, benefits, and working conditions.

A principled antidote to the Tory divide-and-rule policy would be for all unions to oppose all forced mergers, and to defend every union's right to continue representing their members. Voluntary unity is the only democratic path. And unity in struggle is the way to achieve it — that is through the struggle against the present mortal dangers to job security, to adequate funding of curriculum and resources, and to the overall quality of an accessible, public school system. □

Newspaper Strikers Renew Call for National March on Detroit

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and night sticks. Strikers also visited the private residences of Gannett CEO John Curley and chief negotiator John Jaske.

- A new advertising campaign to remind the Detroit community that the long strike continues is being planned by local unions, as well as a member-to-member education campaign about the strike among the affiliates of the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO.

- The *Detroit Sunday Journal*, the weekly strike newspaper, marked its one-year anniversary in mid-November. The 40-page tabloid's circulation is 165,000, and it has been self-supporting since June.
- Religious activists recently conducted a candlelight walk and vigil attended by nearly 300 persons, and they are leading a letter writing campaign to former First Lady Rosalyn Carter, a member of the Gannett

Board of Directors. The IBT has purchased placards on the sides of buses in Atlanta, urging Carter to pressure Gannett to settle. And Detroit Cardinal Adam J. Maida, leader of 1.5 million Detroit-area Catholics, has called for the companies to bargain fair contracts and end the strike. □

Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act: A Threat to Civil Liberties

by Abdeen M. Jabara

Abdeen M. Jabara is an attorney long active on human rights issues and a board member of The Center for Constitutional Rights. This article is based on a speech which he gave to the National Lawyers Guild convention, held last fall in Miami.

The Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act was signed into law by President Clinton on April 24, 1996. This 128-page law is divided into nine separate chapters which have enacted into law: (1) drastic limitations on the use of habeas corpus by persons convicted in state criminal proceedings to challenge the constitutionality of those convictions in federal court and (2) the targeting of persons in the U.S. who are here on non-immigrant visas or are permanent residents who are in some way engaged in supporting struggles in their original homeland, or U.S. nationals who provide material support for those struggles. The law provides for criminalizing all fund raising for organizations designated as terrorist organizations by the Secretary of State, the creation of a special removal court with five appointed judges, appointed by the Chief Justice, which shall have jurisdiction over cases in which the Attorney General wishes to bypass established deportation procedures for reasons of national security. And further, the Act federalizes a large number of what were purely state crimes with the proviso that they transcend national boundaries. It further allows for the extradition of aliens, other than permanent residents, to countries with which the U.S. has no extradition treaty, and provides that persons who are believed to be members or representatives of Secretary-of-State-designated "terrorist" organizations be excluded from entry to the U.S.

What this Act does is make "guilt by association" a legitimate principle of criminal and immigration law, authorizing imprisonment of citizens and deportation of immigrants not on the basis of any act, but on the basis of groups with whom they associate. It allows the Executive Branch to invidiously blacklist any of hundreds of organizations and individuals without meaningful judicial review. By criminalizing constitutionally protected political activity, the Act would permit increased FBI surveillance and infiltration of political, religious, and charitable groups engaged in non-violent humanitarian solidarity work. The Act, in its establishing the procedures for the expedited hearings of a Removal Court, denies the elemental due process right to confront anything more than a government-prepared summary of the evi-

dence. The Act allows unlimited preventive detention of immigrants accused of associating with designated terrorist groups when no showing is made that the immigrant is him or herself a threat to security or might flee. The Act further allows the use of illegally obtained evidence in immigration proceedings and reintroduces ideological exclusion into U.S. immigration law.

The most draconian aspect of this Act is that it makes the constitutionally protected, non-violent political activity of rendering humanitarian support to a designated organization a crime and would allow for the freezing of funds in U.S. financial institutions. Thus an organization could be organized and incorporated by U.S. citizens, obtain a tax exempt status, and find its funds frozen by a bank and its officers and contributors subject to criminal charges, fines, and imprisonment.

The Clinton administration has been the most ardent proponent of this law because of difficulties and reverses that it, and the Bush and Reagan administrations before it, had experienced in federal court challenges to attempts at deporting seven Palestinians and one Kenyan from California on purely ideological grounds (first under the McCarran-Walter Act and, after that was repealed, under other ideological provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act) and efforts to exclude a Palestinian permanent resident Fouad Rafeedie based on secret evidence. (See *ADC v. Reno*, 70 F.3d 1045 (9th Circuit, 1995) and *Rafeedie v. INS*, 880 F.2d 506 (CD.Cir. 1989) and 795 F. Supp. 13 (CD.D.C. 1992).)

While the targets of this legislation are immigrants and U.S. citizen supporters of struggles abroad, particularly in Third World countries, its intent is abundantly clear: to make acceptable the denial of constitutional rights and protection to the most vulnerable and publicly acceptable group — the foreign born and their U.S. citizen supporters. This, of course, makes the targeting of others all that much easier.

The fact that the Act is tailor-made to be selectively enforced, based upon the politics of the time, is the greatest danger to civil liberties and political activists. As the socio-economic gap widens domestically and the disparities between North and South deepen globally, it's

inevitable that opposition and resistance and uprisings will take place, using various forms of violence. The danger is that the brush of terrorism will be used so broadly by those who seek to stamp out resistance and opposition that they will not be bound by any universally agreed-upon definition. Clearly this legislation is intended to embroil political activists in a way the Smith Act was intended to engage and confound the members of the organized left in the U.S. in the 1940s.

At that time, three separate trials against Socialist Workers Party and Communist Party leaders on charges of conspiracy to advocate violent overthrow of the government led to lengthy legal battles, deportations, imprisonment, and blacklistings. That's exactly what this law is intended to accomplish as the Clinton administration proceeds down the path of creating an American police state.

Already the U.S. government has begun the process of attack by a series of high publicity terrorism trials using paid government informers, confessions obtained abroad by foreign law enforcement using torture, selective leaks to the media, high security arrangements intended to create an atmosphere of public fear, and legislation that tramples on constitutional rights and targets the foreign born. We know that combating these efforts will not be an easy task, but it's an effort for which there is no choice.

There are a number of additions to the provisions outlined above that have been passed or are in the legislative pipeline, particularly in the area of wiretaps, on tap and trace, and pen registers, and expanding the use of emergency wiretaps and allowing the use of illegally obtained evidence. Some of these were in the legislation as originally proposed but met with the objection of both conservatives and civil libertarians. It was the conservatives that were fighting them, and Senator Orrin Hatch says the ball seems to be turned on its head. "I remember the days when it was the Democrats who were opposing increasing wiretap authority and the Republicans that were pushing it. But now it's vice versa." □

Will Anti-Terrorism Bill of 1996 Be the New Smith Act?

by Michael Steven Smith

Michael Steven Smith is a civil liberties attorney in New York City. The following is based in part on an article by the author written for the Encyclopedia of the Left and describing the U.S. government's use of the Smith Act against the Communist Party USA in the late 1940s and '50s.

For more on that subject — and on the question of how to build a united mass movement in defense against government repression — see the speech by James P. Cannon, "The Trial of the Stalinist Leaders," excerpted elsewhere in this issue. See also Cannon's Socialism on Trial.

The "Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996" was introduced into Congress by the Clinton administration at the behest of the FBI and passed into law. The law is dangerous. It defines terrorism overbroadly. Activities of groups in any area of conflict around the world would fit the definition. Under the new law supporters of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress could have been imprisoned. It bars humanitarian fund raising, makes banks freeze U.S. accounts of "agents," and greatly reduces the rights of non-citizens to visit or stay in the U.S. It guts state prisoners' constitutional right to appeals, cutting the right to habeas corpus, a right used to challenge illegal incarcerations since the Middle Ages. Poor people and people of color once relied on the right to habeas corpus reviews by the federal courts, since many received inadequate representation of counsel and were innocent.

The Smith Act prosecutions of 1949 are an example of bad faith misuse of the enormous power of the U.S. government to crush political opposition. An examination of how the Smith Act was used in the 1940s and '50s against the leadership of the Communist Party nationwide, as well as its lawyers, is instructive.

The Smith Act of 1940 (Alien and Registration Act) was proposed by Congressman Howard Smith of Virginia, a poll tax supporter and leader of the anti-labor bloc in Congress, and signed into law by "Democratic" President Franklin Roosevelt. It was the first statute since the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 to make mere advocacy of ideas a federal crime.

The Smith Act was first used in 1941, at the start of World War II, against the Socialist Workers Party leadership, which stood at the head of the successful organizing effort to bring over-the-road drivers in a dozen Midwestern states into the Teamsters union, transforming a small craft union into the largest industrial union in the country. The SWP leaders were a significant voice within the trade union movement in opposition to U.S. entry into the second worldwide imperialist war, a war which was not in the interests of rank-and-file unionists or workers in general, either in the U.S. or anywhere in the world. (For more on this issue, see Farrell Dobbs, *Teamster Politics and Teamster Bureaucracy*, and Art Preis, *Labor's Giant Step*.)

The Smith Act prosecution of the American Trotskyists received the Communist Party's support. The Communist leaders were blinded by their uncritical support of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and their hatred of their Trotskyist political opponents as well as by their uncritical support for the U.S. government, despite its aims and class character, during its engagement in World War II. During the war the Stalinists of the CPUSA were the greatest "patriots" and exerted all their efforts to maintain the "no strike pledge," alienating many rank-and-file workers who wanted to fight for their own interests. The Stalinists opposed strikes (such as the one by coal miners in 1943) even though the rich were making huge profits out of the war, while workers' wages were frozen and living standards declined.

With the world in upheaval during and after the bloodiest war in history, the U.S. government broke its wartime alliance with the Soviet bureaucracy and began the Cold War. Domestically the U.S. rulers began an all-out anti-Communist propaganda campaign in the media, buttressed by a witch hunt employing the judicial system.

The successful use of the Smith Act in 1949 by the Truman administration against eleven top leaders of the Communist Party drove a large nail into the coffin, not only of the CPUSA, but of the labor, civil rights, and peace movements, as well as the newly formed Progressive Party, all areas in which the Communists had been very active and influential. Estimates of CP membership in 1948 are 100,000.

The indictments came on the very eve of the Progressive Party convention and were timed to undermine support for this new party. The Communist Party, which was heavily involved with the Progressive Party, had expected that the Progressive Party would garner over six million votes. After the indictments and the election it got less than one million.

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who at the end of the First World War had played a leading role in the government's nationwide persecution and deportation of radicals, Wobblies, and immigrants (the 1919 Palmer raids), suggested the Smith Act indictments to Democratic President Truman in 1948. Truman embraced the idea as a way to outflank his Republican rivals. By going after domestic Communists the govern-

ment also sought to free its hand internationally to subdue "subversion" in Greece, Italy, and France, where Communism was widely popular and the capitalist social system was very shaky. Capitalism had been overthrown by an indigenous revolution in Yugoslavia; a similar revolution was on the march in China and Indochina. Colonial rebellions against European rule were breaking out in Indonesia, India, and elsewhere and threatening to "go socialist." This was the world context in which there was unleashed the most significant political heresy trial in U.S. history. The Cold War was brought home.

The eleven defendants were charged with "conspiracy" only, not with any overt acts. The accusation was that "they conspired...to organize as the Communist Party and willfully to advocate and teach the principles of Marxism-Leninism," which the government alleged to mean "overthrowing and destroying the government of the United States by force and violence" at some unspecified future time. They were also accused of conspiring to "publish and circulate...books, articles, magazines and newspapers advocating the principles of Marxism-Leninism," as interpreted by the prosecution. The Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels, Lenin's *State and Revolution*, and Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism* were placed into evidence as books from which the defendants taught.

Among the eleven were Gil Green, the leader of the Communist Party in Illinois, Eugene Dennis, the national leader, Henry Winston, also a national leader, as well as *Daily Worker* editor John Gates and Gus Hall, who then led the party in Ohio.

The trial took place in Foley Square, just north of Wall Street in New York City. A record 400 police were detailed to the courthouse, helping to conjure up feelings of fear of imminent violence. The trial lasted for nine months, the longest criminal trial in American history.

Judge Harold Medina is shown in the record to have suffused both the trial and pretrial proceedings with consistent prejudicial rulings and quips, both anti-Communist and racist. At one point, he called Black defendant Benjamin J. Davis, a Harvard graduate from a distinguished Southern family, "boy." The jury was selected in a manner as to make all of its members upper middle class. One showed overt prejudice even before the trial started.

The defendants fought the thought-crime nature of the proceedings and the government's false caricature of their views. They explained, to no avail, that they were for majority rule and against violence, except for self-defense. The guilty verdicts, given the climate of hysteria, were foreordained. All eleven were found guilty as charged. Ten got and served five years in federal prison and paid \$10,000 fines. The eleventh, Robert G. Thompson, a bearer of the World War II Distinguished Service Cross for bravery, received his government's gratitude in the form of a three-year sentence. Four went underground, functioning for years before sur-

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James P. Cannon on the Smith Act Trial of 1949 ("The Trial of the Stalinist Leaders")

This speech was delivered at a meeting protesting the trial of the CP leaders, held in Beethoven Hall, New York City, February 4, 1949. The "Comrade Dobbs" referred to is Farrell Dobbs, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and formerly of the Teamsters union.

There is a widespread popular impression that the Communist Party leaders in the dock in the federal courtroom on Foley Square are criminals and ought to be brought to trial. I personally agree with that popular sentiment. The Stalinist leaders are indeed criminals, and they should be tried for their crimes. But we don't agree with this trial. This is a case of the right criminals charged with the wrong crime. And they are being tried in the wrong court.

Like Comrade Dobbs, I could testify as an expert witness on these questions. I hereby publicly offer the lawyers for the Stalinists on trial my services in their defense against false accusations. I have qualifications as such an expert, as follows:

I was an active member of the Communist Party from its foundation in 1919 until 1928, that is, nine years. I am a student of Marxist and Leninist theory, which the Stalinists are falsely accused of teaching. I have been a working opponent of Stalinism for twenty years.

And, finally, I am familiar with the free-speech section of the United States Constitution which provides that "Congress shall pass no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." I learned that in school, and then had an opportunity to read it over again and ponder over it for thirteen months in a federal "university" at Sandstone penitentiary [where Cannon and 17 other Trotskyist defendants were imprisoned after their conviction under the Smith act — see Cannon's *Letters from Prison*.]

Foley Square Trial Wrong on Three Counts

So, armed with these qualifications, I would challenge the indictment of the leaders of the Stalinist party on three grounds:

1. The crime charged against them — that they "conspired to advocate" the overthrow of the United States government by force and violence — is not a crime in this country under the Constitution.
2. The Stalinists are not even guilty of this crime that is not a crime. They do not advocate the overthrow of the United States government by force and violence or otherwise.
3. The federal court of American capitalism has no right to try them, because the crimes of

Stalinism have not been directed against the system this court represents. The Stalinist leaders should be placed on trial before a court of the international working class for high crimes and misdemeanors against the working class of the world, and of this country, too, over a long period of years; high crimes and misdemeanors ranging from perversions of Marxism to class collaboration and support of the imperialist government of the United States in the Second World War, and including every kind of offense against the ethics of the workers' movement, from falsification and forgery to frame-up and murder.

The Stalinists are guilty of these crimes. The Stalinists are among the greatest criminals in history. But the present trial in the federal court of the Southern District of New York in Foley Square is a frame-up against them, that they advocated the overthrow of the capitalist government of the United States. The whole course of Stalinism, since its inception, has served to support world capitalism and not to overthrow it. Stalinism began twenty-five years ago with the promulgation of its basic theory of "socialism in one country," meaning Russia. That signified: "No socialism in any other country." It signified the renunciation of all perspectives of international revolution: an offer of the Soviet bureaucracy to compromise with world capitalism at the expense of the international workers' movement. That is the theory from which Stalinism originated.

The practice followed from the theory: the expulsions, the frame-ups and mass murders of tens of thousands of Bolsheviks who made the revolution and stood in reality for international revolution against all capitalist institutions; the conduct of the Stalinists in Spain, where they propped up and supported the bourgeois government at the cost of mass murders of Spanish revolutionists; the "people's front" policy of collaboration with capitalist parties and participation in capitalist governments; the Soviet-Nazi pact, whereby the Stalinists joined hands with Hitler in launching the Second World War; the Anglo-Soviet-American [alliance], under which the American Stalinists sold out the working class of the United States and lined up to support the war.

Yes, the record clearly shows that the Stalinists are criminals. But the capitalist court is disqualified — by this record of known facts and by the clear provision of the United States Constitution and even by considerations of gratitude for services received from the Stalinists, especially during the war — to try them.

A Vital Interest in Protesting This Trial

On the other hand, despite the fact that we indict the Stalinists as criminals on the record, we and all other workers' organizations, who have reason for neither love nor gratitude toward the Stalinists, have a vital interest in protesting against their prosecution in this particular case. This is the purpose of our meeting tonight.

This is not a criminal trial of alleged actions in violation of definite constitutional laws. This is a political trial. The freedom to "advocate" any doctrine, including revolution, is basic to free speech and democracy. This trial strikes at the very root of these democratic rights of all workers' organizations.

It should be borne in mind that the indictment against the Stalinists does not charge them with a single action against the United States government. The sole basis of the trial is that they conspired to "advocate" the overthrow of the United States government. That is to say, they conspired to speak and write.

The very provision of the Constitution which I have referred to was designed specifically to prevent Congress from passing laws which would proscribe the "advocacy" of any doctrine. But this indictment under the Smith Act — the same law under which we were prosecuted and convicted in Minneapolis — is an indictment against speaking and writing. Now, once you establish the precedent that it is possible to proscribe one kind of talk or "advocacy," you lay the ground for the suppression of any other. You legitimize the suppression of free speech and the free press.

Unfortunately, our trial and conviction under the Smith Act in Minneapolis and our subsequent imprisonment and the refusal of the Supreme Court to review the case, has already set one precedent. This was a heavy blow at free speech and democracy in this

country, and the Stalinists on trial are suffering from this precedent.

Danger of a Reinforced Smith Act Precedent

It is true, as Comrade Dobbs, pointed out, and as I think all of you know, that the Stalinists did all they could, in every dirty way they knew, to help the prosecution put us in prison. They did everything they could to keep us in prison for our full term. It is true that these scoundrels even tried to sabotage and break up our defense committee, to prevent it from raising funds from sympathetic organizations to pay the lawyers. If the Stalinists had had their way, we would not have been able to employ a legal defense to make a legal record. Their shameful conduct paved the way for their own prosecution under the same law.

That is all true, as has been related so graphically here tonight by Comrade Dobbs. But that cannot determine the policy of a revolutionary organization, or of any workers' organization for that matter. Sheer self-interest, for us and for every honest workers' organization, weighs more than sentiments of revenge in this case.

The Larger Issue: Trend Toward Thought Control

If the precedent established in our case is reinforced by another conviction in this case of the Stalinists, and sanctioned by public opinion until it becomes accepted as custom, the traditional freedoms which the workers' movement needs for enlightened advancement will yield to new encroachments all along the line. The ominous trend toward thought control under a police state will be greatly accelerated.

That is the larger issue, transcending all other considerations, in the trial of the Stalinists now going on. That is why we are so deeply concerned about it and appeal to all workers' organizations, especially to those who supported us in our trial, to protest against the political trial of the Stalinists. I think we have made it sufficiently clear that our point of view in this case is not motivated by Christian forgiveness or soft-headedness, and even less by political conciliation with perfidious Stalinism. Our stand is based solely on our concept of the most vital interest of the working class and its future struggles.

Brightest Pages of American Labor History: A Proud Tradition of Solidarity

It used to be taken for granted in the labor movement that, despite all differences and disputes between different parties and factions and groups, all would unite and cooperate when any section of the labor movement was under attack in the courts of the class enemy. We have come a long way from the old tradition of solidarity against persecution and frame-up. It was a good tradition and we should try in some measure to restore it.

Some of the brightest pages of American labor history were written in united struggles for justice and free speech. The labor movement of today, which did not fall from the skies, is the product and fruit of many struggles in the past, and owes a great deal to these united-front struggles for free speech and justice and freedom of organization.

The Movement in Defense of Moyer and Haywood, 1906

My first interest in the socialist and labor movement was aroused by the great protest movement in behalf of Moyer and Haywood in 1906. They were arrested and brought to trial on trumped-up charges of murder, but their real offense was their labor activities, their militancy and incorruptibility. They were not left alone to defend themselves as best they could. They were leaders of the Western Federation of Miners, which was then affiliated to the IWW. Nevertheless, all sections of the labor movement recognized the threat to themselves and their whole future in the attempt to legitimize the framing-up of these labor leaders.

A tremendous machinery of protest and defense was built up, from one end of the country to the other, in the form of "Moyer-Haywood Conferences." All kinds of organizations, representing every section of the labor movement and all points of view, sent delegates to these united-front conferences. AFL and independent unions, the IWW, the Socialist Party, the Socialist Labor Party, the anarchist groups, and groups of liberals and people of good will — all marched together under the "Moyer-Haywood Conferences" to make a mighty movement in defense of the accused. The ground shook with their tread.

The conspirators who had sought to take the lives of Moyer and Haywood were pushed back. The frame-up was defeated by the threat of the united workers' movement. The great Bill Haywood, of beloved memory, was right when he spoke to the first great mass meeting of 200,000 in Chicago that greeted him on his release from jail, and said: "We owe our lives to your solidarity."

The same solidarity was shown in defense of Ettor and Giovannitti, leaders of the Lawrence strike of 1912; and in the defense of Mooney and Billings. It was true to a considerable extent in the case of the IWW leaders during the First World War, and in the cases of Debs and Sacco and Vanzetti. All class-conscious workers felt it to be an elementary duty, as a matter of course, to join together against the attacks of the class enemy.

ILD Continues the Great Tradition

The Communist Party itself was once the exponent of this proud tradition of solidarity. The International Labor Defense, which was formed in 1935 under the direct inspiration of the Communist Party, was specifically dedicated to the principle of nonpartisan labor defense, to the defense of any member of the

working-class movement, regardless of his views, who suffered persecution by the capitalist courts because of his activities or his opinions.

I can speak with authority about that because I participated in the planning of the ILD and was the National Secretary from its inception until we were thrown out of the Communist Party in 1928. The International Labor Defense was really "born in Moscow"; that I must admit, although it was strictly an American institution in its methods and practices. The ILD was born in Moscow in discussion with Bill Haywood. The old fighter, who was exiled from America with a twenty-year sentence hanging over him, was deeply concerned about the persecution of workers in America. He wanted to have something done for the almost forgotten men lying in jail all over the country.

There were over a hundred men — labor organizers, strike leaders, and radicals — in prisons at that time in the United States: IWWs, anarchists, Mooney and Billings, Sacco and Vanzetti, McNamara and Schmidt, the Centralia prisoners, etc. In discussions, there in Moscow in 1925, we worked out the plan and conception of the International Labor Defense as a nonpartisan body that would defend any member of the working-class movement, regardless of his opinion or affiliation, if he came under persecution by capitalist law.

I never will forget those meetings with Bill Haywood. When we completed the plans, which were later to become reality in the formation of the ILD, and when I promised him that I would come back to America and see to it that the plans did not remain on paper, that we would really go to work in earnest and come to the aid of men forgotten in prison, the old lion's eyes — his one eye, rather — flashed with the old fire. He said, "I wish I could go back to give a hand in that job." He couldn't come back because he was an outlaw in the United States, not for any crime he had committed but for all the good things he had done for the American working class. Up to the end of his life he continued to be an active participant in the work of the ILD by correspondence.

The plans for the International Labor Defense as a nonpartisan defense organization, made there in Bill Haywood's room in Moscow, were carried out in practice during its first years. There were 106 class-war prisoners in the United States — scores of IWWs, members railroaded in California, Kansas, Utah, and other states under criminal-syndicalist laws. We located a couple of obscure anarchists in Rhode Island; a group of AFL coal miners in West Virginia; two labor organizers in Thomaston, Maine — besides the more prominent and better known prisoners mentioned before. They added up to 106 people in prison in this land of the free at that time for activities in the labor movement.

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Marxist Theory for the 1990s

Paul Le Blanc, ed., *From Marx to Gramsci: A Reader in Revolutionary Marxist Politics* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1996), \$22.50, 350 pp.

reviewed by Joe Auciello

The late Ernest Mandel, one of the Marxist activists and intellectuals to whom this new anthology is dedicated, once wrote that revolutionaries of our time would have to be equally adept both on the barricades and in the library. In life, only the rare individual achieves this ideal, a goal more to be strived for than attained. Perhaps a book, rather than a person, can more readily blend the qualities of the political fighter and the university professor. That is what Paul Le Blanc has accomplished with *From Marx to Gramsci*.

This anthology, with thoughtful and ample selections from Marx and Engels, Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky, and Gramsci, and a comprehensive introduction by Le Blanc, will be equally valuable to the scholar, student, and activist. It is a work ideally suited to the classroom and the class struggle.

The readings are carefully chosen and representative of their authors' notable theories and contributions to Marxism. The sample from Rosa Luxemburg, for instance, highlights her ideas of the mass strike, reform versus revolution, and imperialism. The selections from Lenin show his ideas about the party, nationalism, and the state. All of the selections are preceded by a brief biographical and critical note by Le Blanc which creates a useful context for the readings.

Given the limits of a one-volume anthology, Le Blanc has successfully exercised creative editorial judgment in his selections. The readings blend familiar and obligatory titles like *The Communist Manifesto* (deleting material that is only of historical interest) with lesser-known, shorter works that summarize the essential points of books which are too lengthy for inclusion. Hence, Lenin's classic *The State and Revolution* will not be found here, but his 1919 speech "The State" is included. Similarly, Trotsky's masterful 1932 speech "In Defense of the Russian Revolution" stands in for his massive *History of the Russian Revolution*.

These shorter, self-contained pieces convey the essential themes of the longer and better-known works. Reading the selections Le Blanc has chosen will provide students with a good base of knowledge, a strong foundation for further learning. Books like *What Is to Be Done?* and *State and Revolution* are easily available in various editions. Also, the annotated bibliography included in *From Marx to Gramsci* will help guide those students and socialists who wish to continue and deepen their studies.

Le Blanc has not made an idiosyncratic or tendentious selection. He accurately highlights the revolutionary continuity that spans the century from *The Communist Manifesto* to the assassination of Leon Trotsky. Friedrich Engels, in his "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx," noted that Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat...

That statement from Engels sums up the spirit which animates this collection of Marxist literature. Le Blanc's book, then, is a corrective to the prevailing trends in Marxology, of academic Marxism. Advocates of these views utilize Marxism only as a method of study, for analysis of literature, cultural studies, and so forth. However much Marxism may be applied in this way, Le Blanc rightly asserts the primacy of Marxism as an instrument of revolutionary political struggle, as Marx himself would have wished.

In Part One, the 122-page "Introduction to Revolutionary Marxist Politics," Le Blanc identifies and explains the essential concepts of revolutionary Marxist theory. Readers will find a carefully detailed outline of Marxism as a philosophy, theory of history, analysis of capitalism, and a political program leading to a vision of a socialist future. In addition, Le Blanc provides simple capsule summaries of Social Democracy, Stalinism, Maoism, fascism, and concepts like Marxist theories of imperialism, permanent revolution, uneven and combined development, and much more. To put it briefly, Le Blanc's Introduction constitutes a concise Marxist encyclopedia.

In this work Le Blanc presents no new or startling discoveries, nor does he advance any singular theory. This observation should not suggest a weakness in the content and design of the book, whose purpose is to provide readers with a solid grounding in Marxist theory. Originality in this domain would be capricious. Le Blanc firmly and clearly asserts the revolutionary tradition established long ago by the writers included in this volume. He develops a tightly woven, richly documented argument to show the underlying continuity of theoretical orientation and practical political perspective which unites the founders and builders of revolutionary Marxism. As he is widely read in the literature of and about Marxism, Le Blanc is able to draw on his extensive knowledge to illustrate the continuity and development of revolutionary Marxist ideas.

Clarity is the primary virtue of Le Blanc's prose style. Complex ideas are broken down and their basic elements are enumerated, so

that the theories can finally be grasped in their fullness. Le Blanc's writing style highlights the logic of the ideas under examination, developing these step by step. Each chapter in his historical overview is heavily and usefully footnoted. These numerous references are well integrated into the text. A reader does not feel that Le Blanc's encyclopedic knowledge is demonstrated for its own sake; his plentiful references help to show the development, the controversial nature, or the multi-sidedness of the theories under discussion.

To do less would be to oversimplify, but Le Blanc is not guilty of condescending to his readers. Le Blanc's writing strikes and maintains a balance between simplicity and complexity: clarity in exposition that respects and reveals the depth of the theories. Much of the success of Le Blanc's historical overview is due to his ability to write in an informed and clear style.

As a result of these numerous qualities, this anthology is especially recommended for college students or participants in radical study groups. Socialist veterans, also, will find in this book a useful tool to sharpen their understanding of Marxist fundamentals.

Le Blanc's "Introduction to Revolutionary Marxist Politics" concludes with a timely question in a chapter entitled, "Does Revolutionary Marxism Have a Future?" Le Blanc concedes the failure of revolutionary Marxism in the late 20th century, acknowledging that it has failed to achieve the goals advanced by the theorists on whom we have focused our attention — that is, Marx, Engels, et al.

Do these setbacks confirm the views of those who proclaim that History ends with a triumphant capitalism? Here Le Blanc considers the theoretical objections to Marxism raised by informed, prominent critics like Sidney Hook, Bertram D. Wolfe, and James Burnham. They considered Marxism as elitist and undemocratic, with Stalinism as the inevitable, if unintended, outcome of Marxist doctrine. Eventually they all rejected Marxism outright.

Marxists are able to refute these conclusions, and Le Blanc presents the necessary rebuttal in these words:

The fact that post-capitalist societies created through popular revolutions have resulted in bureaucratic dictatorships instead of socialist democracies can be explained not by the impossibility of socialism or democracy but by specific historical circumstances which were not inevitable and which can be overcome. Socialism can only be realized on a world scale, and particularly requires that advanced industrial countries be involved in bringing it into being.

Le Blanc also considers the prognosis for Marxism in light of the fall of the Communist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern

Europe. He offers a coolly objective political assessment and does not minimize the problems that loom large for those who advocate the revolutionary Marxist perspective, noting especially that the power of a correct theory generally has much less impact on popular consciousness than the power of a mighty collapse.

Le Blanc does not predict the future, nor does he promise that revolutionary Marxism will be transformed into a relevant plan of

action. He does, however, convincingly demonstrate that Marxism is one of the most comprehensive and intellectually powerful prescriptions for social change ever developed, showing that the revolutionary Marxist perspective adds up to an approach to reality and a body of thought which is irreplaceable for those wishing to come to grips with the past and the future.

Marxism cannot be learned solely from books, and a cadre cannot be developed in the

library. Experience in political movements and in the class struggle is also necessary to fully understand Marxist concepts and to develop revolutionaries. Yet Marxists do not exalt activism at the expense of theory. There is much to learn and there are many books to read. But if one book can be recommended as the starting point, it is this anthology edited by Paul Le Blanc, *From Marx to Gramsci*. □

Union Busting in the 1990s — What We Can Learn From the Past to Fight It

Continued from page 14

nized than those of generations past. African American, Latino, other nationalities and women constitute a great and progressive force in today's labor movement.

Yes, there are millions of unemployed, desperate for work, especially with the latest round of welfare cuts approved by both the Democrats and Republicans. Sure, we face hostile judges, injunctions, and bought-off cops. And, yes, we have too many labor leaders who are timid and fearful of any great confrontation.

But we have no choice. We cannot, and we will not, surrender all that has been gained in the past sixty years. The solution is simple and terrifying. Instead of one-sided class war, where we get beaten up and crushed down, labor must be willing to fight a TWO-SIDED CLASS WAR, where the labor movement unleashes the entire strength of our forces into the battle. This means a broad program to organize the unorganized, including workfare workers and even prison labor, into unions. This means fighting all forms of racism, bigotry, and anti-immigrant hysteria. This means real international solidarity among workers of all countries.

Just as in the 1930s, not every strike today can become an historic test of wills, a critical political confrontation. But the Detroit Newspaper Strike can. We are in labor's stronghold with 350,000 union members in the southeast Michigan area. The unions here have enormous resources of personnel, funds, equipment, lawyers, media. Last year, in the week following Labor Day, the newspaper strike stood at the edge of such a great confrontation. All eyes were on the struggle. Thousands of strikers and supporters stood

shoulder to shoulder, unafraid of hundreds of riot cops, spitting in the face of injunctions, ready to do whatever it took to win the strike. Behind these thousands stood tens of thousands more workers ready to come forward. Ten union locals, some of the biggest in the UAW, as well as locals on strike, even voted to support the call for a general strike to back the newspaper strike. A real workers' militia was forming in combat operations every Saturday night.

Labor was in a position to declare that union busting was going to be stopped here and now. Does anyone really think that the banks, the corporate bosses, or the politicians would have allowed this strike to escalate any further? Do you think they could afford to let things in Detroit get out of hand, setting an example for the many millions of frustrated workers and unemployed around the country? It isn't likely. And if things had escalated it would have meant the re-emergence of a real fighting labor movement.

Labor is not best prepared for long, drawn-out strikes. Trying to outwait the bosses "one day longer" ignores the multi-billion dollar nature of today's corporate giants. That's not a winning strategy that can reverse labor's decline.

Today's leaders were not brought up in the fire of the 1930s. Most had no part in the civil rights battles of the '50s or '60s or in the militant anti-war movement of the '60s and '70s. They are holding back from the edge of the great unknown of class war. But the militant spirit of the rank and file is being felt at the highest levels of organized labor. Just last year the old Kirkland-Donahue leadership of the AFL-CIO was voted out and Sweeney,

Trumka, and Chavez-Thompson were put in office.

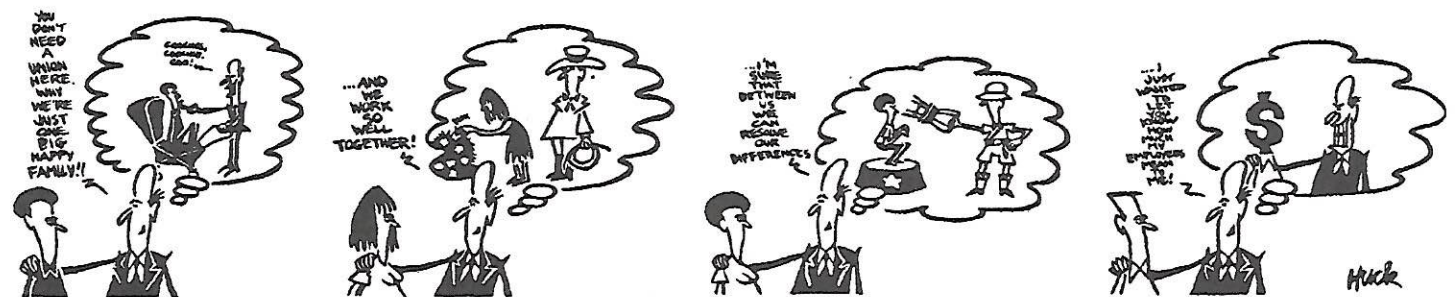
This is only a reflection of what is happening below. It will not be leaders who show the way, just as in the 1930s it wasn't the leaders. It is the mass of rank and file, in alliance with community organizations, who can and must break through all the barriers that stand in our way.

An idea has been circulating for many months now. The idea for a massive, national labor solidarity march to be held in Detroit to support the newspaper workers and say NO! to union busting. 850 strikers began a new appeal for this march. The Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions has now put its support behind it. Workers around the country are always asking — "When will the call go out for us to come to Detroit?" Now we can say the campaign is on to get that call issued soon.

We must all get behind this effort and build it from below. But we need to let our leaders know that we cannot continue as before, that masses of Detroit newspaper strikers ought to be listened to and they are demanding action NOW!

And who is to say what could happen if hundreds of thousands of workers start out in a march? Who is to say what inventive new or OLD tactics wouldn't arise from such a massive mobilization?

The newspaper strike is not dead. The strikers continue to show that they will not disappear. Support continues to pour in from around the nation. What is needed is a clarion call for ACTION that unties labors hands to give the enemies of labor a taste of our own brand of class warfare. □



An Introduction to the History of the Cleveland Labor Movement, 1865-1929

by Jean Y. Tussey

The most important heritage of the Cleveland labor movement is the wealth of experience of the working men and women of this city in their conscious efforts to organize themselves to advance their common interests as wage earners.

An examination of that experience in the period between the Civil War and the Great Depression is a useful beginning for the study of the roots of today's labor movement and the sources of its strengths and weaknesses.

Documents for such a study are the materials that show what the people who built the local labor movement were thinking and saying about their immediate needs and their perspectives for the future, and how they organized toward those ends. Sources include letters, speeches, newspapers; minutes, correspondence, resolutions and proceedings of union meetings, conventions, and committees; poetry, songs, drama, history, biography, autobiography, and novels — particularly by or about workers.

In Cleveland the common experiences of both European and American-born wage workers combined with their different cultural and political histories in shaping the programs, labor organizations, and activities that they developed to cope with the impact on them of capitalist industrial growth.

This was not an exceptional local development. The industrial revolution on both sides of the Atlantic had produced a class of wage workers in urban centers, had taught them through their daily struggle for existence that they had separate interests from those of the employers and property-owning classes, and that they had to organize independently to protect their interests in order to survive.

The historical record repeatedly reveals that the effort to unite workers to advance their long-term concerns as well as their immediate needs was a class-conscious tendency, as was that of their adversaries of the industrialist capitalist class that emerged triumphant from the Civil War.

The history of the local labor movement from 1865 to 1929 is important because that was the period of the city's most dramatic growth as an industrial center. The population grew from 43,417 on the eve of the Civil War to 900,429 by 1930; from 37th place in the 1850s to fifth place among American cities by 1920. The work force multiplied by thirteen: from 30,211 in 1870 to 394,898 in 1930.¹ Modern corporations and unions were born and developed patterns of conflict that were already inherent in the social relations of production firmly established before the Civil War.

The First Strike

Cleveland in embryo was clearly class-divided on the basis of capitalist property relations. William Ganson Rose, author of *Cleveland: The Making of a City*, tells the story of how the first employees here improved their contract with the first employer in 1796.

General Moses Cleaveland was a shareholder in the Connecticut Land Company. "The land company had real estate to sell, and the promoters were anxious to realize a return on their investment as speedily as possible." Moses Cleaveland was commissioned to survey the Western Reserve lands.

"In late summer, General Cleaveland's surveyors, chain bearers and technicians threatened to quit unless more profitable arrangements were made. They had found their work tedious, the swamps dangerous, and the food scarce. On September 30, forty-one of them settled for equal shares in township No. 8...each man pledging faithful service to the company to the end of the year..."²

The Village of Cleveland, with a population of less than two hundred, was chartered by the Ohio Legislature December 23, 1814, and three years later the first printing press was brought here and the community's first newspaper started.

The Cleveland Gazette and Commercial Register did not last long, but other papers followed and on November 3, 1834, a handful of printers got together at the Commercial Coffee House off the Public Square, held a meeting and passed a resolution.

Their purpose was "to establish and maintain fair, just and honorable wages for our services" and "to fearlessly and without favor endeavor to detect and expose every attempt at oppression among employers."

They expressed their solidarity with other organized workers by proclaiming themselves "auxiliary to the Columbus Typographical Society and also to the New York Trades Union."

They also linked their special economic and political interests in a resolution that "Journeyman Printers owe a debt of gratitude to those statesmen and legislators who have contributed to the rights and privileges of working men."³ This occurred when Cleveland was a town of less than 5,000 persons.



The author (at far right) with Gene Stepanik, James Manning, and Alice Matej. Stepanik, Matej, and Tussey are officers of the Cleveland Labor History Society.

1. William Ganson Rose, *Cleveland: The Making of a City* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1950), pp. 296, 873; Naphtali Hoffman, "The Process of Economic Development in Cleveland, 1825-1920" (unpublished doctoral manuscript, Case Western Reserve University, 1981), pp. 68, 260; U.S. Census reports, 1870, 1930.
2. Rose, pp. 26, 31.
3. *Cleveland Herald*, Nov. 10, 1834, reprinted in *Cleveland Typographical News*, Vol. I. No. 2 (Feb., 1928).



The printers were not alone. Other segments of the working class were meeting, discussing social conditions, and acting on them in the 1830s. The Carpenters and Joiners Society of Cleveland and Ohio City (west of the Cuyahoga River), and the Tailors Society held separate and some joint meetings which were advertised in the *Herald*. There were also “Workingmen’s meetings” to which “mechanics generally” were invited. Shorter hours — for carpenters, a ten-hour day — were sought in the early part of the decade, and the demand for wages in cash was a major concern following the panic of 1837.⁴

Mechanics and Laborers Protest

On April 5, 1843, the mechanics and laborers of the city held a protest demonstration against payment for their services in store orders and other substitutes for money. About 350 persons marched with placards behind a band, then held a mass meeting in Public Square. It produced results that were “partially successful,” according to the *Plain Dealer*.⁵

In a letter to the editor of the *Herald* on February 10, 1847 — before Karl Marx wrote the *Communist Manifesto* — a Cleveland “Mechanic” said that he was “trying to discover the reason why it is that in proportion to the increase of wealth in a country, the very producers of it sink into a state of dependence and degradation; why it is that our bodies are stupefied with protracted toil, and our minds have neither leisure nor capacity for higher attainments.”

In the following year the Colored Young Men’s Union Society held public debates on abolition and colonization as solutions to the problem of slave labor. Women voiced protests against the unequal treatment of female labor. The Association of United Mechanics heard speakers on reform proposals of the day such as “the benefits resulting from free soil and land limitations.”⁶ By 1851 the necessity for collective action by workers was so generally recognized that a journeyman printer was able to write: “Union is strength in any department, and especially so in the printing department. This, we presume, will not be denied. Iso-

lated individuals, in any undertaking, are powerless compared with those who associate themselves together.”⁷

The panic of 1857 sharpened both the perceptions and the struggles over the conflicting needs of capital and labor. The editor of the *Leader* wrote in June 1858 that “the unemployed in the cities and towns from week to week and month to month are to be numbered in the thousands. In all the cities, begging for work has become the order of the day and in some, the pressing demand for work or bread has led to demonstrations never before witnessed in the towns of the abundant West.”

“Cleveland is included. The remedy,” he advised, “must be in the increase of manufactures. Let some of the capital that must otherwise go to the support of the poor be invested in the iron works and there will be a beginning to the end.”⁸

“Numerous Workmen” had a different view of the problem and how to approach its solution. They advertised a meeting August 7 “for laboring men to consider causes that have brought about a state of unemployment of their fellow men, and to propose means, if possible, for their mutual relief.”

A Workingmen’s Party

In the lively meetings and heated discussions that followed, two main lines of difference emerged that were to surface repeatedly in the Cleveland labor movement. M.A. Henshaw proposed that “for the purpose of more fully perfecting our wishes, we recommend the organization of an entire new political party, without regard to any of the present organizations, to be denominated the Working Men’s Party, whose principles shall be founded in justice, in wisdom, and in truth.”

Opposed to this perspective of independent working class political action were those aligned with John P. Gribben, who based themselves on “principles of vital importance to all classes of the community” and called the advocates of a Workingmen’s Party “a band of unorganized and dissatisfied persons.” Attempts to unite the two groups on a common platform were unsuccessful as Gribben proceeded to write letters to political candidates and raise funds to publish his own newspaper “devoted to the interests of Working Men.”⁹

Independent political organization was suspended during the Civil War years of 1861–1865. An uneasy truce in the interest of a military victory for the North modified but did not end union activity. At the beginning, the demand for labor in the highly profitable war industries such as iron and clothing made some concessions by employers easy to obtain.

In December 1862 the Cleveland Typographical Union was able to demand and win a wage increase for printers without a strike. In 1863 the National Typographical Union held its convention in Cleveland’s City Council chambers, William Sylvis visited the city to rebuild the National Moulders Union, and Cigar Makers Local No. 17 was founded.¹⁰

But by the spring of 1864 employer resistance to wage increases to meet the rising cost of living hardened. This was expressed in a *Leader* editorial on February 8: “The laboring classes of the North are being drawn into war. Wages are on the increase because of the scarcity of skilled labor. If the new call for 500,000 men

4. *Cleveland Herald*, March 23, June 7, July 29, Dec. 3, 1836.

5. *Cleveland Herald*, April 5, 1843.

6. Rose, p.211; Rossell H. Davis, *Black Americans in Cleveland* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1972), pp. 121–122; *Daily True Democrat*, Jan. 10, June 16, 1848.

7. *Daily True Democrat*, Aug. 16, 1851.

8. *Cleveland Leader*, June 16, 17, 1858.

9. *Cleveland Leader*, Aug. 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, 23, 28, Sept. 21, 22, 24, Oct. 20, 22, 25, 30, Nov. 16, 1858.

10. *Cleveland Leader*, Nov. 24, Dec. 9, 1862; Rose, p. 321; Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1947), p. 347.

goes through... more men will be needed, and prices will go higher... We need skillful artisans and working men. The remedy is to be found in immigration."

In May the editor again expressed concern about the effect on the labor supply when the volunteer militia and state draft would take 40,000 men. "Some efficient management might induce larger numbers of... immigrants to come to Ohio, instead of lodging, like driftwood, in New York City or being carried to fields of labor further west..."

When union printers requested a raise that year, the proprietors of the *Leader* and *Plain Dealer* rejected the demand and locked out those who struck in protest.¹¹

The Protest Against the Newton Bill

On April 15, 1865, six days after Lee surrendered at Appomattox, ending the Civil War, the *Leader* reported a remarkable event:

"A tremendous assembly of working men of this city, estimated at 4,000 or 5,000 gathered... yesterday afternoon" at the park to hear speeches and to protest against passage by the legislature of Ohio of the pending Newton bill. "This act provides that anyone entering into any league or combinations for the purpose of threatening or forcibly preventing anyone from engaging in any employment at any wages or compensation, shall, on conviction, be fined not more than \$200 nor less than ten dollars and shall be confined in the dungeon of the county jail on bread and water for not more than 20 days nor less than five days. This protest is a general movement of the working men of the city, not of a clique or partisan concern. This Newton bill, says Johnathon C. Finchner [sic], president of the International Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths, proposes to make criminals of about 40,000 of Ohio's best working men and aims to break up all combinations of laboring men..."

At a time when the total population of Cleveland was less than fifty thousand, and more than 44 percent of that total was of foreign origin, the organization of a workers' meeting of that size in defense of union rights was evidence of the level of viability and solidarity that the Cleveland labor movement had attained.¹²

After the defeat of the South the victorious capitalist industrialists turned to a concerted union-busting campaign to solve their problems of inflation at the expense of workers' wages. They demanded concessions, instituted wage cuts, mechanization, speed-ups, and longer hours of labor, and fired, locked out, and blacklisted workers who protested or engaged in union activity. They used the courts, the police, and the legislatures to supplement their direct economic power as owners and employers.

The response of the workers was to organize themselves to fight back by whatever means were necessary and possible.

Cleveland became an important center of union activity. Capable young leaders emerged in the course of the strikes and organizing activities of the early 1870s. Representatives of skilled workers like the printers, coopers, machinists, and blacksmiths, molders and those in the building trades actively participated in efforts to unite in national unions of their respective trades, and to form local and national associations of all organized workers.

By 1873 the city was a frequent site for labor conventions and it was the national headquarters of the Coopers' Union, the Machinists' and Blacksmiths' Union, and the Brotherhood of Loco-

motive Engineers. The Cleveland Workingmen's Association, formed in 1868, became the Cleveland Labor Union, affiliated to the National Labor Union in 1869. The Industrial Council of Cuyahoga County was the central body in 1873.

Industrial Congress

Martin A. Foran, president of the Coopers, and John Fehrenbatch, president of the Machinists' and Blacksmiths' national union, initiated the call for the Industrial Congress that convened in Cleveland July 15, 1873. Present were "between 75 and 100 delegates from all parts of the country, representing all legitimate trades." Many had been active in the National Labor Union but felt it had become too preoccupied with political and legislative reform activities. The preamble of the new Congress, drafted by its president, Robert Schilling of the Coopers, stressed the fact that the necessity of the hour was "the organization, consolidation and cooperation of the producing masses."¹³

The Cleveland *Leader* viewed with alarm the growing solidarity in the labor movement and conducted an unrelenting campaign of vituperation, personal attack, and red-baiting against trade union organizers and officers. When local telegraphers joined a national strike in January 1870 against Western Union, in sympathy with two San Francisco employees fired for protesting a wage cut, the *Leader* saw "the spirit of the English trade union... pervading the entire working class in this country."

"For the past two years, "the editor explained, "well established firms have been fortunate to continue their business without actual loss. Under these conditions, the price of labor must be reduced... Rude and uneducated labor may thwart and annoy men of superior intelligence, but in the end, the employers will win..."¹⁴

In January 1871 the paper reported 100,000 coal miners out on strike, and the editor said: "If it has come to be a principle among workingmen that they shall commit the whole body to the cause of a fraction without any regard to the rights of employers or the general good, then the system of labor organization is an evil which cannot be too speedily eradicated by the application both of public reprobation and legislative enactment."¹⁵

The 1873 Industrial Congress was called "another step in the attempt of the 'Union bosses' to take charge of and control the interests of laboring men." Machinists and Blacksmiths president John Fehrenbatch was referred to as "Fehren botch... who represents the worst, and most dangerous element of his class... a man who incites working men to revolt against their employers, and helps to make them discontented, and mutinous." Fehrenbatch, Schilling, Foran, and Joslin were frequently called "communist" misleaders of the working men.¹⁶

William Joslin Replies

William Joslin finally replied in a letter to the editor October 24, 1873:

"You seem to take great delight in following close to my heels with ridicule, false reports and blackguardism. It is due me to set myself square and right, before the public, after so much falsifying as the newspapers... have given me, and then give some reasons why the profound editor, or editors, of the *Leader* follow me so closely.

"In the first place I am a working man, and have been for the last forty years, and have studied the labor question for the same length of time, and I think I should know something about it..."

11. *Cleveland Leader*, July 11, Dec. 17, 1864.

12. Rose, pp. 296, 361.

13. T.V. Powderly, *Thirty Years of Labor, 1859-1889* (Columbus, Ohio: Excelsior, 1889), pp. 106-116; *Cleveland Leader*, July 15, 17, 18, 19, 1873.

14. *Cleveland Leader*, Jan. 4, 5, 1870.

15. *Cleveland Leader*, Jan. 4, 1871.

16. *Cleveland Leader*, July 4, Jan. 23, Sept. 16, Oct. 6, 1873; March 3, 1874.

What I know is by studying the past, observing the present and projecting these facts into the future which is as clear and certain as a simple problem in mathematics. It is these facts the capitalists, swindlers, etc., are afraid the working class will learn, and when they do justice will fall upon their heads...."

The reason the *Leader* "is so sharp after me," Joslin said, "is because it is an advocate of a false political and social system, and a mere caterer to the vicious appetite of capitalists and dare not advocate the truth upon the labor question...."

Joslin's letter revealed a very different kind of labor spokesman from one who was quoted approvingly in the pages of the *Leader* a few days earlier.

Charles Wilson, grand chief engineer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, had described his organization as differing from other trade organizations in four ways: membership qualifications included "character, education, experience and ability as locomotive engineers," "it tries... to secure the confidence and esteem of its employers, and work in harmony with them;" "it relies on its merits for strength to obtain that to which it is justly entitled;" "and... the brotherhood stands alone, seeking no entangling alliances with other trades."¹⁷

Two months later, at twelve o'clock noon, December 26, the locomotive engineers of the three railroad systems struck against a wage cut, suspending practically all train operation in and out of the city.¹⁸

The *Leader* was appalled by the "acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated during the progress of the strike... There is no cause so desperate and pressing as to require that it be bolstered up by misplaced switches, obstructed tracks and cowardly bullets and brickbats aimed at those who are willing to work for the wages that the strikers refuse."¹⁹

In February 1874 a special convention of the engineers met in Cleveland, their national headquarters. They dumped Wilson for his opposition to the recent strikers, replaced him with T.M. Arthur of Albany, and voted to demand restoration of the wage cuts or strike the railroads nationwide.²⁰

The militancy of the locomotive engineers was not exceptional in Cleveland or other American cities during the depression of 1873 to 1878. Workers were fighting back, organizing and demonstrating on many different levels. In 1874 alone strikes in Cleveland over wages also involved at least two hundred union freight employees, another two hundred seamen, and seven hundred coal heavers, who were joined by hundreds of dockhands, coal yard laborers, sewer diggers, and others. On May 18 a mass meeting at Public Square was part of national demonstrations called by the Industrial Congress to protest a proposal to repeal the eight-hour law covering federal employees. The National Miners' Association held a convention in the hall of the Cuyahoga County Industrial Council in October.²¹

In March 1875 the Cuyahoga County Industrial Council hosted a conference that laid the basis for the Greenback Party. Most of the advocates of the monetary reforms it sought were lawyers, farmers, and small businessmen, but the Cleveland meeting in-

cluded such national union leaders as John Siney of the Miners, A.C. Cameron of the Typographers, Richard Trevellick of the former National Labor Union, Robert Schilling of the Coopers, and C.W. Thompson, Negro leader of the Tobacco Laborers' Union of Richmond, Va.²²

Also in 1875 Francis Skarda and Leopold J. Palda founded the Bohemian weekly *Delnicke Listy* (Workingmen's News) in Cleveland as the "Organ of the Socialist Workingmen's Party in the United States." It was to these Czech socialists that the unorganized Standard Oil Company workers turned for leadership in the upheavals of 1877.


A new round of wage-cuts in that fifth year of the long depression precipitated a series of overlapping strikes that involved large new currents in the local labor movement. Unorganized workers struck Cleveland's two largest employers, Henry Chisholm's Rolling Mill and John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company.²³

Both strikes started as walk-outs by predominantly foreign-born, semi-skilled workers in departments using new mechanized processes. The Rolling Mill workers received some assistance from members of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers in setting up a committee to represent them in negotiations. When the company began operating with strike-breakers, Joseph Bishop, Amalgamated president, came in from Pittsburgh and advised the strikers to go back to work on the company's terms. They refused and remained out.

May Day

MADE IN USA!

MAY 1ST, CELEBRATED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AS THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' HOLIDAY, WAS ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED AS A NATIONAL DAY OF DEMONSTRATIONS FOR THE EIGHT HOUR-DAY BY THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR BACK IN 1886.



GABRIEL EDMONSTON, FIRST A.F. OF L. TREASURER & FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS, SPONSORED THE A.F. OF L. PROPOSAL THAT "EIGHT HOURS SHALL CONSTITUTE A LEGAL DAY'S LABOR FROM AND AFTER MAY FIRST, 1886..." AND THUS WAS BORN MAY DAY!

KLEBOKI
OF ST. PAUL
FROM JOURNAL OF THE CARPENTERS

The Lesson of the Rolling Mill Strikes
The four-month strike ended April 30 on the company's terms. About a hundred workers were not rehired. Shortly before the conclusion the local committee of McGrail, Thomas, Torrey, Ress, and Lannigan issued a statement that said in part: "...Whatever the results of this strike we have learned one good lesson, that is, that our interests as workingmen are identical and our religious, political, and national differences of opinion shall not jeopardize our rights as men..."²⁴

The Standard Oil strikers, after they walked out April 19, 1877, were organized by men who had already absorbed that lesson. Some of the workers from the mechanized barrel shops spoke

17. *Cleveland Leader*, Oct. 22, 1873.
 18. *Cleveland Leader*, Dec. 27, 1873.
 19. *Cleveland Leader*, Dec. 30, 1873.
 20. *Cleveland Leader*, Feb. 25, 26, 1874.
 21. *Cleveland Leader*, April 3, 22, May 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 19, Oct. 30, 1874.
 22. Foner, pp. 476-477.
 23. Sources for the events of 1877 include a number of useful studies: Herbert G. Gutman, "The Labor Policies of the Large Corporation in the Gilded Age: The Case of the Standard Oil Company" (New York: unpublished manuscript, n.d.), pp. 19-44; Leslie Seldon Hough, "The Turbulent Spirit: Violence and Coaction among Cleveland Workers, 1877-1899" (unpublished doctoral manuscript, University of Virginia, 1977), pp. 61-67; James Beaumont Whipple, "Cleveland in Conflict: A Study in Urban Adolescence, 1876-1900" (unpublished doctoral manuscript, Western Reserve University, 1951), pp. 85-94.
 24. Gutman, footnote, p. 31.

English or German, but most were Bohemian and came to the respected working-class leaders who spoke their language to discuss how to proceed. From the very first, all mass meetings were addressed in the three languages. At a meeting of two thousand workers a strike committee was elected with equal representation from the three main nationalities. Skarda was made chairman, and a wage demand of twelve cents a barrel was adopted. The Czech socialists urged unity and cautioned against violence in the struggle of "workingmen...oppressed by capitalists."

The strategy of the strike committee was to increase their strength and bargaining power by appealing to all workers to support their wage demand and join their struggle. Breaking through language and other barriers to communication, they held mass meetings of thousands, including women and children; parades with a Bohemian brass band and as many as 4,000 marchers. They covered lamp posts throughout the city with posters demanding the twelve-cent rate.

They appealed to non-striking Standard employees working for less than one dollar a day and to coopers in contract shops to quit. Palda and Skarda also met with the skilled hand coopers on behalf of the machine barrel makers on April 25, and that day some four hundred yard hands reportedly left their jobs.

Other Cleveland workers struck for higher wages, held meetings, marched to work sites seeking support, and faced police squads which were rushed to protect nonstrikers. City sewer workers, some masons and carpenters, brickmakers, iron workers, and on April 23 about a hundred cigar makers joined the movement of strikers.

Standard Oil announced it was going to resume machine barrel production May 2 and fire those unwilling to return at the nine-cent rate. Arming against possible resistance from the estimated two thousand men and boys still out, company and city officials deputized special police from the plant to supplement the regular police force.

Skarda urged the strikers to hold firm on their wage demand, to attempt to persuade others not to go to work, and to obey the law and avoid violence. But the daily confrontations with scabs and police became more bitter, and on May 10 the "Battle of Fort Standard" erupted. Four hundred police and more than five hundred strikers and supporters were involved. Women were "clubbed and trampled" and stones were thrown.

The Cleveland *Leader* reported that city and company officials concluded: "The peace must be preserved at all hazards; private property must be made secure, regardless of the right or wrong that originally underlay the difficulty."²⁵ Three armed militia companies were placed on standby duty that night, and additional police and detectives guarded the refineries the next day. The strikers stayed away.

The company then announced that unless the men returned to work in a day or two, they would be replaced. On May 12 the committee met with management and called off the strike. They accepted the nine cents; the company promised to increase wages when business "picked up" and not to hire any more boys of fourteen years or younger.

Cleveland saw another major demonstration of the potential power of labor solidarity that summer. The *Leader* reported on July 23 that as a direct result of the closing down of the Cleveland & Pittsburgh line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, cutting off a major

source of fuel, "all the mills and furnaces of the Cleveland Rolling Mill Company and the Northern Ohio Iron Company are shut down. The Standard Oil Company, with its legion of employees, will stop work this morning for lack of transportation. No less than six foundries in this city will be forced to suspend operations today." In addition, sixty-four engines and two hundred and fifty cars of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern railroad were blocked by strikers and sympathizers in the Collinwood community of Greater Cleveland.²⁶

Although a number of different crafts were involved, the railroad workers united to run a disciplined strike. To avoid a possible source of violence and police intervention, they closed all the Collinwood saloons. To expand the strike a committee of brakemen and firemen from Cleveland convinced Lake Shore men at Toledo to join them. The local men were the last railroaders from Ohio to go back to work, remaining out until August 3, after the national strike had collapsed.²⁷

The struggles of the seventies had taught another generation of workers that "an injury to one is the concern of all," and it was with that central concept that the Knights of Labor became the mainstream of the organized movement of the eighties.

Originating as a secret organization of skilled garment cutters in Philadelphia in 1869, it spread slowly and quietly to other cities where blacklisted trade unionists were being driven underground.

Cleveland Knights of Labor Organized

The first Cleveland local was organized by eleven men "gathered together at midnight in the spring of 1876, at the old Temperance Hall on Superior Street during the great Pittsburg Railroad strike...under Bob Schilling and Nate Anson, who had joined the Order in Akron..." The founders included several carpenters, painters, tinsmiths, coopers, a sailmaker, an inventor, and a newspaperman.²⁸

The post-depression upturn in industry was accompanied by renewed union organizing. Strike activity in 1880-81 sought restoration of wage cuts. The Knights participated in these struggles, growing in the process. Secrecy was abandoned by the national order in 1881. On May 30, 1882, District Assembly No. 47 was organized "and became the greatest body of organized labor that ever existed in Northern Ohio," according to its own historians. At least for the 1880s, this was no exaggeration.

It united most of the existing local unions and aided the organization of many new ones. It included unskilled workers as well as craft unionists, women, and Blacks, as well as foreign-language locals, such as German Typographia No. 6, which had been organized by Robert Bandlow in 1873. It cooperated with national trade union leaders like John Jarrett of the Amalgamated Iron and Steel Workers and Peter J. McGuire of the National Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners when they came to Cleveland to organize.²⁹

Despite the growth of conflicting philosophical and political tendencies within the working class, local labor solidarity advanced. This was demonstrated in the large Rolling Mill strikes of the eighties.

By May 1882 the local leadership of the Amalgamated Iron and Steel workers felt they were in a better bargaining position than they had been in 1877. Business had improved and about four-fifths of the Rolling Mill's five thousand employees had been organized into the Amalgamated or the Knights of Labor.³⁰

25. Gutman, p. 42.

26. Philip S. Foner, *The Great Uprising of 1877* (New York: Monad Press, 1977), p. 189.

27. Hough, pp. 65-66.

28. *Twenty Year History of District Assembly 47, Knights of Labor* (Cleveland: D.A. 47, 1902), p. 27.

29. Whipple, pp. 139-140.



Max Hayes

On May 9 the Amalgamated demanded that the company accept the union wage scale steelworkers had won in other cities, a closed shop for skilled workers, consultation with the union before discharging any worker, and rehiring of workers recently fired for union activity.

The company refused and a strike and lockout closed down production. Early in June management announced it would reopen the plant with non-union help. Unable to breach the solidarity of the local labor movement to get enough replacements for full production, the

company had to resort to importing new Polish and Bohemian immigrants from outside Cleveland. A neighborhood scuffle between the wife of a Black striker and a Bohemian woman whose husband was working at the mill made the papers.³¹ Confrontations between strikers and scabs protected by police provoked violence which again provided the excuse to suppress the strike by force and threatened use of the militia. By August the fight was over — until the next round.

Three years later, in 1885, it was the Polish and Bohemian wire mill workers who led the protest against a new wage cut by closing down the Rolling Mill. The strategy and tactics of the strikers and the company did not differ basically from those in the earlier confrontations of the workers with the vanguard of corporate steel and oil in 1877 and 1882. But this time, after a struggle lasting almost three months, the company agreed to rescind the wage cut. The workers had won the battle and went back to their jobs.³²

The explanation for the victory lies in the growth and solidarity of the labor movement in 1885. The Rolling Mill workers had the support of the whole working class in Cleveland, from left to right. An anarchist named Gorsuch was arrested for speeches at strike meetings and was charged with “inciting to riot.” The *Cleveland Leader* was screaming, “These Communistic scoundrels have hoisted the red flag of Agrarianism, Nihilism and Socialism...” But the Gorsuch trial resulted in a hung jury and dismissal of the case.³³

The Trades Assembly of the Knights of Labor sponsored a mass meeting at Public Square in support of the strikers at which Martin Foran was the main speaker. The former Coopers’ Union president and labor-organizer-turned-lawyer-and-liberal-politician, called for company officials to open their books and show why they could not pay higher wages. He proposed a profit-sharing plan and advocated arbitration to settle the strike.³⁴

Cleveland labor’s strikes reached the high point of the decade in 1885–86, and more than 70 percent were at least partly successful. Most of the strikes were against wage cuts and the elimination of skilled labor through mechanization. The unions had traditionally called for shorter hours so that increased productivity would benefit rather than victimize the workers. In the eighties the struggle for the eight-hour day became the main unifying force and organizing axis for labor. More than 600,000 members joined the K. of L. nationally in 1885–86, despite its officers’ opposition to strikes. The number of assemblies in the Cleveland district rose from ten to almost fifty.³⁵

Long-smoldering, complex differences within the all-inclusive organization and its mixed assemblies intensified with growth. In December 1886 in Columbus, Ohio, the five-year-old Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, headed by Samuel Gompers of the Cigar Makers, joined a large dissident group of trade unions from the Knights. They formed a new national organization, the American Federation of Labor.³⁶

The Decline of the Trades Assembly

When the Cleveland split in the Knights took place it was not simply a division over craft versus industrial unionism, or personal differences between Samuel Gompers and Terence Powderly, Grand Master Workman of the Knights.

It was because the Knights of Labor Trades Assembly had lost its independent class character as an organization serving the needs of Cleveland workers. Max Hayes described the reasons in the Labor Day 1937 issue of *The Cleveland Citizen*:

The peculiar system of organization that prevailed in the K. of L., which admitted to membership all trades and professions except lawyers and saloonkeepers, soon became the happy hunting ground for designing politicians and business promoters, and due to this situation, coupled with the formation of local assemblies dual to local unions affiliated with A.F. of L. internationals, dissatisfaction became widespread and united action was difficult to maintain.

In fact, trade affairs relating to wages, hours, etc., became very largely secondary matters, and at meetings of the Trades Assembly the politicians and hustlers who were members of the Republican and the Democratic parties lined up on opposite sides of the chamber and battled each other for endorsements for elective and appointive positions to such an extent that unions uninterested in political spoils withdrew their delegates.

It was at this period — early in 1887 — that some active members of Typographical Union No. 53, Cigarmakers Union No. 17, Typographia No. 6 (German), Iron Molders No. 218, Amalgamated Carpenters, Brewery Workers No. 17 and Bakery Workers No. 19 — with about a thousand members began to hold informal conferences to consider organizing a city central organization free from the maneuvering of old party politicians and other elements that subordinated general labor progress to their opportunistic interests.

Central Labor Union Chartered

The new Central Labor Union was chartered by the A.F. of L. in October 1887. “As a means to circumvent the machinations of

30. Hough, pp. 105–120; Henry B. Leonard, “Ethnic Cleavage and Industrial Conflict in Late 19th Century America: The Cleveland Rolling Mill Company Strikes of 1882 and 1885,” *Labor History*, 20, No. 4 (Fall 1979), pp. 528–536; Whipple, pp. 96–100.

31. Leonard, p. 533.

32. Hough, pp. 121–156; Leonard, pp. 536–544; Whipple, pp. 102–103.

33. Whipple, p. 103.

34. Whipple, pp. 104–105.

35. Whipple, p. 110; Rose, p. 453; Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Vol. 2 (New York: International Publishers, 1955), pp. 54, 82; *Twenty Year History of District Assembly 47*, p. 21.

36. Glen A. Gildemeister, “The Founding of the American Federation of Labor,” *Labor History*, 22, No. 2 (Spring 1981), pp. 262–267; Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Vol. 2, pp. 132–144.

politicians and other self-seekers, one of the first acts of the Central Labor Union was the adoption of a constitution in which was incorporated a section providing that only delegates could be seated from bona fide trade and labor unions who were employed at their calling or served as officials." To supplement this restriction they formulated a platform of "radical" demands.³⁷

There was little in the platform to distinguish it from the Knights. Municipal ownership of public utilities, the eight-hour day, and equal pay for women in public employment were popular labor demands. So were such state issues as abolition of capital punishment, contract prison labor, and child labor; laws for enforcement of sanitary inspection of mines, workshops, and dwellings; and compulsory education. Liability of employers for work-related injury to health and body or loss of life was a demand of the Central Labor Union in advance of many labor reformers. National legislative demands included many of the tax and money reform proposals of the day.

The radical difference between the Central Labor Union and the Knights can be seen in the former's declaration of principles:

"As the power of capital combines and increases, the political freedom of the masses becomes more and more a delusion. There can be no harmony between capital and labor under the present industrial system... The emancipation of the working classes must be achieved by the working classes themselves, as no other class has any interest in improving their condition... we regard it as the sacred duty of every honorable laboring man to sever his affiliation with all political parties of the capitalists and to devote his energy and attention to the organization of his trade and labor unions and the concentration of all unions into one solid body for the purpose of assisting each other in all struggles, political and industrial, to resist every attempt of the ruling classes directed against our liberties and to extend our fraternal hand to the workers of our land and to all nations of the globe that struggle for the same independence."³⁸

For the next two decades dedicated young trade unionists attempted to apply those principles in building the local labor movement. Outstanding among such men was Robert Bandlow. Born in Germany in 1852, he arrived in Cleveland with his parents two years later and grew up in the city's largest immigrant colony. He was educated in Cleveland's common schools, then learned the printing trade from his fellow workers in the German daily newspaper, *Waechter am Erie*.

In January 1873 he organized the German printers. They joined the five other German unions in the United States to form the National German American Typographia. Bandlow represented Typographia No. 6 successively as an active member of the Industrial Council, D.A. 47 of the Knights of Labor, and the Central Labor Union.³⁹

Organizing and Educating

In April 1890 Bandlow was appointed general organizer for the A. F. of L. (without pay). "Working in daytime as a printer, he spent his evenings, Sundays and holidays in carrying the message of unionism to the working masses," according to Max Hayes, "with the result that in two years he had formed 26 local unions

and linked them up with their respective internationals, the total membership being increased to approximately 5,000."

To educate the new recruits "as to fundamentals and proper discipline in the ranks," the central body and some of its affiliates designated a period during their meetings when any proposition — "industrial, political, economic or social — could be freely discussed by members or invited speakers."

"As a printer and knowing the value of publicity," Bandlow believed a labor paper "free from entangling alliances could be conducted successfully and aid materially in upbuilding the local labor movement, which view was shared by many active delegates and members of affiliated unions." The result was the establishment of *The Cleveland Citizen* by two young members of Typographical Union No. 53, Henry C. Long and Max S. Hayes. Vol. I, No. I appeared January 31, 1891, "Published Under Control of the Central Labor Union."⁴⁰

From the first issue, the weekly paper printed local, state, national, and international labor news; official notices and communications from the A. F. of L. and other labor organizations; a directory of twenty-eight affiliated local unions; verse, educational features, and opinion. The Preamble, Declaration of Principles, and Platform of the Central Labor Union, in full or in part, appeared as a regular column. The paper became a lively open forum for every working class tendency and, for half a century, an invaluable documentary record of the history of the Cleveland labor movement.

In the early 1890s the Central Labor Union and its *Citizen* replaced the disintegrating organization and institutions of the Knights, inheriting the genes of its strengths and weaknesses. The youthful energy and purposefulness of the new central body quickly propelled it to a leadership role in the workers' movements, in which it was firmly based. In 1892 labor solidarity was sought by formation of a joint committee of the C.L.U. and D.A. 47; in 1893 and again in 1895 the local Knights endorsed the *Citizen* as Cleveland's only labor paper.⁴¹

In the economic crisis of 1893, the worst America had experienced up to that time, the Central Labor Union addressed itself to the needs of the unemployed as well as those of its union members. More than 6,000 persons packed one of many demonstrations organized by the C.L.U. at Cleveland Public Square in August 1893. They demanded "that provision be made at once to furnish work for the unemployed on public works of permanent utility, and that such work be undertaken without the intervention of contractors" (eliminating middlemen). The Republican and Democratic parties were roundly denounced and a local political convention was organized by the central body the following month to nominate independent labor candidates for local office.⁴²

The C.L.U. and the *Citizen* promoted special efforts to organize working women and supported women's rights groups, fund appeals for strikers, union theatrical and cultural events, protest demonstrations, and Labor Day parades.

"To keep the record straight," Max Hayes wrote in 1937, "...with few exceptions the officers and active delegates in the central body became adherents of the People's (Populist) and Socialist Labor parties, but never neglected their allegiance to their unions as paramount to all other attachments."⁴³

37. Max S. Hayes, "A History of Cleveland Labor" (Reprinted from the Labor Day Issue of 1937), *Cleveland Citizen*, Aug. 31, 1979.

38. *Cleveland Citizen*, Feb. 6, 1891.

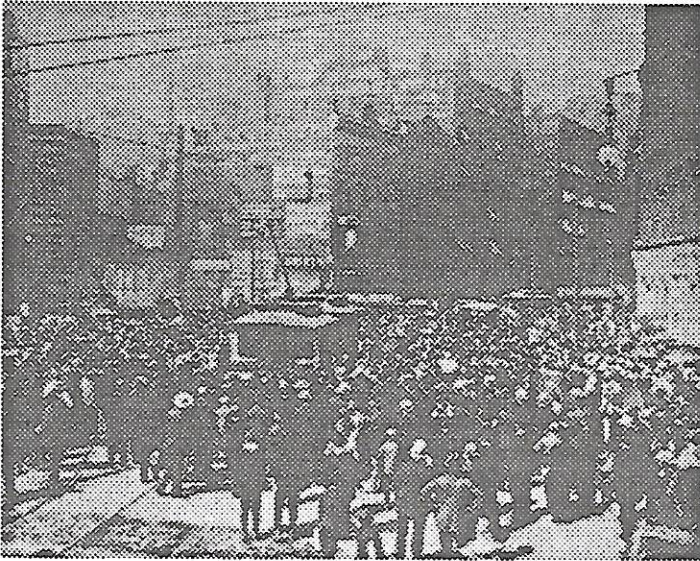
39. *Cleveland Citizen*, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, Mar. 4, 11, 18, 1911.

40. *Cleveland Citizen*, Aug. 31, 1979.

41. *Twenty Year History of District Assembly 47*, pp. 27, 31, 33.

42. *Cleveland Citizen*, Aug. 5, 12, 19, 26, 1893.

43. *Cleveland Citizen*, Aug. 31, 1979.



Workers gather at the corner of Euclid Avenue and Public Square in Cleveland, Ohio, during a streetcar strike in 1899

Despite constant efforts of their opponents both inside and outside of the labor movement to dislodge them, by the turn of the century the socialist trade unionists in Cleveland were recognized leaders of progressive forces in the national A. F. of L. and S.L.P.

To their pragmatic critics in the unions, the *Citizen* of December 10, 1898, pointed out that local non-salaried organizers of the A. F. of L. — Robert Bandlow, Isaac Cowen, John Kircher, and Robert Barthels — “have organized five-sixths of the unions now in existence in this city.”

In the 1899–1900 realignment in the socialist movement, Hayes and Bandlow were singled out by the Daniel DeLeon administration for sharp denunciation as the “labor fakir” element in the Socialist Labor Party; and by the opposition, as shining examples of effective, non-sectarian socialist activists in the trade union movement, as well as leading party builders.⁴⁴

In 1900 Max Hayes served on the committee that negotiated the national merger of the S.L.P. dissident group with the Social Democratic Party led by Eugene Debs to form the Socialist Party.⁴⁵

The Role of Blacks and Women

Blacks and women played an important consciousness-raising role in the local labor and socialist movements in the first quarter of the new century. Printers had been the first national skilled workers union to admit women on an equal-pay-for-equal-work basis after the Civil War. Cleveland Typographical Union No. 53 had elected Mrs. Mary Pushaw, followed by Miss Dora Jordan, as local treasurer from 1885–1891.⁴⁶

Barbara Bandlow was a regular candidate on the socialist ticket for School Council and a leader of numerous attempts to organize working women. She was elected president of the Cleveland branch of the Women’s Trade Union League in 1910.⁴⁷ Her feminist view of the relation between the labor, political, and women’s movements was expressed in a letter to the *Citizen* of July 16,

1904, when the Women’s Federal Labor Union, A. F. of L., was disbanded:

...I sincerely hope that No. 53’s auxiliary, the Amalgamated Carpenters’ and Engineers’ women’s auxiliaries, and above all the workers in the garment industry, will be able to accomplish some of the work that the Women’s Federal Labor Union had mapped out for itself. If labor is to be free the organized workers must perform the emancipation act, and the women folks must be recognized as a factor in this struggle for freedom. Yes, men must be willing to accord the women workers the same privileges they ask for themselves. Above all they must vote for labor’s liberation by casting a Socialist ballot.

Marie H. Geiger blamed the demise of the Women’s Federal Labor Union on the lack of support and the backwardness of the trade unionists of Cleveland.

“Don’t the average trade unionists realize that woman is a victim of this cursed system and as a result must organize to protect herself against the exploiter?” she wrote in the July 30, 1904 *Citizen*.

“The average man (trade unionists...not excepted) considers the woman a household drudge, and that she has no other ambition outside of marrying the first fellow that asks her and rearing a family, which nine cases in ten, he is unable to support and educate as befits human beings...”

She continued her activity, serving on various United Trades and Labor Council committees. But she didn’t change her views or restrict herself to official Council policies. In 1907, urging women to fight for equal rights in all spheres, she wrote:

“Women should expect as little help from the men as workingmen do of the capitalist class.”⁴⁸

Women like Barbara Bandlow and Marie Geiger were neither isolated exceptions nor impractical and ineffective visionaries. The continuity and consistency of their conscious feminist struggle for working class solidarity had an impact on the local labor movement.

In 1913 the Women’s Industrial League, endorsed by the Cleveland Federation of Labor, was formed as a central body composed of the Waitresses’ Union, House Maids’ Union, garment workers, nurses, and school teachers, as well as professional and business women.⁴⁹

A thousand women met at Moose Auditorium in July 1919 and voted unanimously to strike for their right to organize the telephone company. A week later women from the Telephone Operators’ and Tailors’ unions played an active part in a convention to form a local labor party.⁵⁰

Negro Protective Party

Blacks in Cleveland, like women and minority language groups, organized themselves independently to take care of special concerns, and reached out for allies to oppose divisive racism.

A Negro Protective Party was formed in Ohio to run a slate of candidates against the Republicans in 1897 after the Governor refused to investigate the lynching of a Black man in Urbana, Ohio. This was apparently the first break from solid support of the Republican Party after the Civil War. Forty-nine of the 477 votes for the independent candidate for governor came from Cleveland.⁵¹

44. *Cleveland Citizen*, Aug. 12, 1899; N.I. Stone, *The Attitude of the Socialists Toward the Trade Unions* (New York: New Yorker Volks-Zeitung, 1900), pp. 18–19.

45. Howard H. Quint, *The Forging of American Socialism* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953), pp. 343–349.

46. *Cleveland Directory*, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891.

47. *Cleveland Citizen*, June 25, 1910.

48. *Cleveland Citizen*, Feb. 17, 1907.

49. *Cleveland Citizen*, Oct. 25, 1913.

50. *Cleveland Citizen*, July 12, 19, 1919.

From 1916 to 1918 Ross D. Brown, then referred to as the “unbleached orator,” was a popular Socialist Party speaker in Cleveland and throughout Ohio. In 1919 W.W. Lambert, a Black unionist and member of the executive board of the newly organized Ohio Labor Party, reported that there was strong sentiment on the river along the eastern border of the state “for political and economic equality.”⁵²

Organization of Black workers into A. F. of L. unions was recommended by the Legislative Committee of the Cleveland Federation in 1916. Large-scale migration from the South “that the U.S. Department of Labor had encouraged” was under way to supply industry producing for the war in Europe. Earlier attempts by groups of Black workers, such as the “colored waiters,” to form unions had been aided by the socialist organizers of the central labor body.⁵³

1919 Steel Strike

The previous experiences and traditions of Cleveland workers influenced their response to the major struggles of the epoch, such as the great steel strike of 1919. In this first nationally coordinated A.F. of L. craft union attempt to organize the steel industry, lessons of the Rolling Mill experiences of the nineteenth century were not lost.

In 1919 Cleveland’s steel workers at the American Steel and Wire Co., which had absorbed the Cleveland Rolling Mill, joined the A.F.L.’s nationwide strike.⁵⁴

“Cleveland from first to last was one of the strong points in the battle line,” the national secretary of the joint organizing committee, William Z. Foster, later recalled.

“On September 22 the men struck almost 100 percent in all the big plants, and until the very end preserved a wonderful solidarity. Under the excellent control of the organizers working with Secretary Raisse there was at no time a serious break in the ranks, and when the strike was called off on January 8, at least 50 percent of the men were still out, with the production not over 30 percent of normal. Thousands of the men refused to go back to the mills at all, leaving them badly crippled.

“The backbone of the Cleveland strike was the enormous mills of the American Steel and Wire Co.... Long after the strike had been cracked in all other sections of the industry, the rod and wire mill men of Cleveland... stood practically solid....”

“The remarkable fight of the rod and mill men” Foster explained, “was due in large measure to the peculiar circumstances surrounding their organization.” They combined the “bottom upward” system of organizing the unskilled, with the “top downward” movement of the skilled to unite all the workers in the plant, thus overcoming the “skilled worker problem.”⁵⁵

Foster also wrote that Negroes generally were indifferent or hostile to organized labor’s activities and “resistant to the trade-union program” in the steel industry. But in certain districts, “notably Cleveland and Wheeling, it is true that they organized 100 percent and struck very creditably...”⁵⁶

In June 1929 a well-attended Negro Labor Conference was held in Cleveland. Speakers included A. Philip Randolph, Socialist president of the A.F. of L. Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters, *Citizen* editor Max S. Hayes, and others.⁵⁷

The Black population of the city had grown from three thousand, less than 1.5 percent of the total in 1890, to more than seventy thousand, constituting 8 percent of the residents.⁵⁸ Almost totally working class, their exclusion from most unions reflected a major weakness in the development and solidarity of organized labor.

From the turn of the century to the stock market crash of 1929, and the ensuing social debacle, leadership for effective strategies in the Cleveland labor movement was provided by local unionists who, like William Joslin in 1873, followed the method of “studying the past, observing the present and projecting these facts into the future....”

Experienced Federation spokesmen like Bandlow (until his death in 1911), Business Agent Harry D. Thomas, Max Hayes, carpenter Thomas Dolan, and others provided valued assistance in the major organizing drives of the cloakmakers, garment, auto, and steel workers. They debated employers’ representatives in public meetings, union meetings, and in the press, on the “Open Shop vs. Closed Shop” and “welfare capitalism” reforms of the early 1900s and the “American Plan” in the 1920s.⁵⁹

“New Anti-Union Movement A Revival of Anti-Union Shop Crusade of 15 Years Ago” a *Citizen* editorial explained. Building Trades unions’ strikes against wage cuts and against “American Plan” proposals for “individual contracts” were supported morally and financially by the central labor body. Union officers charged with “racketeering” were deemed innocent until proven guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt.⁶⁰

Hayes Summary

Summarizing decades of experience with attempts “to divide and destroy the union movement in this city” by the “foes of organized labor,” Hayes wrote in 1924:

Lockouts have been forced, political, racial and religious prejudices have been played upon, jurisdictional controversies within the unions have been magnified and distorted, and personal differences were nurtured and exaggerated by labor’s opponents in the hope of



John P. Green (1845–1940), the first African American elected official in Cleveland. In 1890 Green sponsored legislation which established the Labor Day holiday in Ohio.

51. Russell H. Davis, *Black Americans in Cleveland*, pp. 138–139; *Cleveland Citizen*, Nov. 6, 1897; “Election Results,” *The Ohio Almanac* 1890, p. 240.

52. *Cleveland Citizen*, Aug. 19, 1916; Aug. 25, 1917; Aug. 3, 1918; Oct. 25, 1919.

53. *Cleveland Citizen*, Nov. 4, 1916; Sept. 6, 1902.

54. Rose, p. 588; *Cleveland Citizen*, Sept. 27, 1919.

55. William Z. Foster, *The Great Steel Strike and Its Lessons*, (New York: Huebsch, 1920), pp. 177–181.

56. Foster, p. 206.

57. *Cleveland Citizen*, June 8, 1929.

58. Davis, pp. 83, 221.

59. T.L. Sidlo, “Socialism and Trade-Unionism. A Study of Their Relation in Cleveland.” *Western Reserve University Bulletin*, 12, No. 6 (Nov. 1909), p. 139; *Cleveland Citizen*, June 30, 1903; June 10, 1911; Jan. 17, 24, 31, May 23, 1914; July 20, 1918; Jan. 17, 1903; Apr. 2, May 24, Nov. 24, 1904; Jan. 13, 1906; Jan. 30, 1909; Jan. 2, 1915; Sept. 7, 1918; Aug. 21, Oct. 2, 23, Nov. 20, 1920; Dec. 31, 1921.

60. *Cleveland Citizen*, Oct. 16, 1920; Oct. 2, 1920; April 21, 1917; Aug. 11, 1928; Jan. 12, 1929.

dividing and conquering, but all these schemes were checked and defeated by the strategists within labor's ranks and solidarity of the workers was preserved and steadily augmented.⁶¹

But this overview of labor's past did not blunt sharp observations about its retreats, declining membership, and short-sighted, alienated national leadership. The *Citizen* report from the 1926 A.F. of L. convention noted:

At best the movement seems to be at a standstill or making progress at a snail's pace, which showing is causing expressions of disgust among delegates from many organizations, who argue that something must be done to end the interminable jurisdictional controversies and to win the 1,600,000 members in the independent unions to the A.F. of L.

Officers at the top had a totally different view of the problem.

The absurd exhibition of laziness and cowardice on the part of the rank and file, together with the apparent fear of losing their jobs that is engendered in the minds of the non-unionists, is getting on the nerves of the international officers, who are willing to serve faithfully and conscientiously, but are helpless to carry through their plans without the cooperation of the memberships.⁶²

Union membership continued to decline and chronic unemployment was reaching disaster proportions, but by the end of 1929 the A.F. of L. convention reaffirmed its position in favor of autonomous craft unionism in opposition to resolutions "favoring merging of international unions to eliminate jurisdictional disputes." The "Women's so-called 'equal rights' amendment" was "declared a 'fallacy and absurdity,' used for propaganda purposes by a minority political group of women." Routine resolutions on unemployment gave lip service to organizing and shorter hours.⁶³

By contrast, the *Citizen* reports provided critical analysis in plain language of new and old programs to deal with the growing unemployment and related social and economic problems facing working men and women.

In a November 20, 1927 editorial, Max Hayes took issue with Press editor Louis Seltzer's solutions such as cutting production, expanding foreign trade, etc. Hayes wrote:

We have punctured that soap-bubble so many times that it is unnecessary to repeat the performance here, and hence we conclude this gentle criticism by informing our friend Louie Seltzer that he can think and write on this subject until the cows come home, but he will find no practical solution of the problem of overproduction (or underconsumption) and unemployment until he accepts the trade union philosophy of shortening the hours of labor to divide the work to be done among all who must work for wages, and to increase wages in proportion as production increases.

In short, the nearer we come to a system where producers of wealth will be able to consume that wealth (or its equivalent), the sooner we will solve the questions tied up in production and involuntary idleness.

As an immediate demand, a September 3, Labor Day editorial raised the slogans: "Reduce working time, daily or weekly! The

six- or seven-hour-day or the five-day-week at most would fulfill all our requirements very easily under our present highly industrial state."

For immediate relief for the unemployed, the Cleveland Federation of Labor called on city and county officials to get busy on authorized local public works projects.⁶⁴

Shortly after the crash of 1929, *The Citizen* called for a massive program of public works:

...from roads to school and reforestation; from public utility developments to river and harbor improvements; from electrification of railroads to bridge building and tunneling; from internal waterways to abolition of slums and tenement houses; from extension of private industrial plants to municipal museums, markets, hospitals and parks — the call awaits our people in the nation and in the smallest community.

These needs have not just presented themselves, but it takes times like the present to drive home that need.

In former times public improvements were often considered an out of work palliative. Labor should insist that these improvements be considered a national policy on a scale hitherto unknown.

They should be a definite, constructive, continuous and necessary part of our social life.

Further, these activities

can go hand in hand with a study of causes for the present conditions, such as inflation of credits for speculative purposes and the uncontrolled loans of millions of dollars out of the strong boxes of wealthy corporations that were used by stock market manipulators.

In short, the Wall Street smash may have been a blessing in disguise, as it will surely lead to a broader education along the lines of human relations.⁶⁵

This concept of the relation between public works programs and unemployment represented the conscious application of the lessons of past experience in dealing with the cyclical economic crises of nineteenth century industrialization to the chronic unemployment and underemployment of world-wide twentieth century mechanization.

It also reflected a growing conviction among Cleveland workers: "Improved labor conditions and the consequent advancement of the masses are not brought about by acquiescence in the free play of so-called 'economic laws,' but by a deliberate effort on the part of organized labor."⁶⁶

Consciousness of labor's role and responsibility in the "advancement of the masses" and confidence in its capacity to unite the city's diverse, multinational working class toward that common end was the heritage of the 1865 to 1929 experience. It provided the framework for development of strategies and tactics by far-seeing local leaders to fight back against attempts to divide the Cleveland labor movement for the next half century. That heritage is being re-examined by a new generation of young workers for its relevance today. □

61. *Cleveland Citizen*, Nov. 8, 1924.

62. *Cleveland Citizen*, Oct. 9, 16, 1926.

63. *Cleveland Citizen*, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, 1929.

64. *Cleveland Citizen*, Dec. 8, 1928.

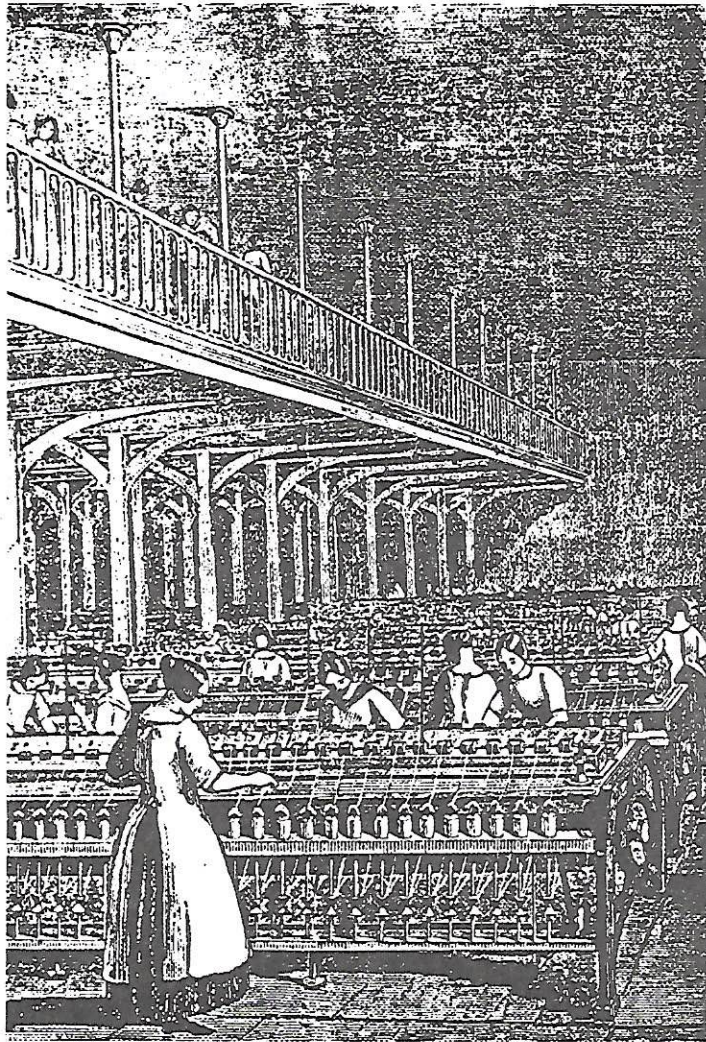
65. *Cleveland Citizen*, Dec. 21, 1929.

66. *Cleveland Citizen*, Jan. 30, 1926.

“Small Help”: Child Labor in United States Industry, the Family System, 1790–1860

by Miriam Braverman

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Introduction

In the transition from the artisan to the factory economy, it was the children of New England whose labor created the wealth which fueled the growth of industry in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. They were this country's first wage workers. Children

victimized by poverty, and the weakest members of society, were pressed to labor in the factories. The desperation of the families was such that the labor of even the smallest child was often needed. What has been called the “family system” of labor was the child labor system.

Children were a significant part of the labor force from the very beginning of the United States factory system. That this truly remarkable history has been virtually overlooked in the flood of articles and books that have been produced in the recent period by labor historians is a puzzling fact.¹ In an attempt to begin to redress this inequity, this study has been undertaken.

Who is the child laborer?

He or she is, first of all, a poor child. This may seem self-evident, but it is an essential characteristic because poverty shaped the nature of childhood for them. In whatever historical period, or whatever society, for the poor children there was little transition to adulthood, no period like that of children of affluent families who could not only grow in spirit through play, but above all were educated. The poor child was impressed into labor as soon as he or she was physically capable. This was true in the Middle Ages in Europe and in the agricultural and pre-industrial society of the American colonies.

In fact, children in the colonies were greatly prized for indenture, both because they were easily controlled servants and because they were required, when indentured young, to serve until they were 21 years of age. The delivery of 100 poor and orphaned children from Britain to the Virginia colony in 1619 began a large trade in young people. “It would be interesting to know,” wrote Estelle Stewart in *History of Wages in the United States*, “to what extent throughout our history from the time the 100 children landed in Virginia in 1619, to the time nearly 200 years later, when Slater opened his cotton mill with 9 small children, the work of a very young country was really carried on by its young inhabitants.”²

It would indeed be interesting to know the extent of the use of child workers in colonial times. In this study, we begin with the children who worked in Slater's factory. Their appearance marked a revolutionary leap in the history of children: from now on their work was tied to a machine. The imperative of the machine's owner was that the child work the machine as fast as possible, for as many hours as possible, and for as little pay as possible. The child's labor was wrested from the family, or in the case of apprenticeship from the master, and appropriated by the factory

1. The lone serious study published in the recent period is David Nasaw's *Children of the City: At Work and At Play* (Garden City, NY, 1985), a fascinating account of the world of work and play of kids in the street trades.
2. Estelle M. Stewart, *History of Wages in the United States From Colonial Times to 1928* (Washington, D.C., 1934), 42.

owner, without any of the responsibilities that the family or master had — subsistence, and, in the case of the master, the rudiments of education. The factory owner's only responsibility was to pay the child a wage. Children were this country's first wage workers.

In discussing child labor, the question immediately arises, can a child worker be defined according to age? In the history of industrial development, children as young as 3 years have gone to work. The history of the industrial period is dotted with state laws attempting to set the minimum age for employment, from 9 years in Connecticut in 1855 to 14 in the 1900s to the 1920s.³ By 1938, 16 was the minimum age a person could legally enter the labor force without school and health certificates. If childhood ended when working life began, we can agree with Marx that in the legislative wrestling with child labor we see "capitalist anthropology."

Since the age of 16 became the age in the U.S. Census from 1880 on as the age when the boys and girls became men and women, and because this age is generally recognized today as the legal minimum working age, we have defined child workers as those under 16. (The 1880 and 1890 censuses enumerated male workers under 16 as boys and female workers under 15 as girls.)

It was the labor of these children that ushered in the United States factory system in 1790; it was the children who carried the onerous burden of exploitation which characterized the introduction of wage labor in the United States.

Samuel Slater's "Manufactories": Children, the New Labor Force

When Samuel Slater stole out of England in 1789, headed for the United States, with the design of the Arkwright spinning machine in his head, so "as to produce a good yarn, and cotton cloth of various descriptions,"⁴ he introduced the technology needed in this country to set up a viable textile industry. It was the Arkwright machine that made possible the transition from household production and the small artisan-type factory to the "manufactory."

There had been previous attempts to take the spinning process out of the home prior to Slater's operation, setting up a few spinning jennies and looms under one roof and using child power to turn the wheels. George Washington, in his diary of 1789, wrote of his visit to a sail duck factory in Boston, where he found "children...turning the wheels, fourteen girls, each tending two looms and busily spinning flax."⁵ But, after many failed attempts by mechanics and artisans, it was finally Slater's mechanical genius which built machinery powered by water, a plentiful and cheap source in New England, and which succeeded in producing a yarn of sufficient strength for weaving and capable of being run by young and unskilled hands, or, as they were called, "small help."

With the beginning of operations in this factory in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1790, the industrial revolution came to the United States. The mill stands today in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, with a tablet reading "Samuel Slater, Father of the American factory system. From this little mill, started by Slater in 1790, grew America's great cotton textile manufacturing industry whose products are known around the world."

Absent from this tablet is any mention of the nine children, 7 to 11 years old, who made up his labor force, and were this country's first factory workers.

* * *

For the first five years of the factory owned by Slater and his partners, William Almy and Moses and Smith Brown, children in the immediate area provided a sufficient labor pool. With only one adult overseer, there was no pressure for labor recruitment for mill operations. The yarn produced in this mill was of such good quality, the machines and labor that produced it so cheap, that it easily replaced home-spun yarn. The demand for the factory-produced yarn increased and more factories were built. By 1801, 100 boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 10 worked in Slater's expanded mill — still with one adult superintendent.

Moses Brown, Quaker and abolitionist, mentor and financier for Samuel Slater, hailed the encouragement of the cotton yarn spinning industry: "...as the manufactory of the mill yarn is done by children from 8 to 14 years old, it is nearly as total a saving of labour to the country as perhaps any other that can be named."⁶

Children at work was, of course, no novelty in 1790 and the early nineteenth century. There was always work for children to do on the farms, and boys were usually apprenticed out by the time they were 14 years old. Women and children had done the spinning and weaving process in the home. In 1791, a year after Slater opened his "manufactory," Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton issued his *Report on Manufactures*, arguing for the great value that would accrue to the country with the introduction of manufacturing, pointing out how the labor of those he considered heretofore idle persons — women and children — could be beneficial to manufacturing. He obviously did not consider the work done at home as work. "It is worthy of particular remark," he wrote, "that, in general women and children are rendered more useful, and the latter more early useful, by manufacturing establishments, than they would otherwise be."⁷

The emphasis on the morally redemptive power of work strengthened child labor recruitment, and was hailed as a blessing showered on the children by the manufacturers. "Employment, labor, healthy refreshing constant labor [is] the grand secret to keep boys correct and moral, to help them out of vice in every shape, to make good sons and good citizens of them," said one writer in the *Mechanics Magazine* of December 1836.⁸

Although boys were mentioned most frequently, girls were not overlooked. "A well regulated manufacturing establishment in this country is a real boarding school for young women between the ages of 12 and 20, taken as they are from the poor and less productive class, and from the solitary kitchen service."

This statement reflected the view of the new class of manufacturers.⁹

Since children were believed to be ruled by the devil, work could defeat "those dark and obscure ideas which are natural to childhood." These religious ideas owed much to the disdain for the idle aristocracy of monarchist times, but they adapted well to the needs of the new manufacturers, applied, of course, especially

3. Elizabeth Lewis Otey, *The Beginnings of Child Labor Legislation in Certain States: A Comparative Study*, Vol. VI of *Report on Condition of Woman and Child Wage-Earners in the United States* (Washington, D.C. 1910) 25-72 *passim*.

4. George S. White, *Memoir of Samuel Slater, the Father of American Manufactures*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1836) 71.

5. Barry Gewen, *The Intellectual Foundations of the Child Labor Reform Movement* (Ph.D. diss. Harvard University, 1972) 1.

6. Caroline F. Ware, *The Early New England Cotton Manufacture: A Study of Industrial Beginnings* (New York, 1966) 23; Mary Feldblum, *Formation of the First Factory Labor Force in the New England Cotton Textile Industry, 1800-1848* (Ph.D. diss. New School for Social Research, 1977) 157; White, 87.

7. Alexander Hamilton, "Report on Manufactures" in *Reports of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States prepared in Obedience to the Act of May 10, 1800* (Washington, D.C., 1837) 10; *Niles's Register*, Nov. 16, 1816, 172-178.

8. Gewen, 11.

9. *Ibid.*, 22-23.

to poor children. Ministers supported the manufacturers by preaching the moral good of the work ethic and the dangers of sloth. Added to the religious theme was the patriotic, that the national wealth was enhanced by children's (and women's) labor.¹⁰

With the decline of household manufacture the cotton spinning mill flourished. The supply of cotton was increasing as Southern plantations, helped by Eli Whitney's cotton gin, were shifting their emphasis from tobacco, rice, and wheat to supply the growing northern and foreign textile markets.¹¹ Funds to capitalize these mills were available from rich merchants such as Moses Brown, who as a Quaker was seeking to put his money in enterprises other than the slave trade. Slater himself came from a prosperous family in England, so that he considered himself not only a "laborer," his word, a builder of mills, and an "employer," but also a "money lender."¹²

In 1799 Slater added another factory, and many others followed suit. The [British] Embargo Act of 1807, prohibiting exports from the United States and barring American ships from sailing into foreign ports, disrupted the trade of the young cotton textile industry. With the exclusion of British goods, the decline of the price in raw cotton and the increasing demand for coarse clothing in the South and West, the manufacturers expanded their domestic markets. This, together with the high profits in the first decade of the nineteenth century, in some cases twenty to thirty percent, encouraged the mercantile interests to put their money into cotton manufacturing. Jefferson's treasury secretary, Albert Gallatin, reported that by 1811 eighty thousand spindles were working, compared to 4,000 spindles in 1807.¹³ The number of spindles in operation in cotton mills in Rhode Island alone had risen to 163,000 by 1826.

The expanded textile industry demanded more raw cotton, re-energizing the Southern slave system. After the 1829 depression a further expansion of markets for the Rhode Island manufacturers included the production of "negro cloth"¹⁴ for the Southern slave-owners, seemingly without disturbing any Quaker consciences.

With the growing number of mills and growing markets a larger work force was needed. Slater tried hiring "apprentices," but when young boys saw that "apprenticeship" in the mills consisted of tending machines, they ran away. Recruiting from orphanages and the indenture system also proved unsuccessful in filling the labor needs in the mills.¹⁵ In the 1790s and well into the 1800s Slater and his partners, like other mill owners, resorted to advertising

in Rhode Island and Massachusetts newspapers, "offering employment to large families, those with five or six children preferred."¹⁶ The "family system" of labor was the child labor system.

What the manufacturers were looking for was cheap and docile labor, and with the technology making it feasible to hire unskilled workers, who could be had cheaper or be more easily controlled than children? There was some resistance by farmers in the area to sending their children into Slater's mill, because of prejudice against Slater as an Englishman, and because of the stories of atrocities they heard of conditions in the English factories. Also, farmers who owned their own land needed the children's labor on their farms. It was from among indigent families who had no other resources that children were recruited, and such families were

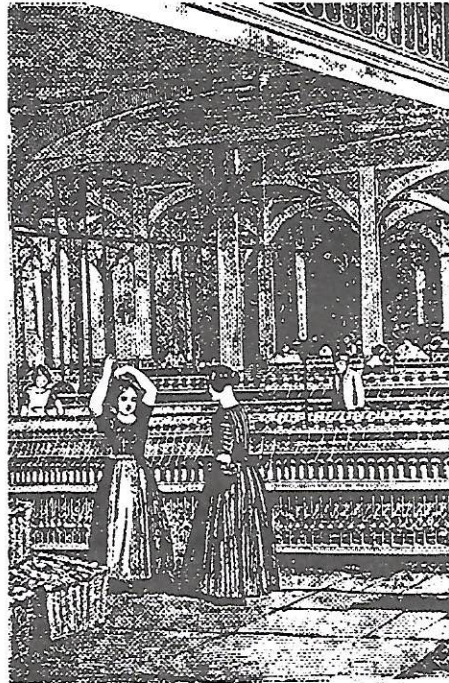
plentiful during the decades following the American Revolution. Families were constantly on the move in the postwar economic disarray. "Approximately ten percent of the population of New England were referred to as transients, vagabonds, and 'unwanted persons,'" writes one of Slater's biographers.¹⁷

In New England's rural areas there was also a significant labor pool of landless and poor families from which the early mill owners drew their work force. In much of New England, agriculture had become marginal, the soil too poor or played out to produce enough to maintain a family, let alone enough of a surplus to buy what they could not produce themselves. Obadiah Brown, son of Moses Brown and partner of Samuel Slater, looking out for sources of labor, wrote of a family in Marblehead, Massachusetts: "This is a place disagreeably situated, being very rocky and the inhabitants appear to be poor, their homes very much on the decline. ... Children appearing very plenty."¹⁸

Families who could not afford to go west, families who came from cities where commercial crises forced them to seek work where they

could get it, were grist for the manufacturers' mills. With state laws forcing indigent families to leave towns under threat of whipping, if they were not in legal residence (one year in Rhode Island and two years in Massachusetts), the wandering poor were collected by the mill owners "from the highways and the hedges," and their children became candidates for work in the mill.¹⁹

By 1816 the work force in one of Slater's factories consisted of twelve families with from three to eight members, totaling 53 workers, with only 8 single men and 4 single women.²⁰



10. Ibid., 11; 10 passim.

11. Harold Hutcheson, *Tench Coxe: A Study in American Economic Development* (Baltimore, 1938) 164.

12. James Lawson Conrad, *The Evolution of Industrial Capitalism in Rhode Island, 1790-1830; Almy, the Browns, and the Slaters* (Ph.D. diss. University of Connecticut, 1973) 191; Louis McLane, Secretary of the Treasury, *Documents Relative to the Manufactures in the United States*, Vol. I (New York, 1969, reprint of 1833 publication) 928.

13. Albert Gallatin, "Manufactures" in *American State Papers. Finance*. V. II, 427; Joseph Brennan, *Social Conditions in Industrial Rhode Island* (Philadelphia, 1978, reprint of Catholic University Press, Washington, D.C., 1940) 3; Gary B. Kulik, *The Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in America: Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 1672-1829* (Ph.D. diss. Brown University, 1980) 265; Caroline Ware wonders about the accuracy of the figures of the 1810 Census of Manufactures, complaining of a decrease in sales and the need to cut back operations. However, mills were built due, she writes, to the artificially high prices Almy and Brown enforced on all manufacturers, as well as expanding internal markets. Ware, 39 passim.

14. David Macaulay, *Mill* (Boston, 1983) 65.

15. Otey, 50.

16. Ware, 29.

17. Tucker, 70; Kulik, *Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution*, 202-205.

18. Tucker, 80.

19. Brendan Francis Gilbane, *A Social History of Samuel Slater's Pawtucket, 1790-1830*, (Ph.D. diss. Boston University, 1969) 310.

In hiring families, married women, mothers of child workers, were not hired for factory work until the advent of the immigrants in the 1840s and 1850s. Mothers were to maintain the house and the traditional occupations there. Women who worked in the mill were usually widows or single, itinerant females. But fathers were a problem for the mill owners. The employers avoided hiring adult men because they considered them troublesome. This was especially true of men from England, who "brought with them the disorderly habits of English workmen," such as failing to appear for work on Monday mornings or walking off the job if they were dissatisfied with the pay. "We need a self-operating machine," said one owner, "which can be run by a bow and will make us independent of the [un]reliable class of workmen we were compelled to employ." Except for overseers or skilled workers, then, there were few jobs for adult men. Slater allowed them to keep small gardens; many did odd jobs, such as painting, hauling goods; others did hand-loom weaving at home.²¹ They picked up work where they could.

With improvements in mill technology, jobs for men declined further. Between 1817 and 1830 the proportion of families with fathers working in one Slater mill declined from three-quarters of the work force to one-third. The percentage of children in the mills remained high. Samuel Slater, gathering information for the 1832 treasury secretary's report on manufactures, noted that 1,744 men, 3,301 women, and 3,550 children worked in the cotton textile mills of Rhode Island; children, then, made up seventy percent of the labor force.²²

An 1836 report of the Massachusetts House Committee on Education summed up the manufacturers' labor policy:

Labor being dearer in this country than in any with which we are brought in competition in Manufacturing, operates as a constant inducement to manufacturers to employ female labor and the labor of children to the exclusion of men's labor because they can be had cheaper [emphasis added]. . . [With the increase of indigent families] there is a strong interest and urgent motive to seek constant employment for their children at a very early age.²³

Conditions for Child Workers in the "Manufactories"

With cotton mills fast becoming the country's leading industry after 1820, children were involved in the entire production process from cleaning the raw cotton to the spinning of the yarn. The baled cotton, in the early days of the manufacture, was distributed to homes where children "too small to work in the factory" beat and picked the raw cotton to loosen and clean it. When picking machines were introduced in the mill in the 1820s, the children were used to spread the cotton on the machines, readying it for machine-cleaning. The carding and roving machines, which pre-

pared the cleaned cotton for spinning, were operated by or with the help of children. The cotton was then ready for the spinning machines, the Arkwright spinning frames, driven by water power and tended by children.²⁴ With the introduction of the power looms, beginning in 1813, young girls took over most of the weaving, gradually replacing the skilled male spinners.

A vivid picture of the work of the children in the early years of the industry, and the conditions under which this work was done, is found in Josiah Quincy's diary, where an 1801 visit to Slater's mill is described. Once he had allayed Slater's suspicion that he was a spy seeking to steal his production secrets, he was admitted to the factory.

All the processes of turning cotton from its rough into every variety of marketable thread state...are here performed by machinery operating by water wheels, assisted by children from 4 to 10 years old, and one superintendent...at the rate of from 12 cents to 25 cents for a day's labor...[we could only] pity these poor little creatures, plying in a contracted room, among flyers and cogs at an age when nature requires for them air, space and sports. There was a dull dejection in the countenances of all of them. This, united with the deafening roar of the falls and the rattling of the machinery, put us into a disposition easily to satisfy our curiosity.²⁵

Quincy touched on only a few of the onerous conditions under which the children worked. The working hours were tied to that of the machines. The machines were built with child workers in mind. For instance, the Arkwright spinning frames were "built very low...to accommodate children, and consequently sometimes caused deformity, by the frequent act of stooping," wrote Andrew Ure, contemporary observer.²⁶

Idle machines were as much an anathema to the owners as idle children. The children were worked to the maximum to keep the machines operating and producing. In summer the children were called to work by the bell in the factory belfry by 5 a.m. Breakfast and dinner breaks gave the children barely enough time to run home for their meals and rush back to the factory. They worked until 7 p.m. In winter the bell rang at dawn, and when natural light waned, candles were lit, and the children worked until 7:30 p.m. The work week was at least 70 hours, but when the demand for the product was high, the children were compelled to work extra hours. The bell was rung in accordance with the owner's clock, and it had a tendency to stretch the day an extra half hour.²⁷

The long hours and fast and dangerous machines, the fetid air, hot in summer, cold in winter, the rooms, particularly the picking room, saturated with lint — all took their toll in accidents and death. The poet Thomas Man described the factory in an 1833 poem as a place "Worse than the Bastille [sic] — Inquisition of our race."²⁸

Slater himself wrote his partners, after a child was hurt in an accident in the factory: "you call for yarn, but think little about the means by which it is made by such children."²⁹

20. Ware, 199.

21. Tucker, 140–142; Feldblum, 156, 96–97; Jonathan Prude, *The Coming of Industrial Order: Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts, 1810–1860* (Cambridge, Mass. 1983) 118.

22. McLane, 927. The percentage of child workers was probably higher. There was no defined line between men and women and the children. Crompton Mills reported to Slater that they employed "117 men and large boys"; Satinet Mill employed "8 men and a boy"; Mill Merino had "60 young men, 10 boys and 20 boys," the groups distinguished by differences in earnings, 25 cents for one and 50 cents for the other; Smithfield reported "3 young women"; a mill in Scituate "20 women and girls"; Wakefield only "girls" and "children." McLane, 935, 948, 950, 957, 962, 963; Otey, 52–53.

23. Edith Abbott, *Women in Industry* (New York, 1924) Appendix A, "Child Labor in America Before 1870," 342.

24. Ware, 21 *passim*.

25. "Diary by President Josiah Quincy" in 1801 *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*, Sec. 2, May, 1888: 124, 157.

26. Andrew Ure, *The Philosophy of Manufactures* (London, 1835) quoted in Kulik, *The Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution*, 194; Feldblum writes: "some of the machinery invented in this country was conceived expressly for the purpose of being managed by children." 155.

27. Otey, 60–61; Ware, 250; Conrad, 273.

28. Steve Dunwell, *The Run of the Mill: A Pictorial Narrative of the Expansion, Decline and Enduring Impact of the New England Textile Industry* (Boston, 1978) 69.

29. Conrad, p. 108.

Children's wages were vital to family survival. In 1815 Dennis Rier contracted for himself, his children, his sister, and her children to work in the mill. The children's wages were geared to age or size, the youngest and smallest, 8 years old, earning 75 cents a week, two boys, 13 years old each with the highest earnings, \$1.50 per week. Dennis Rier's children's weekly contracted earnings totaled \$7.83 per week. Rier was to earn \$5.00 a week, his sister, Abigail Smith, \$2.33. The total contracted wage for the adults was \$7.33, 50 cents a week less than that of the six children.³⁰

The contracted wage was not the real wage, however. Though the children and their fathers were bound by the yearly contract, usually running from April 1 to the following March 31, the owners could declare it null and void in the events of a decline in business, reduction in protective tariffs, or "any other event" which might intervene. The vagaries of water power — ice, flood, drought — often brought the mill to a halt. Illness, fines for breaking rules, further reduced the wage. Machine breakdowns were common, often making workers idle and payless for weeks at a time. Periodic economic depressions closed mills, some for a year or two years, and one small mill was "still for four years." Families were tied to company housing (deducted from wages by the employer), and in debt to the company store (whose records were kept by the company). With imprisonment for debt hanging over them and with the two-year residence requirement before indigents could become eligible for poor relief in towns in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, families could not afford to move and had to endure as best they could.³¹

In a study of the 1828 and 1830 payrolls of Slater's spinning mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Estelle Stewart of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics analyzed the wages of a family of six. Their total two weeks earnings in November 1828 were \$24. "From this was deducted 57 cents for pasturing a cow and 96 cents for rent, netting \$22.47 for a two week period. The individual earnings of the six family members for a twelve hour day were 83 cents, 46 cents, 11 cents, 9 cents, 33 cents and 17 cents for a total net earnings per day of \$1.87." Another small family member was added to the work force in August 1828 adding 8 cents a day to the family income. After the economic collapse of 1829, two family members were unemployed and the other cut back to about one-half a day in the two week period. In the same period their rent was increased from 96 cents to \$1.06, and again to \$1.08 a week. "The total impact on the average net earnings per day for the family was to drop them from \$2.09 in 1829 to \$1.43 in 1830." (Emphasis added.)³²

Estelle Stewart further notes that "a comparison of the wages of Slater's first operatives (in 1790) and those nearly forty years later indicates that after a generation of growth and prosperity for Slater and his fellow manufacturers, the wages of the workers, especially the children, had not changed. In fact, in some cases by 1828, even before the [1829] collapse children were making less." (Emphasis added.)³³

Usually, neither the children nor their parents received the wages they earned directly. They were credited to the family

account in the company store, from which, according to the annual contract between the mill owner and the father of the family, they had to make their purchases. Posted outside the Crompton Mills in Rhode Island was a notice informing workers that if they fail to make their purchases from the company store "there are plenty of others who would be glad to take their places at less wages."³⁴

Slater required employees to "promise and agree I will not trade or make purchases in any store whatsoever...except at the stores belonging to Mr. Slater." The Benjamin Goddard family saw no money between April 1840 and March 1841, Slater claiming the total wages were owed the store. Often Slater paid wages in kind, in cloth or potatoes. The chaotic state of the money supply in the early days of the republic, when banks issued their own paper, heavily discounted by other banks and often penalizing holders of paper, made specie valuable. Moses Brown and William Almy, Slater's partners, often held on to specie, leaving Slater with no funds to provide for the workers.³⁵ Slater sent his partners a stream of complaints. "I cannot," he wrote his partners, "bear to have people come around me daily and sometimes hourly and say I have not wood [in February], nor corn, nor have had any for several days, can you expect my children to work and they have nothing to eat... You know or feel but little about it."³⁶

There were a multitude of rules in the factories requiring the workers to maintain "regularity, obedience, sobriety, steady industry and punctuality." The workers had to abide factory discipline. They had to shed their old habits, such as leaving the factory, as they did in Slater's mill in 1796, to pick whortleberries.³⁷ To come to work after the ringing of the bell meant heavy fines. One little girl who was 25 minutes late, reported Seth Luther, the fiery labor advocate, was fined one and one half days' wages, one-half day for each five minutes she was late.³⁸ Children were often caned by overseers for any infraction. Slater himself, over six feet tall and 260 pounds, an imposing and intimidating presence, carried a whip as he kept a close eye on the children, and did not hesitate to use it if they lagged behind in their work.

Other cruel punishments were reported in the *New England Citizen*, a labor paper. For example, in 1832: a "poor unfortunate deaf and dumb boy being most cruelly beaten...females most shamefully and brutally punished," with the editor adding that he heard of "one hundred cases of corporeal punishment which had occurred within two miles of this office." Another paper, *The Cooperator*, referred to the "whipping room [as] an indispensable appendage to the cotton mill."³⁹

Resistance by Fathers and Children

The treatment of the child workers by overseers and owners did not go unchallenged from fathers of children in the mill, but the form of the early protests had a special character. Slater's on-site presence in the mill brought him in direct contact with these fathers with whom he had contracted for the labor of their children, and he thus sometimes felt more keenly than the absentee owners the justice of the fathers' grievances. In addition, Slater himself had served an apprenticeship in England, where the master was re-

30. Otey, 64; Gary Kulik, Roger Parks and Theodore Penn, editors, *The New England Mill Village, 1790-1860* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982) 445.

31. Editha Hadcock, *Labor Problems in Rhode Island Cotton Mills, 1790-1840* (Ph.D. diss. Brown University, 1945) 71 *passim*, 74-75; Conrad, 319.

32. Gilbane, 258, 259, quoting from Stewart.

33. *Ibid.*

34. Tucker, 158.

35. Feldblum, 111; Tucker, 158, 55, 156.

36. Conrad, 114; Kulik, *The Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution*, 213-214; Tucker, 184.

37. Tucker, 163; 49. Conrad, 105.

38. Seth Luther, *An Address to the Workingmen of New England, on the State of Education, and on the Condition of the Producing Classes in Europe and America*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia, 1836) 29.

39. Otey, 65; Gilbane, 254.

sponsible for the moral and educational growth of the apprentices. But this *paterfamilias* role, brought into the factory, brought him into conflict with the fathers. To Slater, the children in his employ were to give him the respect and the obedience due their masters. If they transgressed, he felt he had the authority to discipline them. Like his fellow manufacturers, Slater felt, too, that he was providing a unique service in employing the children, an idea prevalent among those with strong Protestant convictions, who saw themselves as God's stewards on earth, and with this office went the obligation to punish the unruly and reward the virtuous.⁴⁰ The fathers often did not agree that their contract with Slater putting their children to work in the mill meant that they had given over their authority over them. There are records of strong parent resistance to Slater's factory discipline in the early decades of manufacturing. Slater's use of the whip to enforce discipline sometimes brought "warm words" from some fathers.

Arnold Benchley was a particular thorn in Slater's side. Slater wrote his partners in 1793: "Benchley is on the brim of another disturbance, the first night I lit candles [to extend the work hours into the night] he sent for his children to come home, which they did, afterwards he and I had a considerable of a warm [sic] debate, however it terminated so that his children worked the night following." On four occasions in 1795 and 1796, three fathers withdrew their children from the mill because there was no light or no heat in the mill, and because Slater failed to pay the children their wages, leaving the families without food. Peter Mayo and his family were discharged because Mayo tried to "control his family while under charge of the overseer and [for] disorderly conduct generally."⁴¹

Parents went to court to try to retain their parental power, to protest whipping and flogging. Mill owners in many cases were fined from 10 cents to \$3, the courts not yet recognizing the complete authority of the employer over his employees. The court decisions, however, varied from community to community. One justice of the peace, although denying the right of the overseer to relegate to himself the right to punish children, upheld the overseer on the grounds that the parent had agreed to delegate this right to the overseer. His decision was subsequently upheld in a jury trial. In 1833, in another court case against a Slater overseer for "having beat, bruised, punched, choked and pushed about a 14 year old girl, the justice of the peace levied 10 cents in damages against Slater. The case was appealed, and a jury in Providence awarded \$20 in damages, the full amount allowed by law."⁴² To remove family resistance to his authority over the children, Slater scattered family members throughout the mill. By the 1830s, when Slater's sons took over management of the mills, the disciplining authority was vested in the overseers, and Slater's form of paternalism came to an end.⁴³

The fathers of the children who came into the factories were from an artisan culture, and their republican convictions were evident in their attempts to protect their children in the "manufactories." In effect, what Slater and the other owners were demanding, and what the fathers were contesting, was the breakdown of the authority of the householder and a free use of the labor of the children as the employer saw fit. With children laboring in the

factories, often earning together a total exceeding that of the father, the erosion of the father's claims was inevitable. Arnold Benchley might have been a thorn in Slater's side, but he was fighting from a position of weakness. His six children earned, from July 16 to October 3, 1792, about six pounds, while in the same period he earned three shillings.⁴⁴

Children, then, had little protection in the mill. Their most onerous burden was the long hours, adding to the danger to life and limb. Even adults found twelve- to fourteen-, and sometimes fifteen-hour days inhuman. Seth Luther, the spokesman for the "producing classes," as he put it, described the burden factory labor put on children, in his 1832 address to the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Workingmen:

[If a visitor went into the factories incognito] instead of rosy cheeks, [he would see] the *pale, sickly, haggard* countenance of the ragged children, haggard for the *worse* than *slavish* confinement in the cotton mill... [H]e might see in some instances the child taken from his bed at four in the morning, and plunged into cold water to drive away his slumbers and prepare him for the labors in the mill. After all this, he might see that child *robbed, yes, robbed* of a part of his time allowed for meals, by moving the hands of the clock backwards and forwards, as would best accomplish that purpose... We could show him *many* females who have had corporeal punishment inflicted upon them: one girl, eleven years of age who had a leg broken with a billet of wood; another who had a board split over her head by a heartless monster in the shape of an overseer of a cotton mill "paradise."⁴⁵

The younger children were completely at the mercy of the factory and its demands. The terrors and helplessness often brought tragedy. One young farm boy, who found confinement in the mill intolerable, "drowned himself in the pond adjoining the factory." Many who were older ran away. In the 1820s, 56 percent of the 175 children employed in one Massachusetts village, left the town.⁴⁶

* * *

When the War of 1812 ended and the British flooded the American markets with cotton goods at cheap prices, pressure was put on the mill owners to cut costs. The introduction of the power loom in the 1820s firmly established the factory system. It also firmly established the child labor system.

One woolen manufacturer praised the use of the power looms over the putting-out system:

The saving in operating sixty looms by water instead of the old way, by hand, amounted to about \$40 per day. Besides the saving, we got rid of sixty weavers, the most of them men who in gone times were intemperate and exceedingly troublesome; and substituted for them thirty girls, who were easily managed and did more and better work.⁴⁷

Indeed, productivity in weaving did increase with the use of the power loom, cotton cloth production rising four-fold between 1820 and 1824. But at the same time cotton prices were up, and prices of finished goods hit a decline. The early 1820s, too, were years of serious drought, contributing, together with increased competition and limited markets to the decline in profits. For

40. Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village in the Early Industrial Revolution* (New York, 1978) 21.

41. Gilbane, 246, 54; Tucker, 84-85; Prude, 224.

42. Gilbane, 261-262; Brennan, 42.

43. Tucker, 198-203 *passim*.

44. Tucker, 82.

45. Luther, 20.

46. Prude, Note 57, 116.

47. Feldblum, 104.

example, the Pawtucket Manufacturing Company's profits declined from 15 percent in 1823 to 8 percent in 1824.⁴⁸

To deal with this situation, the Pawtucket manufacturers decided in May 1824 to extend hours and cut rates. This quickly became common knowledge in the community, and the young girl weavers in all the Pawtucket mills immediately struck. "When the bell rang to call them to their employment," wrote the *Manufacturers and Farmers Journal*, "they assembled in great numbers, accompanied by many who were not interested in the affair, round the doors of the mill, apparently for the purpose of hindering or preventing the entrance of those [willing to work]; no force, however, was used."⁴⁹

An account of the first strike meeting appeared in the same newspaper:

The female weavers assembled in parliament, to the number, it is stated, of *one hundred and two* — one of the most active and most talkative was placed in the chair, and the meeting, it is understood, was conducted, however strange it may appear, without noise, or scarcely a single speech. The result of the meeting was a resolution to abandon their looms unless allowed the old prices.⁵⁰

The community of Pawtucket rallied in support of the young girl weavers. The frustrations and resentments of displaced artisans, in a community with an artisan tradition, erupted in a tumultuous demonstration, which, continued the newspaper account, "filled the streets, led by the most unprincipled and disorderly part of the village, and made an excessive noise — they visited successively the houses of the manufacturers, shouting, exclaiming, and using every imaginable term of abuse and insult. The window in the yellow mill [that of the Pawtucket Manufacturing Company] was broken in... The next day the manufacturers shut their gates, and the mills have not run since — a complete stillness now reigns..."⁵¹

By June 3, the strike was over. The workers agreed to work the extra hour, but the cut in wages was rescinded. As the owners put it: "Inasmuch as some alteration was indispensably necessary to enable them to prosecute their business, the extension of time was thought to be less inconvenient than a reduction of wages."⁵²

The owners agreed to a compromise, but in the circumstances it can only be considered a victory for the young girl weavers, a victory made possible by the support of the artisans and workers of Pawtucket, where the "clockwork regime" of the factory was grafted onto a thriving artisan community. Pawtucket was the site of shipbuilding, ironworks, and machine building shops. Among the artisans in Pawtucket, to be sure, were those who were on their way to becoming mill owners, but many were forced to leave their trades by the expansion of the cotton textile industry, and identified with the workers in the mill. The artisans and workers of Pawtucket were strongly republican in their outlook, and secular as well. Only 15 percent of Pawtucket residents belonged to the churches built and supported by the monied group. Indeed, the strictly religious elite looked with fear and disdain at the hard-drinking and "immoral" conduct of the artisans and workers. They were outraged by the "pre-marital pregnancies [which] in

the late eighteenth century were at the highest rate of any period in American history prior to the 1960s."⁵³

The workers, on their part, felt robbed of the fruits of their toil and of their dignity, which they believed were won for them by the Revolution. Thomas Man, the poet who execrated child labor, in his poem, "Picture of a Factory Village," described Providence in 1833:

For Liberty our fathers fought
Which with their blood they dearly bought,
The fact'ry system sets at naught.
A Slave at morn, a slave at eve,
It doth my inmost feelings grieve;
The blood runs chilly from my heart,
To see fair Liberty depart...⁵⁴

But Slater, in his paternalist thinking, understood none of this. When, in 1831, the fence in front of his house was broken by resentful individuals he offered a ten dollar reward "for the detection and conviction of the villain or villains" who did this, offering to "pay Five Dollars to the incendiaries if they will come forward and give him a reason for so wanton and villainous an act." His answer, though he did not know it, was in the words of an anonymous pamphleteer of the 1830s who expressed the anger and resentment of the workers and artisans: "The memory of the founder of the cotton factories should be held in contempt by the present generation and execrated to the remotest ages of posterity. Since the introduction of cotton machinery from England, the manufacturers hold a great part of the white population in chains."⁵⁵

The Trades Unions Resistance

The depression of 1829 had a devastating effect on the young textile industry. Many firms went bankrupt. Slater's sons took over the management of their properties from their father, and the paternalistic vestiges of Samuel Slater's reign were snuffed out. No longer would Slater have "warm words" with a father about the treatment of his children. The contract with the householder forbade his entry into the mill on behalf of his children. The wrenching away of children from family protection, and the helplessness of the father or other members of the family, fueled the litany of resentments in the working community. They turned to "combination," or trades unions — a coming together of the trades in one organization. One of their most passionate leaders, Seth Luther, called on the farmers, workingmen, and mechanics of New England, in 1832, to counter the society "ruled by avarice," to "sound the *alarm*" against the "powerful and inhuman group of monopolized wealth."⁵⁶

Chief among the demands of the union of the trades was free public education. This was the vehicle through which they felt the children could be saved from the dehumanizing influence of the factory and reclaim their birthright as citizens. A letter signed "Many Operatives" appeared in the Philadelphia labor paper *Mechanics Free Press* of August 1, 1830. They stated:

48. Gary Kulik, "Pawtucket Village and the Strike of 1824: The Origins of Class Conflict in Rhode Island," *Radical History Review*, 17, Spring 1978, 21-22; *The Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution*, 335, 339.

49. *Ibid.*, Gilbane, 266-267.

50. Kulik, 23; Gilbane, *ibid.*

51. Gilbane, 268.

52. Gilbane, 268. The 1824 strike was not the first strike in Pawtucket. A "turnout" was reported in 1801, when "operatives marched angrily by the factory with bunches of cotton yarn about their hats." Hadcock, 83.

53. Kulik, "Pawtucket Village," 16, 15; *Beginning of the Industrial Revolution*, 285, 298.

54. Conrad, 346.

55. Gilbane, 281; Feldblum, 92.

56. Luther, 5-6; Prude, 118.

[We agree with] the observation of our Pawtucket friend...lamenting the grievances of the children employed in those factories. We think those observations are correct, with regard to their being brought up as ignorant as Arabs of the Desert, for we are confident that not more than one-sixth of the boys and girls employed in such factories are capable of reading or writing their own name. [sic]⁵⁷

Not that Pawtucket lacked schools. Children of the well-to-do were educated in private schools, where, in addition to learning English and the classics, young ladies learned embroidery, painting, music, French, "appropriate to their station in life." Teachers came to town to teach Latin, Greek, and rhetoric; and a variety of other subjects, including geography, history, and elocution were taught at the Pawtucket Academy. An evening school was opened by one teacher, "For the benefit of those employed in Factories, provided 200 or more will subscribe" to pay the \$1.50 for twelve evening lectures. The teacher generously included a copy of his own *Grammar Simplified* in the price.⁵⁸ It is doubtful that 200 children would have come to the twelve lectures after 13 or 14 hours in the factory, let alone be able to pay the \$1.50, which represented more than a week's wages for most children, money much needed at home.

Beginning in about 1797, Slater established Sunday schools for the factory children at his own expense, which the children were required to attend. Slater hired Brown University students as teachers. His purpose, he said, was to "condition the children for their primary duty in life as hewers of wood and drawers of water," hardly candidates for Latin, Greek, or rhetoric. Other mill owners joined Slater in setting up the Sunday schools. They were predominantly Methodist, but Slater and the other owners evenhandedly contributed to Baptist, Episcopalian, Universalist, and Congregationalist schools. In several towns, the men who ran the Sunday schools were the supervisors of the factory operatives, and their aim was to teach obedience, punctuality, deference, attention to duty. The children were taught that to disobey, in school and factory, meant to be thrown into the fires of hell and suffer eternal damnation.⁵⁹ Thus the belief that children were born with original sin, and redemption lay in work, reinforced the hegemony of the owners.

These Sunday schools did little educating in reading, writing, and arithmetic. In 1828 the Rhode Island legislature established "public" schools, primarily funded through lotteries. These schools were ostensibly free, but with only small financial allocations from the state, parents were required to pay for "rent for [school] rooms, fuel during the winter, and books and facilities for the pupils." If parents could not pay, they had to so declare, and then became exempt from fees. This provision was a sore point with the artisans and mechanics, as were the lotteries which, they said, were primarily supported by the poor. Their republican pride bridled at what they called "pauper schools." In 1832 the mechanics of Providence called for a ten-hour day, to "insure us an opportunity to secure that education for our children which will fit them to become citizens of a free republic." They were further angered that when the children were able to go to the schools, overseers were known to take "small help" out of the school room and into the mills, "the same as a draft in the army."⁶⁰

In December 1831 a meeting was held in Providence calling for a convention the following February in Boston, at which time the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Workingmen was formed. A Committee on Education was set up and reported, in 1832, on the state of working children and education in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. Their investigation found four thousand "hands working in the factories in these states, sixteen hundred between the ages of 7 and 16 years. The bells which set the working day in these factories invariably started at break of day, sometimes earlier..." (in Coventry, Rhode Island, as early as 4 a.m.) until eight o'clock at night, to which must be added the 25 minutes added by the owners' bells, more than a fifteen hour day, with only one hour break for all meals.

"Your Committee also learned," continued the report,

that in general, no child can be taken from the Cotton Mill to be placed at school, for any length of time, however short, without certain loss of employ;...nor are parents, having a number of children in the mill, allowed to withdraw one or more, without withdrawing the whole; and for which reason, as such children are generally the offspring of parents whose poverty made them entirely dependent on the will of their employers, and are very seldom taken from the mills to be placed in school.⁶¹

The trades unionists considered the struggle for free public schools and the ten-hour day at adequate wages intertwined, for only when a wage earner was able to support the family was it possible for the children to attend school. The thrusting of adult male workers into marginal jobs, and the undermining of their family authority and status in the early industry's use of child workers, lent resonance to these demands.

Legislative Efforts

By 1834 Rhode Island had passed a law requiring those running for political office to own \$134 in property, a considerable sum in those days.⁶² The trades unions then turned their efforts to what the workingmen considered more pressing needs, e.g., extension of suffrage, abolition of imprisonment for debt, formation of a workingmen's party. The cause of the children was not abandoned, however, and the pressure for education and protective legislation continued. The first labor legislation in the United States concerned the education of child workers.

There had been in the early decades of the nineteenth century episodic and tentative expressions of concern that child workers were without any opportunity for even the most basic learning. Colonel David Humphrey, whose child workers in his Connecticut factories were taken from New York workhouses when parents refused to allow their children to work there, promoted an early Connecticut law of 1813, perhaps out of a sense of *noblesse oblige*, making it the employers' duty to ensure that the children learned reading, writing, and "the first four rules of arithmetic."⁶³ New Jersey passed a law in 1816 requiring children to get one hour a day in school and attend Sunday school. A bill providing for the education of children passed in the Pennsylvania House in 1827.⁶⁴ The governor of Rhode Island lamented in 1818 that "too many of the rising generation who are obliged to labour in the [manufacturing villages with] almost increasing application and industry,

57. John R. Commons and Associates, *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society*. Vol. V, *Labor Movement* (New York, 1958) 62.

58. Gilbane, 325.

59. Tucker, 167, 165; Kulik, *Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution*, 286.

60. Gilbane, 331; Otey, 87; Abbott, 345.

61. Commons, 193-197.

62. Hadcock, 89.

63. Otey, 90.

64. Gewen, 27, 39.

are growing up without an opportunity of obtaining that education which is necessary for their personal welfare, as well as the welfare of the community." It was, however, not until 1840 that a bill requiring a total of three months schooling for each child worker under twelve years passed the Rhode Island legislature. There were no enforcement provisions, but even this weak legislation was too much for the manufacturers. It was repealed in 1845.⁶⁵

In every state which passed a law concerning the education of child workers in the factories, the law was ineffective. In 1840 Henry Barnard, secretary of the board of education for Connecticut, wrote that he knew of "not a single case" where the 1813 Connecticut law had been enforced. The 1816 New Jersey law was repealed in 1819. The Pennsylvania bill of 1827, which passed the House, failed to pass the Senate. Despite the highly touted interest of Massachusetts in education, legislation there was written so that it could be easily evaded. The 1836 bill requiring Massachusetts children under 15 years old to attend school three months of the year, with employers penalized with a \$50 fine if in violation, was amended in 1838 making it easier for employers to profess ignorance of the educational status of children in their employ. Several years after the passage of the 1836 law providing that children under 15 could not work in any *incorporated* establishment unless they had three months of schooling, Mann reported that by and large it had been obeyed, but that in small corporations and those owned by private individuals it had been "uniformly and systematically disregarded." The unions disagreed, stating in 1842 that "the act of 1836 was in most cases wholly disregarded."⁶⁶

The education of factory children remained a thorny issue and a recurring one. In 1850 the Rhode Island legislature appointed a commissioner, W.B. Sayles, to investigate the number of persons employed in manufacturing "under the ages of 15, 12 years and 9 years, respectively; what are their hours of labor per day, the number of months thus devoted to labor per year; to what extent they are deprived of the benefits of our Public Schools." Commissioner Sayles reported in 1853 that there were 59 children under 9 years working in the mills, 621 under 12 and over 9 years, and 1,177 under 15. The small number of children under 9, he said, was the "only point of my inquiry in which I can present...even a tendency to a favorable result." The hours of labor in the majority of the mills were twelve-and-a-half with some children working up to fourteen hours a day. The children worked eleven or twelve months a year, so that despite the "noble sentiment proclaimed in our Legislature...[that] 'The property of the State shall educate the children of the State' [nevertheless] 2,000 of the children in this State...are without any adequate advantage for the most common education." (Emphasis in original.)⁶⁷

Sayles reported a conversation with one young "bright-eyed boy, though under size and sickly of countenance":

Q.: How old are you?

A.: Fourteen years.

Q.: How long have you worked in the mill?

A.: Ever since I was 7 years old.

Q.: How long since you attended school?

A.: I never went to school.

Q.: Can you read and write?

A.: I can read a little, but cannot write.

Q.: Have you not had opportunity to attend school?

A.: No sir. My mother has needed my wages.

Q.: Have you not had some leisure time?

A.: I have worked all the time, except when sick or the mill has been stopped.⁶⁸

By 1853, the working population in the mills was predominantly Irish. To Sayles, "It does not, in my mind, improve the matter, or lessen the evil that larger numbers of these operatives are children of foreigners." In fact, the terrible irony, he reported, was that these children "[w]ent to school in Ireland, but not since he or she came to this land of free schools!" (Emphasis in original.)⁶⁹

Sayles made a series of recommendations to the Rhode Island Legislature regarding minimum working age, hours of work and required education, and enforcement. The next action of the Legislature was in 1856, asking the commissioner, Robert Allyn, for another study on the state of education among working children. He reported that of the 30,749 children between the ages of 6 and 15 in the state, only 19,330 attended school regularly. The legislature, then, in 1857 passed a law requiring three months schooling a year for child workers under 12. A new approach to enforcement was included in this bill — fining the parent when children did not attend school. Enforcement did not improve.⁷⁰ One writer charged that the three month schooling requirement was eroded by employers who, after nine months, took the children out of one factory "and then [took] them directly to another with a lie in their mouths."⁷¹

Laws limiting hours of work to ten for children 12 years up to 18 were passed in some of the New England states, as well as in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and Ohio before the Civil War. The first laws setting minimum ages when children could work in the factories at 9, 10, or 12 years passed in the 1840s and 1850s in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. All these laws had loopholes. In every state except Connecticut employers could not be penalized for breaking the law unless it could be proved that they were "knowingly" or "wilfully" in violation.⁷²

All these laws were essentially dead letters, because they provided no enforcement mechanism.⁷³ The employers and the state legislatures stubbornly resisted any legal infringement on what they considered their inalienable right to set the conditions of labor of the children they hired. The commodification of children prevailed, and no attempt to modify it was tolerated.

The 1850s

The 1850s were a time of economic turmoil and large-scale unemployment. The cotton textile companies' profits fell as the sales price of goods went from nine to twelve cents a yard to two cents a yard between 1815 and 1860. The number of spindles workers were required to tend increased thirty-three percent between 1840 and 1860, while wages in some jobs remained the same, increasing slightly in some occupations in the 1850s, and in some during that period, particularly in children's jobs, declining. In the early 1850s the unsatisfactory level of wages and the "withdrawal of privileges enjoyed for a quarter of a century," such

65. Otey, 85, 87, 88.

66. Otey, 91; Gewen, 39; Otey, 77, 78, 7.

67. W.B. Sayles, *Report of the Commissioner, Appointed to Ascertain the Number, Ages, Hours of Labor, and Opportunities for Education of Children Employed in the Manufacturing Establishments of Rhode Island* (Providence, Sayles, Miller and Simons, Printers to the State, 1853), 4, 5.

68. *Ibid.*, 7.

69. *Ibid.*

70. Hadcock, 184.

71. Abbott, Note, 344.

72. Gewen, 43; Otey, 82.

73. *Ibid.*, 207-210.

as fifteen minute breaks in the morning and afternoon did not sit well with the American workers.⁷⁴

The 1850s were a decade of labor unrest, with strikes by mostly American workers in many of the factories in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The workers struck, the employers stood firm, and when the factories reopened, the work force was predominantly Irish and French Canadian.

Irish and French Canadian immigrants had started arriving in significant numbers in the 1840s. In 1850 thirty-eight percent of Slater's work force in the Webster mill were immigrants from England, Scotland, and Germany. By 1860 thirty-nine percent of the work force in this mill were French Canadian, and twenty-one percent were Irish. Entire families, including adult men and married women, took factory jobs in the 1850s, the number of adult males employed in the mills rising from thirty-five percent in 1831 to fifty-three percent in 1860.⁷⁵

The family system, which had given the parent a contract stating the wage for the child's labor, was eliminated. Each child employed was considered an independent worker, the rates set by the employer and paid directly to the child. The child had become a full-fledged wage worker.

Apparently unafraid of interference from family members regarding treatment of the child workers, the employers allowed immigrant parents to work together with their children. Although company store and Sunday school attendance requirements were not universally applied, "within the factory," wrote Barbara Tucker, "...Horatio Nelson Slater and his assistants controlled the factory floor....The hiring policies, the allocation of jobs, the discipline of workers were management's prerogatives."⁷⁶

Sayles reported in 1853 that fewer children under 12 were employed in Rhode Island mills. The census reports for the Massachusetts villages of Oxford, Dudley, and Webster township also show a decline of workers under 16, from twenty-five percent in 1831 to just below fifteen percent in 1860. The decline was sharpest among American workers. Irish children under 16 made up 10.8 percent, French Canadian children 30.3 percent, and American children 7.5 percent of the labor force.⁷⁷ In interpreting these statistics it is important to keep in mind that many Irish adults, completely dependent on mill work for survival, were in the jobs previously done by children. In addition, the sting of necessity that compelled mothers and fathers to work in the factories also compelled them to enter their children in the labor market, "even to deceive local factory agents about the ages of their children so that they, too, might enter the factories and contribute to the family income."⁷⁸

Whatever the extent of the general decline in the percentage of child workers, it was due to the decline in the employment of the youngest workers. Caroline Ware attributes this decline primarily

to developments "within the industry [which] did more than educational legislation to mitigate the evil of child labor in cotton mills, at least as far as the youngest were concerned. The discovery that the work could be more economically done by older workers than by little boys and girls who operated the first mills, and the introduction of the boarding house system, were chiefly responsible for the declining proportion of child workers."⁷⁹ To this must be added that the influx of desperately poor Irish and French Canadian workers created an adult labor pool from which the owners could recruit workers physically capable of greater productivity than children but still cheap.

Prude, on the other hand, generously attributes the decline to the "cumulative weight of public opinion, probably combined with some loss of confidence in the efficiency of the very young workers," so that "in the fifth and sixth decades of the nineteenth century a consensus developed in Massachusetts that child labor in textile factories should be restricted." He also cites the passage of laws regulating hours and requiring some schooling.⁸⁰ However, it must be repeated that the lack of enforcement provisions in the Massachusetts laws and the necessity to prove that the employer *knowingly* hired underage children, undermined the effectiveness of the laws and puts a stronger weight on the efficiency factor, together with the available adult cheap labor market, as chief factors in the decline of the use of the youngest workers.

Children still made up a significant part of the labor force in the 1850s, and the conditions under which they worked remained onerous. Sayles described these in his 1853 report:

[It is] disagreeable to see little, half clothed children, seeking their way to the factory in the very darkness of a winter's night,...The only relaxation that great numbers of children so employed find, is that of occasional stopping of Mills for water, repairs, or on an occasional holiday. It needs no student of physiology to understand, to some extent, what must inevitably be the consequences of such toil. It matters not that the labor be light. It generally requires close attention, and constant standing upon the feet, and gives nothing like the requisite amount of time for the recreation and rest that all children require, and must have, to retain their physical health, to say nothing of their opportunities for mental culture.⁸¹

In 1853 Sayles reiterated the observations of Josiah Quincy in 1801.

With nativist sentiment strong, the immigrant workers had no rights and no support from the surrounding community. Any remaining vestiges of paternalism had disappeared, and complete control over the workplace passed to the employers. The wage labor system, pioneered by the child workers in Slater's factories, was fully in place, and the century-long, bitter struggle for some protection for children in the mills and factories had only begun. □

74. Ware, 112; Stewart, 363-395. Doffers, traditionally one of the children's jobs, showed a decline in the daily wage from 1849 to 1856, from 40 cents a day, working 75 hours a week, to between 28 and 33 cents a day for males working 75 hours a week and 17 to 20 cents a day for females working 72 hours a week (except for 1859 and 1860, when females earned the equivalent of male wages, 32 cents a day). The wage for both male and female weavers declined after 1850. Weaving was primarily a "young girl's" job by the 1850s, the skilled male mule skimmers phased out by the power loom. The weavers earning in 1849 and 1850 were 88 cents to \$1.05 a day. Between 1851 and 1860 they averaged 80 cents a day. Female weavers earned 76 to 82 cents a day in 1849 and 1850, dropping to an average of 65 cents in the years 1851-1860. The hours of work for weavers varied from 72 to 84 hours a week. Stewart, 363, 390-391; Tucker, 251.

75. *Ibid.*, 238; Prude, 213.

76. Tucker, 248-249.

77. Prude, Note 89 213, 331.

78. Tucker, 247-248.

79. Ware, 289.

80. Prude, 213.

81. Sayles, 5.

Death of Robert F. Williams

Black Freedom Movement Loses Giant

The following article and accompanying box are reprinted from the November 1996 issue of *Justice Speaks*, monthly publication of the North Carolina-based *Black Workers for Justice*. To subscribe to *Justice Speaks*, write PO Box 26774, Raleigh, NC 27611. A one-year individual subscription is \$10; two-year individual, \$16; one year for organizations/institutions, \$15.

Robert F. Williams, of Monroe, North Carolina, one of the most important leaders of the African American people during this century, died of Hodgkin's disease in Baldwin, Michigan, on October 16, 1996. His death ended several years of struggle with the debilitating effects of the cancer.

The Monroe native won world renown for his leadership of the Black community of Monroe in their resistance to Klan terror and the advocacy of the right of Black people to defend themselves against violent attack. As a result of his leadership role, in 1961, the Southern ruling class, using the Klan and local law enforcement authorities, decided to move against Rob under the guise of trumped-up kidnapping charges. To escape certain assassination by the Klan, Rob, his wife, Mabel, and their two children were forced to flee into exile for 8 years, first in Cuba and then in China.

While in exile, Rob lent his voice and leadership to the young Black liberation movement. He continued to publish *The Crusader*, which he started in Monroe in the late 1950s. He also produced a radio broadcast [from Cuba] called "Radio Free Dixie," encouraging the African American people to organize against racist tyranny. During this time Rob was named president-in-exile of the Republic of New Africa.

From 1957, when he returned home from the Marine Corps, Rob became a staunch fighter against oppression. It is said that when he got off the bus in Monroe he witnessed Jesse Helms, Sr., father of the [present] North Carolina senator [sponsor of the Helms-Burton law against revolutionary Cuba], beating a Black woman. He described this as a defining moment for himself...the point at which he made a commitment to take the battlefield against white supremacy and injustice.

Many around the world learned about his leadership when the NAACP suspended him from the presidency of the Monroe chapter, which he had saved from going out of existence because they formed a rifle club (with a National Rifle Association charter) to protect the Black community [of Monroe, a part of the town called Newton] from armed attacks by whites. (See *Justice Speaks*, September 1995.)

He was also known for his defense of two Black youths, ages 7 and 9, who were charged with rape and jailed after the 9-year-old allowed a 6-year-old white girl to kiss him on

Readings on Robert F. Williams

The story of Monroe, N.C., and Rob Williams [in the early 1960s] has not been made available to young people and workers.

There are three important works that describe what took place during that time and subsequent events in the life and struggle of Rob and his family. We suggest people read *Negroes with Guns*, written by Robert F. Williams; the chapters on Monroe in *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* by James Forman; and a pamphlet entitled *People*

with Strength: The Story of Monroe, N.C. by Truman Nelson.

We would be glad to make the last two pieces available for those who are interested in studying these writings. (Write *Justice Speaks*, Box 26774, Raleigh, NC 27611.) *Negroes with Guns* is available on a limited basis in some bookstores and may soon be reprinted by the Robert Williams Tribute Committee. Jim Forman's book is also available on a limited basis.

—Justice Speaks

the cheek. In what became known as the "Kissing Case," worldwide attention was focused on North Carolina. (Another recently departed freedom fighter, attorney Conrad Lynn assisted the NAACP [in fighting this case].)

The "Swimming Pool Case" also led to notoriety and the increased anger of the racists in the region. The Black community engaged in a struggle to use the local swimming pool, which had been constructed with federal funds. Local white authorities would not allow integrated use, nor would they consent to separate use. When the Black community refused to give up and did not accept promises of construction of [another] pool at some undefined date in the future, the town government filled the pool with concrete rather than let the Black community use it.

The final confrontation came [on August 27, 1961] when the Black community came to the aid of non-violent freedom riders who were demonstrating in front of city hall [in Monroe]. The demonstrators had been attacked by a vicious mob who had beaten Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) activist James Forman with a shotgun, splitting his head open. Unsuccessful efforts were made to rescue them and get them back to the Black community. Armed Black people set up defenses at the border between the white section of town and the Black community of Newton.

A white couple "wandered" into the Black community and was surrounded by angry people who had prepared themselves for an assault by a caravan of gun-wielding racists. Rob protected the couple in his home. [This became the basis for the trumped-up "kidnapping" charge.] Word came back to Rob

that he was going to be held accountable for all of the violence that was taking place. Knowing that they would soon come to kill him, he left town. At Rob's funeral, N.C. State Representative Pete Cunningham said that "there is no doubt that if Rob had not left town, he would have been killed."

Pursued by 500 FBI agents, Rob and his family were forced out of the country into exile, spending the next five years in Cuba and three years in the People's Republic of China.

Presented the Black Movement to Other National Movements in the World

While in exile, Rob and his wife, Mabel, published *The Crusader* and broadcast Radio Free Dixie. In 1963, at his request, Mao Tse-tung issued his historic statement in support of the African American struggle.

Rob returned to the U.S. in 1969 and [while living in the North] fought extradition [to North Carolina] until 1974, when the charges [against him] were dropped. He lived in Baldwin, Michigan, where he continued his work against racism in dealing with the criminal justice system, education, and housing among other things. He wrote his autobiography. Historian Tim Tyson is about to publish a biography of Rob entitled *Radio Free Dixie*.

Rob Williams was an important link between the Southern-based civil rights movement, with its challenges to Jim Crow and unlawful discrimination, and the Black liberation movement as a whole, with its perspectives on the right of self-determination, human rights, and international ties.

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Tom Giunta, 1906–1996

by Frank Lovell

On his seaman's papers and in the records of the Painters Union the name is Thomas Giunta. His birth certificate shows that he was named Tommaso, son of Nunzio and Francesca Giunta, born in New York City in 1906. To all who knew him in his adult years he was Tom, always polite and always ready to be helpful when possible. Friends of his in his old age remember him as contemplative and reclusive, mainly interested in political economy, history, and philosophy. He read extensively and spent a few hours daily in the local library looking through technical journals and literary magazines. He lived for 20 years in retirement in Miami Beach, Florida, and swam regularly in the ocean until his health failed. He died of cancer at age 90, on December 24, 1996.

The circumstances of his early life in New York City prepared him for the bewildering social turmoil of the 20th century. The son of working-class Italian immigrants — his father was a tailor — Tom grew up in a household of political anxiety, social restriction, and economic insecurity. He was 10 when the U.S. entered the First World War, old enough to remember adult discussions of war crimes and civilian suffering. And by the time of the Russian Revolution in 1917 he was able to appreciate the profound social change brought on by the Russian working class, and he may have experienced some of the repercussions of that momentous event in the form of the infamous Palmer raids that victimized in some way, whether brutally direct or distanced, the lives of all U.S. immigrants at the time.

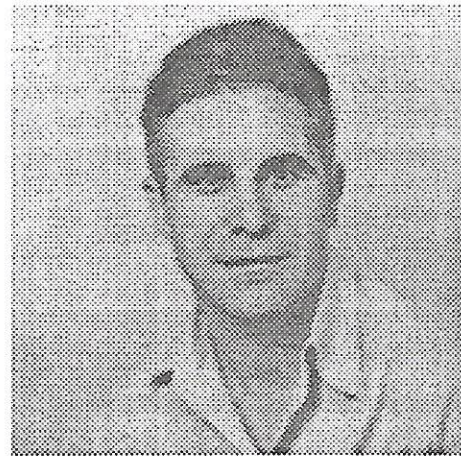
While still a teenager, Tom was attracted to the intricacies of the European political puzzle, the homeland of his parents under the rule of Mussolini's Black Shirts, the German republic

in the throes of revolutionary crises, the young Soviet Socialist state seeking to extend the working-class revolution, and restless strike actions of working people in France and England, climaxed by the 1926 British general strike. According to acquaintances who knew him in the early 1930s, Tom, as a young adult, joined the Socialist Labor Party. By this time, U.S. society was in the grip of the Great Depression.

At some point in this period Tom transferred his political allegiance from the SLP to the Socialist Party, where he identified with the political supporters of the exiled Russian revolutionary leader, Leon Trotsky. They were soon to be expelled from the SP and to found, in 1938, the Socialist Workers Party. As a member and supporter of the Trotskyist movement, Tom retained throughout his long lifetime an abiding faith in the potential power of the American working class to transform society and change the world. He not only identified with the historic mission of the working class, his entire life was that of a worker and an organizer of workers.

In 1937 Tom shipped from the port of New York on an intercoastal ship bound for San Francisco. He joined the Sailors Union of the Pacific and remained a sailor for most of the next decade, during which time he was an active member of the SWP maritime fraction, mostly on the Pacific coast, in San Francisco and Seattle. During World War II, he sailed as a licensed officer, first as third mate and later as second mate and navigator. At the end of the war he left the sea to work ashore.

In late 1945 he joined the Painters Union in the New York area and worked there in the painting trade for two decades, until December 1966. He was an active union member and served from time to time as an officer of the union. Sub-



Tom Giunta

sequently he joined the Taxi Drivers Organizing Staff of Harry Van Arsdale, then president of the New York Central Labor Council.

Tom took up residence in Florida in 1978, where he enjoyed his retirement years in the company of a large circle of friends and acquaintances who shared his political interest and sympathies, including several former SWP comrades from New York. Together they participated in political discussion forums and economic study circles. Until the last two years of his life Tom remained in good health. He is remembered fondly by all who knew him during these years. When he learned of his terminal illness he arranged for the Trotskyist revolutionary movement to be the sole beneficiary of his estate.

Tom requested that his ashes be scattered at sea. □

Black Freedom Movement Loses Giant

Continued from previous page

He also highlighted the leadership of ordinary working folks, who were factory workers and farmers, and showed that they not only had a stake in fighting against the stifling daily oppression in the South but had the ability to organize themselves and participate in their own liberation.

This link in the movements was in evidence at Rob's funeral as Rosa Parks sat in the front row. In a statement, Sister Parks indicated that while they were struggling in Montgomery [in the famous Montgomery bus boycott], Rob was

struggling in Monroe. They both lived in Michigan in recent years and were friends.

Ironically Honored by Southern Custom

In contrast to the tense and warlike atmosphere of Monroe on August 27, 1961, the town of Monroe provided a police escort for Rob's funeral, and the police that blocked traffic as the funeral procession passed put their hats over their hearts. (These are both Southern small-town customs.)

Equally ironic is the fact that Rob's "Homecoming" was held at one of the largest white churches in town. None of this suggests that the white ruling class and racists have forgotten Rob. What it does reflect, however, is that Rob was and continues to be a giant among human beings, who cannot be ignored and must be respected.

His legacy is so important to our youth at a time when our churches are being burned and our youth are engaged in fratricide.

Memorials for Rob were held November 1 in Detroit and New York. □

"It Is Time to Remake Our Economy and Our Politics"

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most wealth would enjoy first dibs on the nation's productive capacity, and the pressing needs of working people stand last in line.

CIO Agenda Fell to Cold War

Not one of these proposals became law during the next decade and a half (and most of them never have). They all fell victim to the Cold War, while the public strength that labor had exercised in the streets and factories was hobbled by the Taft-Hartley Law. Both the CIO's legislative demands, which had attracted all progressive groupings to the labor movement, and workers' power and dignity on the job and in the streets of industrial America had been swamped by cries for military power that could dominate the world and for ever-rising productivity. The military power, we were assured, would save us from Communism (while it made the world safe for runaway shops and left us the yawning gap in material conditions between industrialized countries and the Third World).

Productivity, unleashed by restoring "management prerogatives" in the factory and office and stimulated by massive research and development funding out of the tax coffers, was supposed to resolve all social conflict and political divisions. These became the basic principles of both political parties. Those same principles reduced most of the once-mighty labor movement to a shrinking group of certified bargaining units, each concerned with the conditions it could win for its own members from the separate firms with which they negotiated.

Today our brutal encounter with the Gingrich doctrine tempts us to look back to the 1950s and 1960s as the Good Old Days. We must not fall into that trap. It is true that for 25 years the material conditions of the average American improved more rapidly than at any other time in our country's history. But the most important social gains of the Cold War years were won only by new waves of popular struggle against the political and economic regime that sustained, and was sustained by, the Cold War itself. Massive civil disobedience smashed legal segregation, a decade and a half after the defeat of the CIO program. During the 1960s a combination of tumult in the streets and liberal lobbying (in which labor played a large and often unacknowledged role) wrung from federal and state legislatures an expansion of social benefits. Widespread and vociferous revulsion against the carnage of Vietnam eventually brought the goal of world military hegemony into question. As the 1970s began vigorous wage demands from rank-and-file workers shifted the larger share of rising productivity briefly in their direction.

Corporate Reaction Since the Mid-1970s

The reaction came fast and furious. Business and government leaders cried out against "stagflation" and "profligate spending." Industry began systematically relocating its operations around the globe. Concession bargaining became management's standard approach to the shrinking unions. Now, productivity continues to rise. Wages do not.

New York City's budget crisis of 1975 signaled the turning point. Secretary of the Treasury William E. Simon then declared that no federal aid should be offered the city unless it charged tuition at its colleges, scrapped rent control, and replaced its city employees with private contractors, especially in health and sanitation.

The public rejected those demands as outrageous. Twenty years later they had become the standard fare of American politics. Simon himself left Washington to head up the Olin Foundation, which was devoted to changing the shape of American academic and political discourse. A majority of American voters was persuaded that the remedy for the problems they faced was to cut taxes and give every man a gun. Everything is to be turned over to the market. Dole has stolen a phrase from the 1960s, and he calls that empowerment.

Things That Make Life Worth Living

Now the lesson is sinking home — the hard way — that the things that make life worth living cannot be bought in the market. The comfort and sustenance people can offer each other, the formation of a child into a human being with a promising future for self and for society, respect and a meaningful voice on the job, safety in the streets, openness of thought and of imagination, and a dignified old age — these things cannot be bought in the discount store. We can secure them only when we think and act together. That is what the public sector is all about. That is what collective action is all about.

In the dismal election campaign we are now enduring, there has been one speech worth remembering. Jesse Jackson reminded delegates to the Democratic convention that the New Deal was not created by President Roosevelt, and the slaves were not freed by President Lincoln. The struggles of ordinary men and women on the plantations, in their neighborhoods, in the mines and mills, generated the political force and the ideas that pushed even the best of our presidents into the reforms for which they are remembered.

We need to follow those examples of the past, not by copying the demands of yesterday, and certainly not by returning to Cold War liberalism, but by thinking and working together toward a new vision of our country's future.

That means organizing ourselves to win a strong collective voice. To create that voice we must bring together all working people: the employed, the unemployed, the people on welfare, and those being thrown to the wolves. We must support each other's fights for the best possible contracts — contracts that secure the hopes of the new and already casualized workers, along with those of people who have long been on the job. And we must also relearn the lesson that the purpose of organization is not just contracts, but the mobilization of effective struggles inside and outside of the workplace to secure a better life for all of us.

It means learning the real and practical meaning of internationalism. As our employers go multinational, so working people must lend support to each other's struggles across national lines, and across the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. We cannot and should not set the goals and standards for people of other lands, but we must support their efforts to improve their own standards, and solicit their support for our battles. Above all we must fly to the aid of those who face death and prison for their part in the struggle.

The Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Movement: A Model

It means recognizing that today, as so often in the past, new vigor and new ideas are being infused into our country's labor movement by new immigrants. The mobilization of Latino and Asian workers in Los Angeles against Proposition 187 brought hundreds of thousands of people into the streets and shut down eight high schools with protest strikes. It reminded me of the massive mobilization of people of southern and eastern European ancestry against the judicial murder of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927. Then as now, the reactionaries got their way. But the immigrants' protests of 1927 galvanized a new social force that transformed the nation's political life only half a dozen years later. The Los Angeles protests of 1994 are also the birth of a social force which will transform this country's life. The current drive by the Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project to unionize that city is propelled by this new vigor and by the experience and knowledge many immigrant workers have brought with them to our country.

It is time to loosen up our minds, as the defenders of Sacco and Vanzetti did, and as our precursors did at the end of history's most terrible war. Simon says we must work harder for less, live in increasingly desolate surroundings, wave our credit cards, and curb our imaginations because that is what the economy needs. We say, it is time to remake our economy and our politics in ways that will make life worth living. □

Anti-Terrorism Bill of 1996

Continued from page 19

rendering or being apprehended. In prison, Yugoslav fascists bashed in Thompson's skull with a pipe. Winston was denied medical care and blinded for life. All the defense attorneys were cited for contempt and served prison sentences, including African American attorney and later Judge and Congressman, George C. Crockett, who served six months.

In 1951 the United States Supreme Court upheld the convictions by a vote of six (including four Truman appointees) to two, with Chief Judge Fred Vinson writing the decision for the majority. Justices Hugo Black and William O. Douglas dissented. Black noted that the government indictment was "a virulent form of prior censorship of speech and press," which is forbidden by the First Amendment and, therefore, unconstitutional.

Douglas wrote of his belief that the Communist Party was impotent, that "only those held by fear and panic could think otherwise," and that, therefore, they represented no "clear and present danger." Reflecting prevailing liberal opinion, he pointed to the hypocrisy of the Communist Party's uncritical support of the government in the Soviet Union and quoted Andrei Vyshinsky, the chief prosecutor in the

1936-38 Moscow trials, Stalin's blood purge against leading Bolshevik associates of Lenin's. (Before the Russian revolution, Vyshinsky had been a lawyer for big oil interests in Baku.) Vyshinsky wrote: "In our state, naturally there could be no place for freedom of speech, press, and so on for the foes of socialism." Thus the bureaucrats of Stalin's partial counterrevolution branded founders of the Soviet state "foes of socialism."

A second irony of the conviction, which was not lost upon many politically conscious workers as well as intellectuals and supporters of civil liberties, was that, as we have said, the Communist Party supported the first use of the Smith Act — in 1941, against the Trotskyists. Even in the 1950s the CP refused to support the defense of James Kutcher, a legless veteran persecuted for his advocacy of Trotskyist ideas.

The criminal convictions of the leaders of the Communist Party deprived the party of moral authority and legitimacy in the eyes of many Americans. (Many others had already experienced the strike-breaking and other anti-worker activities of Stalinist union misleaders and sensed the antidemocratic essence of Stalinism.) Because of government persecution and the witch-hunt hysteria of the McCarthy era, membership

in the Communist Party, just as in other radical parties, began to cost people their livelihoods. The CP was unable to recruit new members to itself or its peripheral organizations, many of which dissolved.

After the 1949 indictments, Hoover, disappointed that only eleven were placed in the sights of the government, wrote Truman, criticizing him with impunity and calling him "insincere" for not indicting broader numbers. This was soon to change. The effective prosecution of the 1949 Smith Act victims led to a second prosecution in 1951 of 23 more leaders, including African American leader James Jackson and former Wobbly Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. In 1953 they were fined and imprisoned.

Further indictments occurred across the country and in the end 140 Communist Party leaders were indicted. It was only after 1961 with the Supreme Court's decision in the Yates case and the Scales case that the Smith Act indictments finally ceased. This was so because the Court in those cases made the requirement of "intent" so high that it was difficult for the prosecution to show a Communist Party member had a criminal mind-set. Nonetheless, the Smith Act remains on the books. □

The Trial of the Stalinist Leaders

Continued from page 21

They were not criminals at all, but strike leaders, organizers, agitators, dissenters — our own kind of people. Not one of these 106 prisoners was a member of the Communist Party! But the ILD defended and helped them all.

The ILD: Center of the Worldwide Movement for Sacco and Vanzetti

The ILD adopted as its policy to remember them all and raise money for them. We created a fund so that five dollars was sent every month to each of these 106 class-war prisoners. Every Christmas we raised a special fund for their families. The Centralia IWW group, almost forgotten for years, were remembered; publicity was given their case and efforts made to help them. The same with all the old half-forgotten cases. The ILD was the organizing center of the great worldwide movement of protest for the two anarchists, Sacco and Vanzetti. All this work of solidarity had the backing and support of the Communist Party, but that was before it became completely Stalinized and expelled the honest revolutionists.

The principle of the International Labor defense, which made it so popular and so dear to the militants, was nonpartisan defense without political discrimination. The principle was solidarity. When you consider all this and compare it with the later practices of the Stalinists; when you recall what has happened in the last twenty-odd years, you must say that the Stalinists have done more than any others to dishonor this tradition of solidarity. They have done more than any others to disrupt unity for defense against the class enemy.

That terrible corruption of disunity in the face of the class enemy has penetrated other sections of the labor movement, too. The social democrats do a great deal of pious moralizing about the Stalinists, but their conduct isn't much better, if any. For the greater part, they make no protest against the persecution of the Stalinists. The labor officials, both of the CIO and AFL, stand aside, and many even support the prosecution.

They think there is no need to worry about the Smith Act, that it is only for Stalinists. That is what the Stalinists thought when we were on trial seven years ago — that this evil and unconstitutional law is only for Trotskyists. I heard in San Francisco a Stalinist party speaker, harassed by an interrogator as to the relation between their trial and ours, said, "This whole trial is a mistake and a misunderstanding. The Smith Act was meant for the Trotskyists." But the Smith Act chickens came home to roost for the Stalinists, and the same thing can happen to others, too.

Revived Unity and Solidarity Needed to Stop Smith Act

If the Stalinists are convicted, establishing another precedent to buttress the precedent of our case, the same law can be invoked against other political organizations, against college professors, and even preachers who happen to have opinions contrary to those of the ruling powers and the courage to express them. It is a great error, a terrible error, to neglect this trial and refuse to protest, an error for which we will all have to pay — they and we, and all of us, all who aspire by whatever means, or by whatever program or doctrine, toward a better and freer

world through the unity and solidarity of the workers. We will all have to pay if the federal prosecutor wins this case and makes it stick with the support of public opinion. That is why we would like to see every effort made, even now while the trial is going on, to reverse the present trend, to overcome the passivity and indifference.

It is, of course, utopian to hope or expect that a great united movement, cooperating loyally as in the old days, can be formed with the Stalinists. The Stalinists cannot cooperate loyally with anyone. We offered them a united front. They refused it. Even now, when the witch-hunt and loyalty purges are directed against them, they refuse to say one word in defense of James Kutcher, the legless veteran, who was removed from his Veterans Administration job in New Jersey because of his political opinions as a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

Because of the attitude of the Stalinists, as well as for other considerations, it would be utopian to hope for an all-inclusive united front. But the trade unions and anti-Stalinist political organizations should join together, for their own reasons and in their own interest, to protest this prosecution. We would join and give our support to such an effort. But in any case, whether it can be done cooperatively or separately, all should raise their voices in protest against the political trial going on in Foley Square. Not for the sake of the Stalinist gang, but for the sake of free speech, for those democratic rights which the labor movement has dearly won and badly needs for its informed and conscious struggle to reach higher ground. □

“What World Revolution?”

Continued from page 2

the other most powerful capitalist countries, use the leverage of loans to impoverished Third World governments to dictate terms that will guarantee the continued siphoning off of surplus value (through the payment of interest on IMF loans) from the working populations of those countries, which are already on the verge of starvation.

But there is unceasing resistance to this most “modern” form of imperialist domination and exploitation. One example is the mass outpouring in Haiti in mid-January 1997 against a government essentially imposed by the U.S./UN occupying force. This new Haitian government is trying to implement IMF-dictated austerity measures. Striking workers are demanding that this anti-national government resign.

Another example is the guerrilla resistance in Peru, which has answered the austerity policies of the Fujimori government with the occupation of the Japanese embassy in Lima. (Some of the details and background of this struggle are presented in the article by B. Skanthakumar and the interview with a Tupac Amaru guerrilla leader, elsewhere in this issue.)

Resistance in Canada and Western Europe

Workers in Western Europe and Canada are also resisting the attempts by their capitalist rulers to take away past social gains (steps toward social-

ism) made by the organized working classes in those countries. (Two articles by Barry Weisleder, elsewhere in this issue, describe the struggle in Canada. The workers’ fight in Western Europe is well described in an article by Daniel Singer in the December 24 *Nation* magazine. See also the reports on the dramatic and powerful French truck drivers’ strike of December 1996, in the December and January issues of *Socialist Action*, a Fourth Internationalist newspaper published in the U.S. — subscriptions are \$8 a year, write to SA, 3425 César Chávez St., San Francisco CA 94110.)

Social gains, such as the Social Security system in the U.S., are in fact steps toward socialism — part of the worldwide socialist revolution. Struggles against cuts in social welfare, health, and education programs, against privatization, against unemployment and wage cuts, against racism and victimization of immigrants, against child labor, against the special oppression of women are necessary struggles out of which a movement for a new and more just society can grow.

The example of the battle now being waged by unionists and their allies in South Korea (see accompanying article) illustrates that, to the question “What world revolution?” we can answer, “The one right before your eyes!”

As Kim Moody rightly points out in the February 1997 *Labor Notes*, capitalist “politicians around the world” are attempting to im-

pose “austerity or disciplinary programs on working people.” In response to this, Moody states correctly, “unions in more and more countries are leading the opposition and finding wide public support.” (Emphasis added.)

The example of how unions shut down much of France in December 1995 is well known. But in addition to that, Moody summarizes: “in 1996, general or mass strikes against government austerity or anti-labor plans took place in Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Greece, Spain, and Venezuela, as well as South Korea.”

“Mass trade union-led political demonstrations have been even more common, particularly across Western Europe.”

Labor unions, and *labor parties*, around the world can pose an alternative to the dead-end rule of capital.

The Cuban CTC’s call for an “International Workers Meeting to Confront Neo-Liberalism and the Global Economy” is a good example of what is needed. Worldwide collaboration among mass movements led by labor can create a mass working-class international. On the basis of such collaboration, international working-class rule could replace the insanity and cruelty of the globalized marketplace with a humane and decent world society that meets people’s needs and allows them to realize their potential as human beings. That is what we’re talking about when we speak of “world revolution.” □

From the Managing Editors

Continued from Inside Front Cover

bicycle. From the age of four, Iqbal had spent six years shackled to a rug loom, tying tiny knots 12 hours a day and earning 3 cents a day. After escaping, he crusaded against the horrors of child slavery in his country.

Iqbal’s murder remains unsolved, but he had been openly threatened by the Pakistan carpet makers association.

An article in the February 1996 *Atlantic Monthly* reported that “between 500,000 and one million Pakistani children aged four to fourteen now work as full-time carpet weavers.” (Jonathan Silvers, “Child Labor In Pakistan.”) Carpets are a major money-earning export for the capitalists of Pakistan and foreign investors who back their operations.

Inexpensive child labor has “fueled Pakistan’s economic growth,” says the director of a government agency, the Workers Education Program. “Entire industries have relocated to Pakistan because of the abundance of cheap child labor and our lax labor laws.”

According to Silvers, child labor has reached “epidemic proportions” in Pakistan, as in many other super-exploited Third World countries. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan estimated the number of child laborers in that country “in the region of 11–12 million,” half of them under the age of ten.

Worldwide, the number of children under fourteen who work full-time “is thought to exceed 200 million,” says Silvers.

“Children are cheaper to run than tractors and smarter than oxen,” Silvers quotes a Rawalpindi landowner.

Silvers also tells of the “new abolitionists,” the fighters against child bondage, among them the Bonded Labor Liberation Front (BLLF), the organization to which Iqbal turned for help and with which he campaigned, gaining international prominence before his murder.

Silvers describes a raid by the Pakistani political police, the Federal Investigation Agency, on BLLF headquarters in 1995. The raiders, accompanied by an official of the Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association,

announced they did not need a search warrant because “we are acting to prevent terrorism.” So those who campaign against the obvious evil of child labor, which on the books is *illegal* in Pakistan, are classed as “terrorists.”

In June 1995, Assistant Director Mahmood of the Federal Investigation Agency charged Ehsan Ulla Khan, founder of the BLLF (who was then abroad and who remained in exile), and Zafaryab Ahmad, a BLLF strategist who was arrested and jailed, with sedition and economic treason, capital offenses punishable by death. According to Mahmood, “The accused men conspired with the Indian espionage agency to exploit the murder of Iqbal Masih... causing a recurring huge financial loss to Pakistan’s business interests abroad and paving the way for India to wage economic warfare against Pakistan.”

When the capitalists’ greed is challenged they always blame “foreign agents,” outside agitators, spies, “terrorists,” and “Communists.” □

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International Workers Meeting

Confronting Neo-Liberalism and the Global Economy

Havana, Cuba, August 6-8, 1997

On May 2, 1996, an "International Union Meeting on Workers Unity and Solidarity in the 21st Century" was held in Havana, Cuba.

Union representatives from 49 countries, and five continents, participated. The delegates agreed to organize and promote an **International Meeting of Workers to Confront Neo-Liberalism and the Global Economy**. The delegates also proposed to invite international unions and social organizations to attend, with the idea of broadening the participation.

The event will be held August 6, 7, and 8, 1997, in Havana, Cuba, and will be hosted by the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC).

The points of discussion will include proposals from workers to confront:

- Privatization
- Unemployment and underemployment
- Lowering of wages
- Cuts in Social Security and deterioration of health care services and education
- Racist attacks on immigrants
- World uni-polarization [that is, the absence of an alternative pole in a world where the U.S. is the sole superpower]
- Unfair distribution of wealth
- Plans to weaken or eliminate unions
- Loss of countries' sovereignty and independence
- Sexual discrimination
- Child labor

- Other specific aspects from each country or region

The U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange would like to invite you to attend a labor seminar, which will be held in Havana, Cuba, August 2-9, 1997. The seminar will be fully hosted by the CTC, and the U.S. delegation will stay at the Lázaro Peña school of the CTC.

As part of the one-week labor seminar, you will attend the "International Workers Meeting Confronting Neo-Liberalism and the Global Economy." You will also visit hospitals, schools, child-care centers, factories, etc. You will meet with representatives from different unions, Cuban and international.

As a guest of the CTC, you will learn about the role labor plays in Cuban life as well as the new challenges workers face as joint ventures appear in Cuba and the negative effects of the Helms-Burton Bill by the U.S. government.

Some free time will also be available to you.

Delegate who attend the two-week seminar will have the opportunity to attend the World Youth Festival.

- One-week Cuba Labor Seminar
Saturday August 2, to Saturday August 9, 1997
From Cancún, Mexico — \$650.00
- Two-Week Cuba Labor Seminar
Friday July 25, 1997, to Saturday, August 9, 1997
From Cancún, Mexico — \$950.00

If you are interested in attending any of the upcoming seminars and need an application or if you have any questions or need more information, please fill out the attached coupon or contact us at the address or telephone number below.

- Please send me information and an application
- My union would like to endorse the delegation to the "International Workers Meeting Confronting Neo-Liberalism and the Global Economy"
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