

Reconstruct
the
Fourth
International!

TORCH

Newspaper
of the
Revolutionary
Socialist League

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3/25c

STATE SOCIETY
OF WISCONSIN

MARCH 15 - APRIL 14, 1979

Revolution Continues in Iran Masses Defy Khomeini Regime



Women march in Tehran on International Women's Day. The women are in the forefront of the continuing struggle for freedom. See box on page 11 for more details.

The revolution in Iran continues, despite attempts by the Ayatollah Khomeini and Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan to restore "order." Tens of thousands of women have been demonstrating against attempts to drive them "back to dog status." The oppressed nationalities are pressing their demands for autonomy. And the workers are forming their own organizations for the first time. What is the situation in Iran today? And what is the road forward? For discussion of these and other questions, see p. 10.

Racist Weber Suit Comes Before Supreme Court in March

See page 4



What Kind of Leadership Do Autoworkers Need?

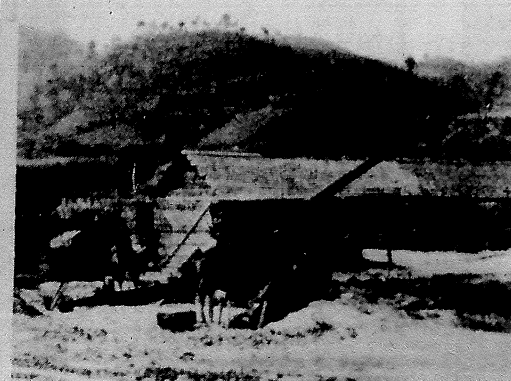
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Workers Organize at U.S. Steel South Works

See page 5



CHINA— OUT OF VIETNAM!



Vietnamese troops defending their country from Chinese invasion.

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31 Indicted for Pontiac Rebellion

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Gay Activists Plan D.C. March

See Page 15

**SECCION
EN
ESPANOL**

**our
readers
write...**

Send letters to:
**TORCH, PO Box 562,
N.Y., N.Y. 10036**

Struggle grows in Chile

Dear Comrades,
Regarding your convention I think that I've gotten a valuable experience in observing both the discipline of the militant comrades and the high political level of the young comrades, which is so important given the need to take our politics in their correct form to the working class. I also believe the comradeship was an important factor in carrying out the discussions fraternally and constructively. And most important for me was the support extended to the working class in my country, which inspires us to continue the struggle until our joint victory...

Regarding the Chilean situation, I can tell you that the news is important, but I believe that the situation in the rest of the world is much more important (Iran, Vietnam, Nicaragua, etc.). This fact might deprive the comrades who follow world events in the Torch/La An-

torcha of some good information (regarding Chile).

Later I will send you the names of the comrades who were murdered in the mines of Lonquen. Right now I only know that five corpses have been identified, and they belonged to a "disappeared" family in Chile (a father and four sons) who were arrested on September 23 [a few days after the Chilean army coup in 1973—Ed.] and taken to the national stadium. After a month in jail they transferred them to an unknown place in Santiago, where they were seen for the last time. The comrades had been tied up and shot once in the head.

What has this meant? The mobilization of the working class and an infinite number of budding acts of resistance in the important industrial sectors. This is meshing neatly with the emergence of a strong front of struggle, which—in spite of being repressed, and with the release of over 1,000 detained

TORCH banned for printing the truth

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the struggling class:

I'm elated and amazed at receiving Volume 6 of the Torch. Since reading my Torch and rereading certain articles, I have come to the conclusion that the only reason myself and other co-plaintiffs [in the Ruiz suit against the Texas Department of Corrections—Ed.] here at Ellis have been denied our Torch is because of the real truths that exist in prisons today and are printed therein.

I have been an active activist, with associates such as David Ruiz, Allen L. Lamar, Samuel J. Jackson, Lee Otis Johnson and James Clayton for quite sometime. Our efforts have been consistent in attacking the conditions of our confinement. I testified in the Ruiz case and since that time I lost 30 days goodtime, placed in third-class, locked in segregation 32 days, and sentenced to solitary for 15 days. My life has been threatened by these back-wood-raised power-thirsting pigs in light of my active support in a stinging dissent denouncing the Ellis Unit and its segregation as unreasonable, unscientific, and based upon unadulterated prejudice.

I give prayer to the many oppressed Blacks, Chicanos

and whites who have sent letters informing the public on what's happening in these slave plantations across the country. In all honesty... I must close in hopes that someone will hear my plea.

My first issue of the Torch—and it's a beauty. So keep up the good work.

Unity in struggle...
**James Douglass Yeager
Ellis Unit #226841
Huntsville, TX**

PS: I'm serving a 500-year sentence.

Woman prison activist raped by guard

Below is part of a letter sent to the Torch/La Antorcha concerning the rape of Shirley Keller, an active member of the Lucasville 14. In the past, to protest the complete denial of human rights to prisoners, the group wrote over 7,500 letters to government officials and conducted a hunger strike.

When this failed to get results, they sent their own cut-off fingers to U.S. officials and the Soviet Mission to the UN. So far their active resistance has been met with brutality, strip-cell confinement, forced hospitalization and drugging, isolation—and now rape!

Dear Torch:

As you know, Shirley Jean Keller is one of a group of prisoners known as the Lucasville 14, having renounced her citizenship in August 1977. She has been fighting with us ever since.

The government took custody of Shirley, and moved her to a federal prison in an attempt to break her away from us... she was first taken to Alderson, West Virginia. She continued to organize while there. She was then moved to Pleasanton, California, the same prison that Patty Hearst was in.

Shirley was recently raped by a male guard at Pleasanton and as a result is pregnant! When Shirley reported that she had been raped she was thrown in the hole in an

attempt to force her into silence, and force her to consent to an abortion, and she has refused both.

The media in California got onto it, and a radio station got in to interview her, and she told it like it was. She was then moved, along with another woman prisoner who was a witness to the rape, to a county jail in San Francisco. A couple of lawyers and some Bay Area political activists called a press conference for her, and some people from Congressman Dellums' office got in to speak with her.

Yesterday I received another letter from Shirley telling me that she has been moved again, this time to a men's federal prison in San Diego, and she and her witness are being kept in an isolation unit there. She only gets out of her cell 45 minutes a day, and they are pressing her to abort, and she is still refusing and stating that she wants to leave the country and have the baby.

**Richard Armstrong
Lucasville 14**

Worker comments on new Baraka play

Comrades:

Recently I saw this play written and directed by Amiri Baraka called "What Was the Relationship of the Lone Ranger to the Means of Production?" which I believe to be really good. It laid out just what the contrast between the workers and the capitalists really is, and was quite an eye-opener.

However there were two points that bother me and I wish to point them out for the people who see the play and in order that the comrades who put the play out might clear it up.

Point one: the Lone Ranger (who represents the bourgeoisie) and the union official (who is the labor bureaucracy) had far too much to say in relationship to the workers on the line. In other words, you had to really listen to the workers on the

line and read between the lines of the people who were playing the bourgeoisie to realize that the workers were getting on to the overthrow of the capitalist class.

Point two: toward the end of the play—when you have found out that the Lone Ranger (bourgeoisie) and labor bureaucrats are working hand in hand to keep the workers down and oppressed by using any means necessary—the workers rebel and other workers come in yelling "Strike!" and carrying guns. They in effect tell the Lone Ranger that they will be back and then he'll get his. But it's a little unclear in the meaning. To clarify: if they were just striking there really was no need for the guns, but on the other hand, if they were overthrowing the capitalists then the guns were necessary and should have been used for that purpose **right then**, not by saying "we will be back and you will get yours."

Like I said, the play is a good tool to open the workers' eyes and the points are my feelings and observations of the play. A revolutionary should have seen these weaknesses and should have really said that the only way forward for the whole working class was a revolution **now, not later**, and which goes into a more detailed explanation.

I hope that the people who have seen the play will write and voice their views on it. This just might bring the working class a little closer to the final goal of a workers-controlled world.

**Comradely,
JM
New York City**

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"He knew the
RSL

On February 24, the New York branch of the RSL paid a Tribute to Malcolm X, who was murdered 14 years ago on February 21. Over 100 people attended the tribute which included a showing of the documentary on Malcolm X's life "El-Hadji Malik Shabazz" and talks on the importance of his revolutionary ideas. The following are the text of the talk given by Comrade Elizabeth Volk:

We are gathered here tonight to pay a tribute to Malcolm X, a great revolutionary and a great fighter for the liberation of Black people. Malcolm X spent his whole political life fighting for the liberation. His whole life took on and struggled against those who believed that Black people could be free without destroying the system; those people felt that you could work reforms, work for peace change, work for non-violence. Malcolm X's whole life is a statement that "You can't be free until you tear down the system."

The leaders of the rights movement were trying to pressure the capitalist system into ending racial discrimination. They following the tactics of Martin Luther King, Jr., who was against revolution, against tearing it down. He was peaceful change within the system. Malcolm X rejected the reformist strategy. He tackled people like Bay Rustin who said "you can go beyond gradualism reform." Malcolm X was revolutionary. He knew capitalism means racism understood how the capitalist system works.

Capitalism teaches us to get ahead by climbing on each other's backs—like a bunch of crabs in a bucket. When I talk about climbing on each other's backs, I'm not just talking about individuals. I'm talking about nations and ethnic groups.

Capitalism began in the rope, and probably the best thing that pushed capitalism forward was slavery. Ever since, the history of capitalism has been: "White is great, it's great to be white, you're not white, or if you're from an oppressed nationality, or an oppressed group like women or gays, you're a so-called for worker who leaves your country to come to another then you're dirt, sometimes to be stepped on, like a common insect. All of that built into the capitalist system and it will never end until capitalism is smashed; until the exploitation of people at the hands of other people is done away with. Malcolm X understood this, and that's why we, the RSL, commemorate Malcolm X here tonight.

There are a few things here we don't fully agree with Malcolm X. He saw oppression and exploitation of society as mainly a

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Richard Armstrong
Lucasville 14

"He knew that capitalism means racism"

RSL Pays Tribute to Malcolm X

On February 24, the New
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was murdered 14 years ago
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Malcolm X spent his whole
political life fighting for rev-
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system; those people who
felt that you could work for
reforms, work for peaceful
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"You can't be free until you
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The leaders of the civil
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reform." Malcolm X was a
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capitalism means racism. He
understood how the capital-
ist system works.

Capitalism teaches us to
get ahead by climbing on
each other's backs—like a
bunch of crabs in a barrel.
When I talk about climbing
on each other's backs, I'm
not just talking about indi-
viduals. I'm talking about na-
tions and ethnic groups too.

Capitalism began in Eu-
rope, and probably the big-
gest thing that pushed cap-
italism forward was Black
slavery. Ever since, the ide-
ology of capitalism has
been: "White is great, and
it's great to be white." If
you're not white, or if you're
from an oppressed national-
ity, or an oppressed group
like women or gays, or if
you're a so-called foreign
worker who leaves one
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common insect. All of this is
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tem and it will never be
ended until capitalism is
smashed; until the exploita-
tion of people at the hands
of other people is done away
with. Malcolm X understood
this, and that's why we, the
RSL, commemorate Mal-
colm X here tonight.

There are a few things
where we don't fully agree
with Malcolm X. He saw the
oppression and exploitation
of society as mainly a race



Malcolm X speaks at Harlem rally, June 1963.

question. But we see that
there are many other forms
of oppression alongside racial
oppression. There is
sexual oppression. There is
religious oppression. There is
national oppression. Racial
oppression is only one
out of many. And we see that
what lies behind all these
forms of oppression is class
oppression—the oppression
of the working class at the
hands of the capitalist class.

But we fully agree on the
central thing that Malcolm X
stood for: "You cannot be
free without tearing down
the system." And that's not
just true for Blacks. It's true
for all oppressed national-
ities. It's true for women and
gays. In particular, it's true
for the working class as a
whole. Malcolm could see
that the system was rotten—
that you had to smash it.
This is why he was hated by
the system. And this is why
he was killed.

Today Malcolm's new-
found friends are killing him
over and over again—the
liberals, the Uncle Toms, all
the people who during his
lifetime hated him, consid-
ered him their enemy. The
ones who work within the
system. The ones who are
calling for a peaceful
change. The ones who are
working with the Democratic
Party. All of these people are
trying to turn Malcolm into a
harmless icon—a sacred
Black image without any rev-
olutionary content. But as
long as Black people are
oppressed, as long as this
blood-sucking system sur-
vives, the revolutionary heri-
tage of Malcolm X will live
on.

Malcolm X is gone, but the
two sides are still fighting it
out. There are the revolution-
aries, like us, who say—with
Malcolm X—"The system is
rotten; get rid of it." And

by working inside it. We say,
let the facts speak for them-
selves. The gains we made
during the '60s are being
turned around. Blacks are
worse off today than they
were in the '60s, not better
off. Take a look around: the
Bakke decision, the Weber
case in steel, Proposition 13,
the cutbacks in social ser-
vices. These are only a few
of the most recent attacks.

None of this would have
surprised Malcolm X. He
understood very well that the
name of the game is "divide
and rule." Whenever capital-
ism is in a crisis, like a major
depression, a war or some-
thing—and there is always
something—the capitalists
always have to find a scape-
goat. Who were the number
one scapegoats in Malcolm
X's day? Black people...
and revolutionaries, like Mal-
colm X himself. But Blacks
have never been the only
scapegoat. There are many
others: Latins, Native Ameri-
cans, Jews, and other op-
pressed groups. Just think
about it; you'll see where I'm
coming from.

Look at the Anita Bryant
campaign—what they tried
to do to gays just a year or
two ago. That's one clear
example of how they use an
oppressed group as a scape-
goat. The capitalists are
always hunting for scape-
goats to take the heat off
themselves, especially in
times of crisis.

And right now this country
—and many other parts of
the world—are in economic
crisis. The dollar is collaps-
ing more and more. We can
feel it here at home every
day. Prices of things are sky-
high, a lot of people can't get
work, and the capitalists
don't know what to do about
it—and they don't give a
damn. What's going to hap-
pen to the so-called token-
ism they've given Blacks

over the last few years?
They're going to take them
back and they're going to
attack us. The system is
going to use Black people
and other oppressed nation-
alities as an excuse to why
whites are in the state
they're in. They'll pit white
against Black. This is what
the Weber case and the
Bakke decision are all about.
This is what Proposition 13
is about.

You cannot be completely
free until class society is
ended; until this society
built on profits and exploita-
tion is smashed. And we
workers have the power to
smash it. We have the power
because we run it all: the
auto plants, the post office,
the garment shops, the
trucks, everything that
moves, everything that pro-
duces the wealth of this
country.

All the history of this
country shows that the only
solution for racial oppres-
sion is revolution. And that's
where we stand when it
comes to reform vs. revolu-
tion. We're for revolution,
that is, a world socialist
revolution of the whole work-
ing class. Why a world rev-
olution, you might ask? Be-
cause the workers are one
class all over the world. We
all face the same basic con-
ditions, regardless of wheth-
er we're Black, Latin, Asian
or white, regardless of color
or nationality. We all have to
sell our labor-power, just to
survive. And we all work for
the capitalists who roll in
profits made from our blood
and sweat. We're one class.
We have one enemy. And we
should have one goal:
to smash the capitalist system.
As we commemorate the
memory of Malcolm X, we
say to all the oppressed:
Join with us, join with the
working class in the struggle
for a socialist revolution. □

August 8th Brigade Sends Solidarity Message

Frank Khali Abney, a member of the
August 8th Brigade, sent the following
message to the Tribute to Malcolm X.
The Brigade will be tried this spring on
charges stemming from the August 8
Rebellion against KKK guards and intol-
erable conditions at the Eastern Correc-
tional Facility in Napanoch, New York.

In the spirit of fraternal solidarity and
struggle, we greet our many comrades
here tonight and uniformly join them in
paying tribute to this great Black leader,
teacher and freedom fighter: El-Hajj
Malik El-Shabazz, our brother Malcolm X.
Malcolm's wisdom and insight as a
leader placed him at the forefront of our
struggle, both nationally and internation-
ally. As the legitimate and uncontested
spokesman for Black people in this coun-
try Malcolm imbued the Black commu-
nity with consciousness. In the tradition
of Garvey and DuBois, Malcolm fathered
a whole new generation of protest and
forged ahead in what is now known as
the Black Liberation Movement.

Malcolm served to inspire us all. He
was patient in the face of our ignorance,
yet uncompromising in the wake of our
fear and vacillation. Through the politi-
cal agitation of this man came the
George Jacksons and Rap Browns of the
sixties. Raised from the ghetto streets of
Detroit and Harlem, Malcolm X did more
than uplift us morally and spiritually...he
made us face ourselves and our reality,
and pressed us to proudly commit our-
selves to the 400-year legacy of struggle
that is our history proper in this country.

We join you in paying tribute to
Malcolm today by re-affirming that
commitment to struggle consistently, to
carry on in the tradition of Malcolm, and
to fight for and ultimately win our free-
dom. Let us move forward to defeat U.S.
Imperialism and smash racism "...by any
means necessary."

A Luta Continua!!!
The Struggle Continues!!!
Frank Khali Abney
August 8th Brigade

Affirmative-Action Programs Under Fire

Smash the Racist Weber Suit!

On March 28, the Supreme Court will begin hearing arguments in the case of Brian F. Weber. Weber, a white worker at Kaiser Aluminum's plant in Gramercy, Louisiana, is suing the company and the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) for "reverse discrimination." He claims an affirmative-action

program signed by the company and the union discriminates against white workers and violates his right to equal employment under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Weber says there's no justification for an affirmative-action program at Kaiser because the company has

always had a "no-discrimination hiring policy" at its Gramercy plant. This is a flat-out lie. Kaiser has followed a racist policy at its Gramercy plant ever since it opened in 1958; Weber himself is an outright racist; and his suit is phony from start to finish.

Let's look at the record.

According to J.P. Roussel, the white president of USWA Local 5702 at Gramercy and a friend of Weber: "When the company first started hiring they had two kinds of badge numbers—certain numbers for whites and certain numbers for Blacks. They were separated, segregated, you know. So I would say there was discrimination. That didn't change until the union came in and they merged the lists."

In other words, Kaiser kept separate seniority lists for Black and white workers. It issued two separate sets of badge numbers, which indicate a worker's seniority compared to other workers. Thus it could lay off Black workers first regardless of how long they had worked at the plant.

In 1967, Black workers at Kaiser began a legal action against the company's racist hiring and promotional policies. The company reacted by setting up a "voluntary" affirmative-action program to head off the lawsuit. But a government investigation into the program four years later revealed that nothing had changed at Kaiser.

The government report charged that although the population of Gramercy is over 40 percent Black, only 82 workers out of a total workforce of 887 at Kaiser were Black—less than 10 percent. There were no Black



Brian F. Weber.

craft workers and no Black managers. Black workers held only one of 11 technician jobs and five out of 32 clerical jobs.

Following the government report, Kaiser "revised" its affirmative-action program to include a goal of hiring Black workers for 50 percent of all hourly openings. However, no goals were set in the lily-white craft jobs. Kaiser claimed that no Blacks had the experience required for these jobs. But a 1973 government study found that Kaiser was perfectly willing to waive its experience requirements when white workers applied for craft positions, although it never did so for Blacks.

As late as 1974 only six out of 279 craft jobs at Gramercy were held by Black workers.

In 1974, USWA President J.W. Abel signed a Consent Decree with nine steel companies, which became a

(Continued on page 16)

What Is the Weber Case?

In 1974 the United Steelworkers union signed a contract at Kaiser Aluminum's plant in Gramercy, Louisiana. The contract requires Kaiser to begin an affirmative-action training program for skilled craft jobs. It gives all Kaiser production workers—Black and white alike—their first opportunity to get skilled-jobs training at company expense. Half the program's openings are reserved for Black workers, until the proportion of Black craft workers is roughly equal to the proportion of Blacks in the surrounding community.

Six white workers and seven Black workers were admitted into the training program in its first year. Brian Weber, a white laboratory technician, applied for one of the openings but was turned down.

Weber claims he has higher seniority than two of the Black workers in the program. He says he was denied admission because he is white. He is asking the Supreme Court to throw out the affirmative-action program because it violates Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act,

which bars job discrimination on the basis of race.

In fact, Weber would have been rejected for training regardless of the affirmative-action program. He had too little seniority to qualify even if no Black workers at all had bid for the openings. Weber knew this before he applied in the first place. He says he wanted to "test" the legality of the program. In reality he wanted to wreck it before it got off the ground.

Weber likes to come off as an ordinary guy who simply wants "equality." But he is an out-and-out racist. In an interview with the New Orleans Times-Picayune last December he said: "I never agreed with making restaurants serve Blacks. If you choose not to serve them, that's your business."

Weber supports segregation on the job, just as he supports it off the job. He wants to wipe out every gain Black workers have made in the past 20 years. We can't let him get away with it. SMASH THE WEBER CASE!

Steelworkers Hold Women's Conference

By A STEELWORKER
CORRESPONDENT

On February 15, the International of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), in conjunction with the Women's Caucus of USWA District 31 (Chicago-Gary), held a conference for the women in the district. Over 350 steelworkers attended. Representatives from the International, including Leon Lynch, vice-president for human affairs, made speeches about the needs of women and the oppressed nationalities in the union. Resolutions were passed which condemned Brian Weber and called for the defeat of his lawsuit against affirmative action, and affirmed support to the Tenneco shipyard strike in Newport News, Virginia. But the basic message in the bureaucrats' speeches was "sit tight, talk, but leave everything to us."

Workshop sessions were similar. There were workshops on childcare, maternity benefits, discrimination and organizing women. They passed good-sounding resolutions, but there was no discussion of a strategy to fight for real changes. The most blatant "no-struggle" line from the International was in the workshop on organizing women. The women who went to that workshop wanted to discuss how

we can get more women active in union struggles, particularly through local women's committees. But the official line was: "You women are in the union, you don't need to struggle. Why don't you organize non-unionized women?"

This year's conference, tightly controlled by the bureaucrats, allowed for little discussion from the floor. Unlike the last conference, which lasted two days with one afternoon devoted entirely to discussion on resolutions, this conference had only one hour for reports from the workshops and for discussion of the resolutions!

Rely on bureaucrats?

The Women's Caucus of District 31 is led and influenced by workers in the Communist Party (CP). Their strategy for organizing women is to rely on the bureaucrats rather than the power and organization of the workers. The CPers' program stresses getting more women in the upper levels of the International. They believe that organizing conferences will build their reputations and help them get appointed or elected to higher posts.

This bureaucratic strategy is counterposed to the activities of more militant local women's committees. As a result, the CPers who dominate the caucus want to keep the committees as narrow as possible and "legitimate." They want to restrict the program of the local committees to "women's issues."

For example, Roberta Wood, president of the district caucus, was opposed to a women's committee having a program which called for fighting against the ENA (the Experimental Negotiating Agreement, a no-strike agreement) and for the right to ratify our contracts. She also opposed having the

committee fight the sexist local leadership when they disbanded the women's committee.

Rank-and-file women steelworkers are more interested in a program that points the way to real changes. As a result, the local women's committees are organizing around broader issues.

For example, at Local 65, the women's committee adopted a program opposing the ENA and supporting the right to ratify our contracts. It also called for company-paid day care and an end to the probation period. The committee has planned an educa-

tional series for the spring. Topics include our rights under the contract and how to file grievances. At Gary Works, Local 1014, women forced the bureaucrats to have an educational on rape, after one sister was raped and found dead in the mill.

The women's conference showed us that women steelworkers are interested and want to fight. But rank-and-file women went away disappointed at the shop-talk character of the meeting. Women are among the most active in the union because we are among the most oppressed workers in the mill. We are a tiny minority in a male-dominated industry and, like other oppressed groups, we work some of the most dangerous and lowest-paid jobs. Men with male-chauvinist attitudes constantly harass us, so every day is a battle.

Local women's committees can set a model for other committees in the union. We need to organize and demand that all local unions have official women's committees with elected rather than appointed leaderships. These committees should have the power to negotiate with management. We need to organize ourselves and build the trade unions into revolutionary organizations for the battles ahead. □



350 steelworkers attended February Women's Conference.

U.S. Steel

Wor

In December 1978, U.S. Steel announced plans to close the foundry at its South Works division in Chicago, eliminating 300 jobs. The foundry is a dangerous and dirty place to work. Over 10 percent of the workers have the lung disease silicosis, caused by the sand that always hangs in the air. When pressure clean up the foundry, it causes respiratory problems. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Steel sued with the plan to shut it down. In the following letter, a foundry worker reports on the efforts to organize against the clos-

Dear Torch/La Antorcha

The announcement of the foundry closing at Steel's South Works (United Steelworkers of America, Local 65) came by surprise. All the men working there demoralized at first. USWA did not seem



Hold on! We've got

it!

P. Roussel, president of USWA Gramercy and ... "When the started hiring ... nds of badge ... in numbers ... certain num- ... They were ... egated, you ... ld say there ... ation. That ... ttil the union ... y merged the



Brian F. Weber.

craft workers and no Black managers. Black workers held only one of 11 technician jobs and five out of 32 clerical jobs.

Following the government report, Kaiser "revised" its affirmative-action program to include a goal of hiring Black workers for 50 percent of all hourly openings. However, no goals were set in the lily-white craft jobs. Kaiser claimed that no Blacks had the experience required for these jobs. But a 1973 government study found that Kaiser was perfectly willing to waive its experience requirements when white workers applied for craft positions, although it never did so for Blacks.

As late as 1974 only six out of 279 craft jobs at Gramercy were held by Black workers.

In 1974, USWA President I.W. Abel signed a Consent Decree with nine steel companies, which became a

(Continued on page 16)

Conference

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ference.

U.S. Steel Threatens Jobs and Lives

Workers Organize at South Works



the working class to control its working conditions. He wouldn't listen to a fellow worker who told him to go ahead and sign; "it was communists who started the union anyway."

Alice Peurala, a reform candidate for president of Local 65 in the upcoming April elections, forced John Chico to hold a special union meeting to discuss the foundry closing. At the meeting on Monday, March 5, many of us spoke about the need to mobilize all the workers at South Works to defend the jobs of the foundry workers. Most of us realize that the only hope for ever forcing the company to clean the foundry up and keep it open is in the militancy of 7,000 workers. The only real power the union has is its membership.

In order to mobilize that power we must inform and organize our fellow workers by carrying this petition to all the other shops at South Works.

So we demanded an official union Committee to

In December 1978, U.S. Steel announced plans to close the foundry at its South Works division in Chicago, eliminating 300 jobs. The foundry is a dangerous and dirty place to work—over 10 percent of the workers have the lung disease silicosis, caused by the fine sand that always hangs in the air. When pressured to clean up the foundry by a citation from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Steel answered with the plan to shut it down. In the following letter, a foundry worker reports on the efforts to organize against the closing.

Dear Torch/La Antorcha:

The announcement of the foundry closing at U.S. Steel's South Works plant [United Steelworkers of America, Local 65] caught us by surprise. All the men and women working there were demoralized at first. The USWA did not seem to be

doing anything about stopping the company. They talked to some lawyers, politicians and government bureaucrats, then gave up. Local 65 President John Chico's attitude was "there is nothing more we can do." It wouldn't occur to our union leaders to talk to the 7,000 rank-and-file workers at South Works.

After asking all the older workers and the union officials what we could do about the company's action, I decided to start the petition [see box]. Seventy-six workers signed up right away. At first some of the workers were afraid to sign, but as word got around, people began coming to me asking how many signatures we had and saying they wanted to sign up.

One man did not want to sign because "it is communist." He knew the Revolutionary Steelworkers Caucus would use it to educate workers in the struggle of

Keep the Foundry Open. President John Chico didn't really want us to form a committee but there was so much sentiment for the committee that he had to grant it.

Plans for the future are to pass the petition around, visit other USWA locals and

get their support, build for a plant-gate rally and publicize our fight in the press.

Jim Gillespie
Revolutionary Steelworkers
Caucus of the USWA
U.S. Steel
South Works Section
Chicago, Illinois

Petition On Foundry Closing

We demand our jobs be made safe and healthful with no loss of pay. Therefore, we demand that the company clean up the foundry and keep it open.

Unemployment is very high. We believe the company's action to destroy 250 jobs of mostly Black workers is a racist attack on the whole working class of people.

We believe the elimination of 250 jobs, in this largely Black and Mexican-American neighborhood of southeast Chicago, is a racist attack on the whole community.

Therefore, we strongly urge the union to inform and organize the workers at U.S. Steel plants in Chicago, Gary, Pittsburgh, and Birmingham to force the company to clean it up and keep it open.

We also make a motion to the union to hold a plant-gate rally at the 60th Street gate to build up the morale of the foundry workers; and to publicize the demand to clean it up and keep it open.

Explosion Kills Four at Chicago Foundry

By A STEELWORKER CORRESPONDENT

For weeks before February 16, workers at the Burnside Steel Foundry on Chicago's South Side had complained that the brakes on the steel-pouring crane often jammed. They had also complained that the bottom of the pouring pit was covered by water that had seeped in.

On February 16, the brakes jammed while the crane was moving a hot steel ladle containing tons of molten metal across the shop. The crane halted above the pouring pit; the ladle hung in mid-air. Management sent some workers to un-jam the crane's brakes while other workers carried on with their regular jobs around the pouring pit.

Then, while the crane was being repaired, the steel ladle tipped over, spilling 3,200-degree molten metal into the pit. The steel hit the water, turning it into steam. In an instant, the steam expanded in volume hundreds of times over. An explosion rocked the foundry, scattering hot steel all around and blowing off part of the roof. Eighteen workers were injured; four of these have since died of burns.

Burnside Foundry's management is not even trying to plead ignorance. Workers there had filed 50 safety grievances in the past year and a half! The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) had cited the company a number of times prior to the explosion. And just two days before,

workers had walked out to protest unsafe conditions. The company's excuse had been simply lack of funds. Apparently they have now found funds—they have shut the foundry down for at least a month for repairs. They are not letting OSHA in to inspect.

The officials of the Burnside Foundry workers' union, the United Steelworkers of America, have responded by denouncing the company roundly. David Marshall, secretary of the grievance committee of Local 1719 at the plant, has said that the company should be charged with murder. But these USWA officials are doing very little else.

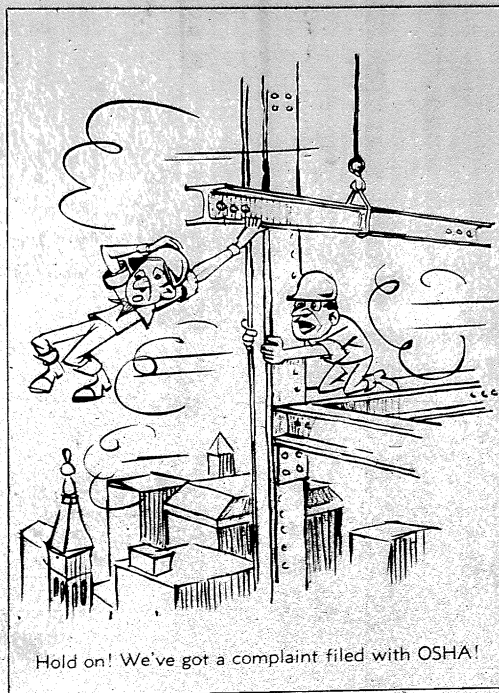
The union's ranks, however, are becoming more aware of just how dangerous working conditions are. Readers of the previous issue of the Torch/La Antorcha will remember the article on the lung disease epidemic at U.S. Steel's South Works Foundry. That is not the only unsafe condition at the South Works Foundry. The same water seepage as at Burnside exists at South Works.

Indeed, the same conditions are present in all kinds of hot-metal-pouring facilities in mills all over the country. The steel companies continue to say that they lack the funds to make their facilities safe. OSHA has not corrected these hazards. The union leadership has done nothing about them, outside of "talking tough."



Ladle hangs above foundry pouring pit.

What we don't need is more tough words and no action. We need to organize to stop the slaughter and the poisoning of steelworkers for the sake of the companies' bank balance. As the struggle at U.S. Steel South Works shows, this organizing is beginning.



Hold on! We've got a complaint filed with OSHA!



Terrence Johnson trial opens March 19

Terrence Johnson, a 15-year-old Black youth, will be tried for murder in the death of two cops in Prince Georges County, Maryland. The trial is set to open March 19. Johnson is being tried as an adult. If he is found guilty he could get two life sentences.

On June 27, 1978, Johnson and his brother Melvin were picked up by the cops because their car supposedly matched the description of a car used in a burglary. At the Hyattsville police station, Officer Arthur Claggett took Terrence Johnson into a small room, beat him viciously and threatened to break his neck. As Johnson fought for his life, he somehow grabbed Claggett's gun and shot him in self-defense. Then he ran out of the room, shooting wildly so he almost hit his own brother. One of his shots killed Officer James Swart. Johnson has pleaded "not guilty," by reason of self-defense in the death of Claggett, and by reason of temporary insanity due to extreme emotional stress, in the death of Swart.

Prince Georges County, a suburb of Washington, D.C., is known for police brutality and KKK activity. In the six months before Johnson's arrest, two unarmed Black men were killed by the cops. Officer Claggett beat a Black man so bad a few years ago that even the state's attorney called it a "case of excessive force." Terrence Johnson had every right to defend his life against this racist pig. **Free Terrence Johnson!**

Free the Puerto Rican Nationalists!

On March 1, 1954, a group of Puerto Rican nationalists fired guns into the U.S. Congress to protest their country's status as a U.S. colony. The 25th anniversary of the attack was marked by a step-up in the campaign to free the Four Nationalist Prisoners, who are the longest-held political prisoners in the Western Hemisphere. The four are: Lolita Lebron, Rafael Cancel Miranda and Irving Flores, who are serving 25 to 75 years for their attack on Congress; and Oscar Collazo, who is imprisoned for his part in an armed attack on Blair House, the temporary residence of President Truman, on November 1, 1950. (A fifth prisoner, Andres Figueroa Cordero, was released in October 1977 because he had terminal cancer. He died March 7 of this year.)

On March 3, more than 1,500 people demonstrated in Washington, D.C., demanding the release of the four. In New York, on March 1, members of the RSL took part in a march, through El Barrio. The march demanded freedom for the four and for William Guillermo Morales. Morales is a nationalist who was arrested in New York on July 12, 1977, after an explosion in his apartment. The state claims the apartment was a bomb factory for a terrorist organization. On March 9, Morales was found guilty of possessing explosives. He still faces federal charges.

Puerto Rico is a U.S. colony. Puerto Ricans have every right to fight by any means necessary for their country's independence. The Four Nationalist Prisoners are prisoners of war. They must be freed!

Black S. African militant sentenced to die

Solomon Mahlangu, a 21-year-old Black South African, is under death sentence for killing two white men. On June 13, 1977, Mahlangu and two friends were stopped and searched by security police in Johannesburg, who found a hand grenade in one of their bags. Mahlangu and Mondy Motloung ran into a nearby garage. When the cops broke in shooting, Motloung returned their fire. Mahlangu hid during the shooting, in which two white garage mechanics were killed. Motloung was beaten viciously by the cops. He was later found unfit to stand trial because of excessive brain damage. Mahlangu pleaded "not guilty" to charges of murder and five charges under the infamous Terrorism and Internal Security Acts. On March 23, 1978, he was found guilty and sentenced to death. The judge accepted that Mahlangu took no part in the shooting but sentenced him anyway!

Solomon Mahlangu is a member of Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the military wing of the African National Congress. He is the first Black political prisoner sentenced to death in South Africa. An international campaign must be organized to demand his freedom. **Death to apartheid!**

Defend the RCP 78!

Washington, D.C., cops arrested 78 supporters of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) in a demonstration on January 29. They were protesting the visit of Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping who came here to cement China's alliance with U.S. imperialism. Helmeted riot police, led by motorcycle and mounted cops, clubbed and beat the demonstrators. All 78 are charged with felonious assault on a police officer. They could get up to five years in jail.

Victory Won Against Bannings in New York

By LEE RAMIE

On December 14, 1978, the New York State Department of Corrections was forced to allow back issues of the **Torch/La Antorcha**, which had been previously banned, into New York prisons. The appeal was filed by the Prisoners' Rights Project of New York City and included a number of publications in addition to the **Torch/La Antorcha**.

This victory was an important test of a decision handed down by U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Curtin on September 13, 1978. The decision, **Jackson vs. Ward** (No. Civ-1969-435, W.D.N.Y.), forced New York to rewrite its regulations regarding prison censorship of publications. Judge Curtin's ruling established fairly precise guidelines which leave the New York prison officials relatively little room to impose arbitrary restrictions on literature.

This decision can also benefit prisoners in other states, such as the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC). Despite the 1977 **Guajardo** ruling, TDC prisoners are still fighting arbitrary use of censorship rules by the keepers. The **Torch/La Antorcha** is usually banned in Texas under a broad rule that says:

"The publication contains material that a reasonable person would construe as written solely for the purpose of communicating information designed to achieve the breakdown of prisons through inmate disruption such as strikes or riots." The "reasonable person would construe..." clause clearly allows the censors to "construe" whatever they want, and thus continue banning the **Torch/La Antorcha**.

The Jackson decision is not a binding precedent for

the Texas courts, but it does provide what lawyers call "persuasive authority." Therefore we want to review the highlights of the decision.

The essence of the ruling is that prisoners must enjoy the same general First Amendment rights as people on the outside, except in cases where a specific threat to the prison is posed. Judge Curtin wrote that guidelines that impose greater censorship than that are unconstitutional and violate due process. He also noted that broadly-framed rules (such as TDC's) place the burden on the prisoner and publisher to prove that a publication does not violate the guidelines, when due process demands that the burden be on the censors to prove that it does.

Stressing the narrow restrictions that may be placed on prisoners' First Amendment rights, Judge Curtin wrote that censorship "should be guided by the presumption that literature should be freely available to prison inmates," and that "correctional authorities who would be censors must show that their imposed restrictions are justified." Prisons may impose censorship "only to the extent absolutely necessary" to guarantee prison security. Thus, the TDC regulation quoted above would be overly broad if the Jackson standard were accepted in that federal court district.

Curtin ruled that "material that may reasonably be thought to incite violence or disruption within a correctional facility may be prohibited by a tightly-drawn regulation.... The publication must present a clear and present danger of the occurrence of the criminal activity which is advocated in the publication." In other words, advocacy of an idea or an

"illegal" act (say, overthrowing the government) is not enough to ban the paper. The prison must show that the article contains a concrete "intent to commit" the act.

The same guideline applies to articles "inciting disobedience toward law enforcement officers or prison personnel." Curtin wrote: "Literature that criticizes police or corrections officials cannot be excluded under this guideline." So prisons can't ban a publication for criticizing the pigs, or for reporting on prisoner struggles.

In sum, the decision stresses in several ways that prisoners are to be allowed a wide range of political literature, and that the prison keepers bear the responsibility for proving that a given piece of literature poses a "real and tangible threat" to security. The decision places restrictions on the censors while affirming broad First Amendment rights for prisoners and publishers.

As Curtin pointed out, the question involved is broader than prisoners' rights alone: "When corrections officials censor publications addressed to inmates, they also place a burden on freedom of the press."

The last main point of the decision was to rule that the media review committees should not only state the name and date of the banned periodical, but also briefly describe or refer to the material thought to be "objectionable." This is important, since without such information it is almost impossible to appeal any given banning.

Prisoners in Texas and other states who wish a fuller summary of the **Jackson vs. Ward** ruling should write to the **Torch/La Antorcha**, PO Box 562, NY, NY 10036. □

FROM THE TDC:



1. No Beards, Mustaches, Long Sideburns or Long Hair Will Be Worn.

2. Sideburns Must Not Extend Below the Middle of the Ear.

3. Hair Must Be Neatly Cut And Off of the Ears.

4. Hair is to be Trimmed Up The Back of The Neck and Head (Block Fashion Not Acceptable)

Is this a poster for regulation haircuts in a Marine boot camp? No—it's the official hair regulations for prisoners at the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC). When Ronald Taylor, assistant director of TDC, testified in the Ruiz case, he said that Black prisoners were allowed to wear afros and white inmates could have long hair. He lied. TDC wardens enforce what you see here.

31 Prisoners Killed

On March 5, indictments came down on 31 prisoners for the July 22 rebellion at the Pontiac Correctional Center in Illinois, in which three guards were killed. A Livingston County grand jury indicted 17 prisoners for murder; of these 17, three were also charged with conspiracy. The state claims that these three—Larry Hoover, David McConnell and Joseph Smith—are gang leaders who planned the death of the three guards. The grand jury also indicted 14 other brothers on felony charges, including assault, burglary, arson and motor actions. More indictments may come.

The rebellion at Pontiac last July was a spontaneous uprising against the rotten and inhuman conditions at the prison. Pontiac was overcrowded and excessively hot, the food was rotten, and programs for the prisoners were in terrible shape. So the brothers rose up.

Right after the rebellion

Rhode Island State Prison R

Six Black prisoners at the Adult Correctional Institution (ACI) at Cranston, Rhode Island, are being framed on charges of stabbing a guard on September 18, 1978. Billy Sims, Timothy "Bird" Kennedy and James Edwards have been charged with assault with intent to murder, assault with a deadly weapon, assaulting a correctional officer and conspiracy. If found guilty, they could get 60 years. The other three—David Collins, James Foreman and Darrell Amado—have been charged with conspiracy and face 10-year sentences if found guilty.

While awaiting trial, the ACI Six are being held in "Cell Block South." According to a prisoner at ACI, this cell block is "over six feet 'underground' in the basement of the medium security building. It doesn't comply with the federal fire code; there is no fire door and no fire exit. There is only one way in and one way out."

There is no evidence connecting any of the six with the stabbing. They are being charged only because they are known organizers and militants. The Rhode Island press has helped the state by whipping up a campaign of racist hysteria against the six.

The State of Rhode Island's real aim is not "justice," but bringing the prisoners under control. This was shown on September 20, 1978, two days after the

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ence of the ruling prisoners must enjoy the general First Amendment rights as people outside, except in the case of a specific threat to national security. The guidelines are more restrictive than those that are unconstitutional and violate due process. The guidelines also noted that the rules (such as the burden of proof on the prisoner and publication of a public statement) do not violate the First Amendment, when due process is provided that the burden of proof is on the censor to show that the material is obscene.

g the narrow restraints that may be placed on the First Amendment, Judge Curtin said that censorship is not a First Amendment right. The guidelines are guided by the First Amendment that literature is freely available to all. As Curtin pointed out, the question involved is broader than prisoners' rights alone. "When corrections officials censor publications addressed to inmates, they also place a burden on the freedom of the press."

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31 Prisoners Indicted for Pontiac Rebellion

Pigs Invade Stateville

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Right after the rebellion

the state put the whole prison on deadlock, with prisoners locked two to a one-man cell 24 hours a day, and denied showers, exercise, job assignments, visits or phone calls. Meanwhile, state investigators moved in. They tried to buy testimony by promising time off sentences for rats. And they also threatened prisoners who wouldn't talk with the electric chair. In all, over 1,200 prisoners, guards and other people were questioned. The state compiled its case using lies, bribes and terror.

A state spokesperson called this "the most massive criminal investigation in Illinois history."

We call it a vicious frame-up!

Second prison on deadlock

Shortly before the indictments came down, on Feb-

ruary 25, a large force of guards, backed up by state troopers, invaded the Stateville Correctional Center in Joliet, Illinois. The assault was led by 22 members of the "tactical squad," in orange riot gear and helmets. Prisoners were locked in their cells and have been there ever since. Without any notice or hearings, 10 prisoners were transferred to the Metropolitan Correctional Center in downtown Chicago. From there, they may be moved to federal prisons.

The state and the prison keepers announced that this is only the beginning. Prisoners at Stateville will be kept in their cells 24 hours a day for the next seven weeks. During this time, every cell will be searched for weapons, drugs and anything else that the prison big shots can use to justify the assault. Then cells will be "cleaned"—personal belongings rifled through, and taken away. The brothers are going to get "reclassified" and Stateville "restructured." Which means more security.

With the prisoners at Pontiac locked down since July, it wasn't easy for the Department of Corrections to get away with a second crackdown. To do this, they put out the story that street gangs were in control of Stateville—ordering the guards around, going to and from their cells whenever they felt like it, and smuggling in dope, alcohol and weapons. Illinois Governor Thompson shot off his mouth about how the prison had to be "retaken."

PPO answers phony stories

Even before the invasion of Stateville, the Pontiac Prisoners Organization (PPO) answered the street gang stories in their newspaper, Spark:

"It seems that an alleged war against crime is to be unleashed by the Department of Corrections to break what has been labelled a 'gang crime network' inside Illinois prisons. PPO considers this whole plan as merely another stage in the state's new wave of repression being directed toward the entire Illinois prison pop-

guard was stabbed. Governor Joe Garrahy declared a "state of emergency" at the prison. This gave him the legal basis to transfer 15 known prisoner leaders to the federal prison at Danbury, Connecticut, and from there to the maximum security prison at Lewisburg, Kentucky. No charges were brought against the 15, nor were they connected in any way with the stabbing. But they were the most effective prison organizers at Cranstons.

FLASH—As we go to press, we have received a letter from three of the brothers informing us that Collins, Foreman and Amado have turned state's evidence and are helping the state falsely convict Sims, Edwards and Kennedy. These three are continuing to fight the state's racist frame-up. Free the ACI Three! □

While awaiting trial, the ACI Six are being held in "Cell Block South." According to a prisoner at ACI, this cell block is "over six feet 'underground' in the basement of the medium security building. It doesn't comply with the federal fire code; there is no fire door and no fire exit. There is only one way in and one way out."

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Troopers move in to begin shakedown at Stateville.

ulation as a result of the Rebellion. This so-called war on crime is but another smoke screen by the state's correctional agencies to further add legitimacy to its attacks on prisoners in general, and Black and Third World prisoners in particular. It is a concentrated attempt to poison the minds of the masses of working class and poor people against the prisoners."

What's going on is that the state wants to get back at the prisoners for the deaths of three guards during the Pontiac rebellion. The state wants to begin threatening and murdering prisoners with the electric chair. But they first wanted to make sure that when the indictments came down in the Pontiac case, all hell wouldn't break loose in Illinois prisons.

Further, the state hopes to kick the rebellion out of all prisoners. Bringing back the electric chair is only one part of the plan. Eleven new gun towers are being built at Pontiac. And a camera system will be put in. All in all, the state wants to crush any signs of a fight.

The Pontiac Prisoners Organization called on all prisoners to stand together when the indictments came down. The RSL calls for the same

fighting unity—inside the prisons and on the streets. We are sisters and brothers in one struggle to:

**Free the Pontiac Brothers!
Smash the Deadlocks!
Build Unity in the Struggle!
It's Right to Rebel!**

SUPPORT THE PRISONER LITERATURE FUND

In the past two years, the Torch/La Antorcha has greatly expanded its coverage of prisoners' struggles. The number of prisoners who read the Torch/La Antorcha and correspond with the Revolutionary Socialist League has also increased significantly.

The RSL provides revolutionary literature to prisoners to the extent that we can. Also, large numbers of prisoners receive free subscriptions to the Torch/La Antorcha.

Lack of funds keeps us from sending prisoners all the literature they want. Thus, to increase the amount of literature we can send, we have established a Prisoner Literature Fund. We encourage all readers of the Torch/La Antorcha to donate to this fund so that we can supply prisoners with revolutionary literature. Those who can make a monthly pledge, no matter how small, should do so. This money will be used exclusively for providing prisoners with revolutionary literature.

Send contributions to:
Prisoner Literature Fund
PO Box 562
New York, NY 10036



Supporters demonstrate for Pontiac prisoners, Sept. 1978.

Auto Contract Struggle Begins

WHAT KIND OF LEADERSHIP DO AUTOWORKERS NEED?

The following article was written by a supporter of the Revolutionary Autoworkers Committee (RAC), an organization affiliated to the RSL.

On September 14 the contract between the United Automobile Workers (UAW) and the auto corporations expires. Since the last contract round (1976) the economy has stagnated further and the entire capitalist class is frightened. They know they are facing an economic crisis. And they are stepping up their attack on the working class to make workers pay for their crisis.

Social services have been slashed to the bone. Poor and unemployed women can no longer get funding for abortions. Special programs for oppressed ethnic groups are being wiped out. Jobs are harder to find. Unemployment, particularly for women and other oppressed people, has increased. And while hospitals, schools, museums, zoos, libraries, and recreational facilities are being CLOSED, the cities are HIRING police.

Carter's wage "guidelines" are only one example of the attack on poor and working-class people. Ruling-class circles, looking for a strategy, are turning more to the conservatives. The conservatives are racist, sexist and anti-working class. The far right, the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan, are growing and getting more aggressive.

As the capitalists increase their attacks they will look more to the Nazis and the KKK to do their dirty work (such as union busting) for them.

Internationally, the U.S.

the losses through attacks on workers in the U.S.

Autoworkers face this contract round under these conditions. A fight will have to be made to prevent the capitalists from wiping out

the working class needs.

The strategy of the present UAW leadership is reformist. They tell workers that with a shaky economy workers should "sacrifice" and limit their wages to Carter's seven-percent guidelines. They parade around saying that they will stop the companies from taking away medical benefits. They will try to sell a few more paid days off as a "breakthrough" and an inch toward the shorter workweek.

These leaders help the auto bosses. In 1976, UAW leaders negotiated a bonus for retirees, who have no cost-of-living protection and are starving. Where did this bonus come from? From the cost-of-living money of working autoworkers! UAW leaders hailed this as a "gain"! One section of workers gets a concession, another takes a loss. Only the auto capitalists really benefit. The strategy of the UAW leadership helps the capitalists to divide and weaken the working class. These leaders are the biggest obstacle to a real united struggle for a decent contract. And they are preparing another sellout this time around.

Because of this leadership, the UAW is in a weak position. Autoworkers are facing massive layoffs, deteriorating working conditions, and increased harassment by management. Speedup, forced overtime, job combinations, health

and safety hazards, and racial and sexual harassment are everyday life.

The workers are beginning a fightback but are not organized. Last summer Detroit autoworkers exploded with walkouts and wildcats over excessive heat and intolerable working conditions. Workers at Romeo, Trenton, Dodge Truck, and elsewhere took action with little organization and leadership. UAW leaders sabotaged these struggles and helped the bosses discipline wildcaters. This leadership must be kicked out!

What kind of leadership should we build?

RAC/RSL believes this leadership must be revolutionary (for the overthrow of world capitalism), and socialist (for the total control of society by the working class). Unless this leadership is built the working class will suffer serious defeats at the hands of the capitalists.

Autoworkers need a leadership that will give no mercy to a policy of class collaboration (no wheeling and dealing with the bosses, no sympathy for their loss of profits). It should see its main task as organizing the members of the union to take it back for themselves. It should organize workers to fight for themselves and not depend on the good intentions of liberal politicians or slick-talking bureaucrats leading UAW locals.

Autoworkers need a real shorter workweek: 30 hours of work for 40 hours' pay, not more token days off! Improved quality medical care, not the poor care that exists now! A substantial wage increase, full COLA, guaranteed SUB (Supplementary Unemployment Benefits), not the capitalist wage restraints! This new leadership should lead the fight for autoworkers' needs. It should lead every struggle for better working conditions; every struggle for full equality for women; for minorities; for gays; for probationaries; for retirees; for dignity and equality on the job for all workers! Decisiveness, bold tactics, combined with strong organization and collectivity is leadership.

It is clear this leadership is not yet built. We must build it. We must start to build a revolutionary opposition in the UAW. This contract round gives us the opportunity to do it. Autoworkers have shown their willingness and ability to fight. This contract fight is a test of strength. Can a real workers' opposition be built to the present leadership of the UAW? Yes! To the degree that this opposition is organized and united, autoworkers have some chance at beating back the attacks we



"Just once I'd like a contract without being blamed for inflation, wars, Mid-East crises, mass layoffs, sink backup, suicides, mange, seagull lice, dandelion infestation..."

Imperialists are getting their butts beat by the workers, peasants (small farmers) and poor people in Iran, Jamaica, Southeast Asia, Nicaragua, southern Africa, and elsewhere. Every time the U.S. is kicked out of a country, the imperialists lose profits. As a result, U.S. imperialism has been weakened. The capitalists want to make up

past gains. The present leadership of the UAW will not lead this fight.

To defend itself, the membership of the UAW needs a new leadership. The contract round is an opportunity to begin to build a leadership that will not limit the struggle of workers to what the capitalists say they can afford, but will fight for what

RAC Calls for United Workers' Demo at Bargaining Convention

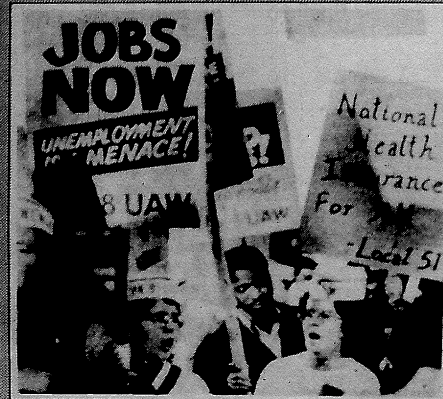
...under attack. Our protests... organized by management.

...in a capitalist day. One-sided... they will not fight... We need a real fight against company attacks—a militant fight.

All union locals, sections, members and organizations who want to fight should unite. The Revolutionary Autoworkers Committee is proposing a united workers' demonstration at the April Bargaining Convention around the following demands:

- 1) FOR A MILITANT RANK-AND-FILE CONTROLLED STRIKE/NO SELL-OUT. Only militant tactics can beat the companies. No return to work until the ranks vote.
- 2) FULL GUARANTEED SUB FROM DATE OF HIRE. Full protection for low-seniority workers.
- 3) NO FORCED OVERTIME/NO OVERTIME WHILE ANY WORKERS ON LAYOFF. Fight the layoffs. Protect the 40-hour week.
- 4) UNLIMITED LOCAL RIGHT TO STRIKE. The local membership alone has the right to determine whether to strike over any issue with no interference.
- 5) INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY. No time off, no demerits until grievance procedure has run its course.
- 6) FIRE ALL RACIST-SEXIST FOREMEN.
- 7) SMASH CARTER'S WAGE GUIDELINES. We need a substantial wage increase. Full COLA.

There is a real threat of permanent layoffs for thousands of UAW members over the coming years. Unemployment is already critical among the youth of



this country. The creation of jobs is crucial. Thirty hours' work for 40 hours' pay (six-hour day) is a key demand in this fight. The capitalist class will not give this up easily. All workers must unite in this struggle. Autoworkers alone cannot win it. RAC will be raising this demand at the Bargaining Convention. We call on all workers and youth, regardless of whether they are UAW members or not, to come out and support us. This will be an important step in building the fighting unity of the whole working class, employed and unemployed, in the face of capitalist attacks. This demonstration will play an important part in building the leadership for this fight.

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How do we build this leadership?

Most autoworkers see the union as something that takes their money and gives nothing in return. They are down on the union instead of seeing that the rotten leadership of the union that's the problem.

But there are indications that a new leadership is emerging: higher attendance at union meetings; more fightback on the shop floor. There are also numbers of workers who are beginning to understand that the union can be a weapon in the class war. Some workers are revolutionaries. Some are militants. A majority of these workers are those most discriminated against: Blacks, women, gays, and other oppressed groups.

Trenton Face Jail Term

DETROIT—Seven autoworkers known as Trenton Seven face possible seven-day jail sentences as a result of the July 1977 walkouts at Chrysler's Trenton Engine plant in Trenton, Michigan. The circuit court will decide their appeal March 14.

In the summer of 1977, autoworkers across the country walked out of their plants, refusing to work in 120-degree heat. At Trenton Engine, the heat was turned into a wildcat strike after Chrysler tried to force some of the leaders. For days workers stood in front of the plant in protest against Chrysler, the courts and over 100 miles from eight cities. Chrysler assembly plants were shut down half-shifts because of electric shortages.

As punishment, Chrysler—with help from the 372 president and the International—fired 10 workers. The State of Michigan charged them with contempt of court for defying a court order to stop picketing at the plant. Federal Judge Feikens, who presided over the trial, used the work for Chrysler as a punishment. He denied the Trenton Seven a jury trial and a course—found them guilty.

Since then six of the seven have gotten their jobs back. But autoworkers and the union must demand that the contempt charges be dropped and that the law be reinstated. The heat walkouts of 1977 were an important step in fighting the inhuman working conditions in the plants. We must continue the struggle for defending the Trenton Seven! □

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Autoworkers are under attack. Our paychecks cannot keep pace with inflation. Job cuts, speedup and disciplines are being systematically organized by management.

We are the victims in a one-sided war. One-sided because the present union leadership is not mobilizing the full power of the membership to fight back. They will not fight at contract time. They will strike only for show while a deal will be worked out behind the scenes. We need a real fight against company attacks—a militant fight.

All union locals, factions, members and organizations who want such a fight should unite. The Revolutionary Autoworkers Committee is proposing a united workers' demonstration at the April Bargaining Convention around the following demands:

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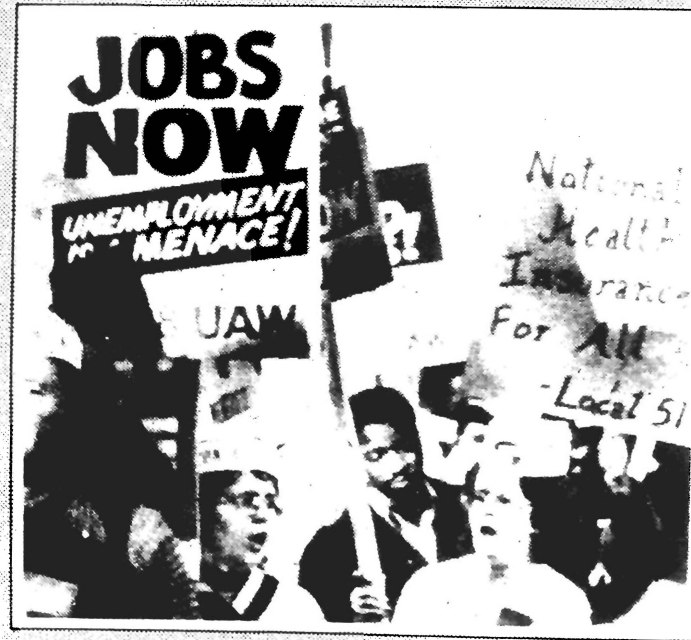
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are facing. And beyond the contract, autoworkers will have gained the necessary experience, increased combativity, and have a real core of the leadership necessary to organize and lead this opposition to take control of the UAW.

How do we build this leadership?

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But there are indications that a new leadership is emerging: higher attendance at union meetings; more of a fightback on the shop floor. There are also numbers of workers who are beginning to understand that the union can be a weapon in fighting the class war. Some of these workers are revolutionaries. Some are militants. A majority of these workers are those most discriminated against: Blacks, Latins, gays, women, and others.

This emerging leadership

must be organized, united and educated. It must gain experience through daily struggle. Its tasks must be to organize a broad yet militant opposition to the present union leadership. It

revolutionary strategy and leadership are necessary.

Along with organizing the core of this leadership on the local level, more is needed. Citywide and regional meetings should be called to



UAW President Doug Fraser (left) buddies up to boss Henry Ford II.

must train workers to collectively fight for control of the UAW. Local contract fights give us real possibilities for waging, and winning, struggles. Local union meetings and shift meetings should be the place where workers argue out which strategy and leadership is going to be able to defend the workers against the companies' attacks. It is here that workers will see concretely that a re-

coordinate joint actions, as well as organize a discussion of the strategy and program of the opposition.

RAC/RSL is beginning to build this core. We will use the Torch/La Antorcha, and are writing a pamphlet that outlines our strategy for building a revolutionary leadership in the UAW. Join us! We welcome comments, letters, criticisms, and further ideas on our strategy. □

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As punishment, Chrysler—with help from the Local 372 president and the UAW International—fired seven workers. The State of Michigan charged them with contempt of court for defying a court order to stop picketing at the plant. Federal Court Judge Feikens, who presided over the trial, used to work for Chrysler as a lawyer! He denied the Trenton Seven a jury trial and—of course—found them guilty.

Since then six of the seven have gotten their jobs back. But autoworkers and all of us must demand that the contempt charges be dropped and that the last of the seven be reinstated. The heat walkouts of 1977 were important steps in fighting the inhuman working conditions in the plants. We must continue the struggle by defending the Trenton Seven! □

New York City

BUS DRIVERS FIGHT UNION BUSTING

By ADELE LOHMAN

The City of New York is using every union-busting trick in the book against a wildcat strike by 2,200 school bus drivers and 1,000 matrons. The workers walked off the job on February 15 to defend their jobs and their union (Locals 1181 and 1061 of the Amalgamated Transit Union). Because the survival of these union locals is at stake, the outcome of this strike is important for all public workers—not only in New York but across the country.

Mayor hides city's role

Since the beginning of the strike, Mayor Ed Koch has denied that the city is involved in any labor dispute at all. His excuse is that the strikers don't work directly for the city. Most of them work for Pioneer and Varsity, two private bus companies hired by the city to transport pupils. These two companies bus 85 percent of the 132,000 public school pupils, including 32,000 handicapped children. The Board of Education grants contracts to these companies

based on bids.

Like with any other city contract, the bidders have to meet certain requirements. In the past, these included two clauses important to the workers: 1) The companies that got the contracts would hire the drivers and matrons currently employed; and 2) the workers would have parity with Transit Authority workers—the same pay and the same working conditions, seniority rights and benefits.

But in calling for bids on the 1979-82 school bus contracts, the city dropped these two clauses. Realizing that their jobs were on the line, the workers struck.

The workers' fears have proved to be well-founded. As a result of the new bidding regulations, Varsity (which alone transports 77 percent of all pupils) has been underbid by a whole group of smaller companies. These firms were able to submit low bids because they operate with non-union and part-time workers. A spokesperson for the two locals has said that if the bids are approved, it will break the union.

The mayor has used the handicapped children in a media campaign to try to

turn people against the strike. The papers ran pictures of children in wheelchairs who couldn't get to school. Then the Mayor got a bunch of politicians to chauffeur a few hundred children and get their pictures in the papers. The strikers were portrayed as evil people, ruining the poor handicapped children's lives.

This was followed by an effort to smear the bus companies by claiming they were mob-owned. Big front-page headlines implied that they meant all the bus companies. Then somewhere near the end of the articles they would admit that only a few tiny outfits, responsible for transporting a small number of pupils, were suspected of having mob connections.

It's all bullshit. If they find out tomorrow that some of the new companies that hire non-union workers are mob-owned, you can bet your life they'll keep quiet about it.

Why the attack?

The city is in a financial crisis, and the banks are demanding more cutbacks and layoffs. The attack on the

school bus workers is therefore part of a general attack on all public workers. The city bosses are going after these workers first for a number of reasons. 1) The two locals are small, and that makes it easier to bust them. 2) Since the strikers are not city workers, the city bosses can make it look like a "private" conflict. There is also less chance that the strike will spread to the other city unions. 3) The strike affects handicapped children, and the city can use that as a weapon against the workers.

As of this writing, it looks bad for the strikers. The city has "asked" the new companies to hire senior drivers with 10 or 15 years on the job. But that leaves a lot of people out on the street. And the ones who do get jobs will have to take a wage cut, with no job security and no union. They will have lost all the gains they fought for over the years.

If the city bosses can bust this union it will make them more confident in going after the public workers' unions. It is important for the whole working class to rally behind the school bus workers and smash the bosses' union busting. □

Opposition Wins Election in UAW Local 551

CHICAGO, March 8—President Byron Cooper took big losses in the February 27 run-off election at UAW Local 551 (Ford Chicago Assembly plant). Ford workers elected opposition candidates to fill two of the three vacancies on the executive board, including the post of secretary-treasurer for the local.

Less than 1,300 of the 3,500 workers voted. However, this was a normal turnout for a by-election. The majority of workers who voted cast their ballots for the opposition candidates as a way of protesting Cooper's "buddy system" with the company.

Cooper's friends didn't like the opposition one bit! Workers believe they are responsible for burning a car owned by the newly elected financial secretary, who is one of the oppositionists. Cooper's gang is also probably responsible for slashing the tire on a car of a member of the United Contract Committee (UCC—a group at the Ford Assembly plant organizing for a militant rank-and-file fight in the upcoming contract round).

The UCC had publicly stated that "workers' control of the union is the real issue" in the election. "When we gain control of our union, then we will have a fighting chance against the company," the United Contract Committee wrote in a pre-election leaflet.

Cooper and his gang are now talking about challenging the election results. They barely hold on to a majority on the executive board. Cooper's losses and the continuing struggle over the election results will provide the rank and file with some openings as we head into the national and local contract negotiations.



Revolution Continues in Iran

Masses Defy Khomeini Regime

By TONY CURZO

The Iranian revolution continues to surge forward. Before the fall of the Bakhtiar government, it looked like the Ayatollah Khomeini and his fellow Islamic priests were in complete control of the revolutionary movement. It seemed that they would have no trouble setting up an Islamic republic. But no sooner did Bakhtiar fall than the various sections of the mass movement started to go their own separate ways.

Since then, Khomeini has been unable to regain control. His every move causes more opposition among the very groups who helped him come to power. For days on end, tens of thousands of Iranian women have been fighting in the streets against Khomeini's attempts to drive them back into domestic slavery. (See box on page 11.) The two guerrilla groups—the People's Fedayee and the Mujahedeen—are armed and are refusing to turn in their weapons. Oppressed nationalities—such as the Kurds, Baluchis and others, who make up 60 percent of the population—are demanding autonomy (limited self-rule). The Kurds in particular have come out of the revolution with guns and are in effective control of the section of western Iran that is part of their homeland.

On the campus of Tehran University, the students are demanding a thorough purge of the faculty, most of whom supported the shah. Press reports say that the Khomeini regime is reluctant to reopen the school for fear that there may be an explosion.

All over Iran "democratically elected" workers councils... are springing up in virtually every institution, from businesses to the air force," according to Time magazine. These councils are

the brand-new organizations of the working class. They are moving to take control of production in many places. In the oil industry, for example, the workers have refused to expand production beyond a certain fraction of total capacity.

While these struggles are buffeting Khomeini from the outside, his ruling circles are themselves to a large extent paralyzed by internal differences. Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, who was appointed by Khomeini, is trying to rebuild the shattered governmental apparatus, especially the armed forces. He wants to gather together the thousands of administrators who worked for the shah, to get the economy moving again. But he is being frustrated at every turn by the opposition of the masses, and by Khomeini and his organization of Islamic committees.

Khomeini's committees and Bazargan's governmental apparatus are in effect two parallel governments which compete and work at cross purposes with each other. In recent days Bazargan and Khomeini have quarreled in public. Bazargan went so far as to hand in his resignation, but Khomeini refused to accept it. Khomeini may want to keep Bazargan around for a while because he may not yet feel strong enough to take over directly in his own name.

To strengthen his shaky hold on the country, Khomeini is planning to have a referendum where the choice is posed as the monarchy vs. the Islamic republic. All the same, he is taking no chances. Yes votes will be cast on a green ballot. No votes will get a red one—so much for a secret ballot! Every voter is required to sign her/his name and address on the ballot itself—thus anyone who votes no will be adding her/his name to a ready-made enemies' list.



Leftists rally at Tehran University against Bazargan government.

This referendum is designed to give Khomeini the authority to go all out with his reactionary plans. Citing "the will of the people," he will have more freedom to move against women's rights. He will try to use the vote as a mandate to disarm the various guerrilla movements. He will call on the workers to disband their committees and bow down before the popularly elected government—namely himself. He will use the referendum to legitimize his secret, hand-picked Islamic Revolutionary Council. In short, he will use it to come out openly as the nation's dictator.

At this point, however, Khomeini's forces have lost control of the situation. The revolution has created a power vacuum at the top of Iranian society. No individual or group is able to assert control. Khomeini has no

reliable armed forces to impose his will on the various forces which brought down the shah. This vacuum at the top can't last forever. Either the revolution will move forward or one or another bourgeois figure will put together a reliable armed force and seize control.

The Iranian workers have the potential power to take over the country. Their power was crucial in bringing down the old regime. However, the workers are only now beginning to organize themselves. They still lack nationwide organizations, and they don't have a revolutionary party that could lead a struggle for power.

Given this situation, it's doubly important to find ways to reunite the mass forces that made the revolution in a struggle against Khomeini. Right now all these groups—the workers, the

Lesson From the Iranian Revolution

HOW THE ARMY WAS DEFEATED

By WILLIAM FALK
and SUSAN EDMUNDS

When we talk to workers about the need for a revolution in this country and throughout the world, many people agree. They know the system is rotten and brings nothing but misery to the world's peoples. What a lot of people are unsure of, however, is whether a revolution is really possible.

"That sounds good," we're told, "but what about the cops and the army? The bosses can get the army to shoot us down like dogs. They can roll their tanks through any building or factory we take over. They've got the planes, the bombs, the tanks, the guns."

This is a serious question. Today we face a ruling class that has built up the largest and most powerful military machine the world has ever seen. And yet, their machine can be overcome. This was shown recently in Iran, where the masses of people toppled the shah and then his puppet-successor Shahpur Bakhtiar. To do this, the people had to defeat the shah's army. The fact that this happened, and how it was accomplished, is one of the lessons of the revolution in Iran.

The first question that comes up about defeating a modern army is: How can we deal with the sophisticated weapons of the ruling class? This was certainly a question in Iran, where the shah had built one of the most modern, well-equipped armed forces in the world—the most modern tanks, guns and artillery; the new

electronic smart bombs; and the most advanced fighter planes, the F-14 with Phoenix missiles.

But the shah—like rulers everywhere—couldn't very well use many of these weapons inside his own country. For example, any bombing of Tehran—Iran's capital and heart of the revolu-

tion—inevitably would have killed thousands of people loyal to the shah, destroyed millions of dollars of private property, and damaged the shah's hopes of getting support internationally. So his hands were tied and the bombs and missiles had to stay put.

In addition, even "robot" weapons cannot function without people. For example, no plane, tank or armored car can go anywhere without fuel. This means people have to drill for, pump and refine the oil, and people have to transport the oil to wherever the planes, tanks and armored cars are. So if the people who usually do these things stop doing them, nothing moves.

This is what happened in Iran. Starting in November of last year, the oil workers stopped all oil production. Not only did this deprive the regime of billions of dollars from the sale of oil to other countries, but it also deprived the military of fuel to keep the planes, tanks and armored cars running. Thus, the oil workers' strike helped to defeat the military.

The most important point to remember, however, is that the armed forces—not the individual rulers—have and control most of the weapons. If the soldiers stay loyal to the regime, the people will not be able to get arms and the revolution will have trouble moving past a certain point. But if the revolution can win over (or demoralize) the soldiers, then all the bosses' weapons become our weapons, and the revolution becomes an almost invincible force.

Thus, one of the most important tasks in a revolution is this: To win the ranks of the armed forces to the revolution, or at least demoralize them so

(Continued on page 17)



Troops joined demonstrations against U.S.-backed Bakhtiar regime.

women, the oppressed nationalities, the peasants, the students and you—are beginning to wage their separate struggles against Khomeini. The workers have to find ways to tap the energy and militancy of all these oppressed sectors and unite them into a common struggle against the regime.

The best way that all these so-called forces can be united against Khomeini is through a struggle for a constituent assembly. A constituent assembly elected by a universal and secret ballot, allows all these forces to gather and freely determine what the nation's future will be. It is opposed to the dictatorship of Khomeini's secret Islamic council, and his bogus referendum.

A fight for a constituent assembly will unite the workers and all the oppressed layers of society in a common fight for their democratic rights. It will provide a common rallying point against Khomeini's game.

Even should Khomeini end up with a majority in an eventual vote for a constituent assembly, the very existence of such a national congress would immediately bring all of the oppressed sectors together against the Khomeini bloc and make it much harder for him to consolidate his hold.

Meantime, the workers have to fight right now to strengthen their organizations. The workers' councils should be extended beyond the factories, to

Iranian Women



Vowing to fight all attempts at women of Iran have taken to the Women's Day—hundreds of thousands in Tehran chanting: "Down with Khomeini!"

Iranian women played an active role in the revolution from the very beginning. But at the moment Khomeini wants to put them back under a dictatorship he has abolished co-women from bigamy and arbitrary divorce (Khomeini also abolished the 1963, men—but not women—constituent public.) Khomeini also wants to return to the head-to-head system.

It was this last order that sparked the demonstrations. Women have been jeered at, stoned and threatened. Thousands of women took over Tehran. 15,000 other women seized the streets. Thousands of women gathered. Among them were women in chador, the right of their sisters to dress as they please.

The demonstrations have forced Khomeini to back down. Women that wearing the chador is a moral women have not been fooled. As the demonstrations spread to other cities.

The attacks on women are part of a broader strategy (see article). Khomeini has called the women "traitors." He has told the people to turn in their weapons to his Islamic courts. The barbarism of the execution of at least 14 people has shown the world.

More is at stake than the rights of all the people is on the line. The determination, are showing the oppression at the hands of Khomeini.

s in Iran



against Bazargan government.

give reliable armed forces to impose his will on the various forces which brought down the shah. This vacuum at the top can't last forever. Either the revolution will move forward or one or another bourgeois figure will put together a reliable armed force and seize control.

The Iranian workers have the potential power to take over the country. Their power was crucial in bringing down the old regime. However, the workers are only now beginning to organize themselves. They still lack nationwide organizations, and they don't have a revolutionary party that could lead a struggle for power.

Given this situation, it's doubly important to find ways to reunite the mass forces that made the revolution in a struggle against Khomeini. Right now all these groups—the workers, the

DEFEATED

In addition, even "robot" weapons cannot function without people. For example, no plane, tank or armored car can go anywhere without fuel. This means people have to drill for, pump and refine the oil, and people have to transport the oil to wherever the planes, tanks and armored cars are. So if the people who usually do these things stop doing them, nothing moves.

This is what happened in Iran. Starting in November of last year, the oil workers stopped all oil production. Not only did this deprive the regime of billions of dollars from the sale of oil to other countries, but it also deprived the military of fuel to keep the planes, tanks and armored cars running. Thus, the oil workers' strike helped to defeat the military.

The most important point to remember, however, is that the armed forces—not the individual rulers—have and control most of the weapons. If the soldiers stay loyal to the regime, the people will not be able to get arms and the revolution will have trouble moving past a certain point. But if the revolution can win over (or demoralize) the soldiers, then all the bosses' weapons become our weapons, and the revolution becomes an almost invincible force.

Thus, one of the most important tasks in a revolution is this: To win the ranks of the armed forces to the revolution, or at least demoralize them so

(Continued on page 17)

women, the oppressed nationalities, the peasants, the students and youth—are beginning to wage their separate struggles against Khomeini. The workers have to find ways to tap the anger and militancy of all these oppressed sectors and unite them into a common struggle against the regime.

The best way that all these social forces can be united against Khomeini is through a struggle for a constituent assembly. A constituent assembly, elected by a universal and secret ballot, allows all these forces to get together and freely determine what the nation's future will be. It is counterposed to the dictatorship of Khomeini's secret Islamic council, and to his bogus referendum.

A fight for a constituent assembly will unite the workers and all the other oppressed layers of society in a common fight for their democratic rights. It will provide a common rallying point against Khomeini's regime.

Even should Khomeini end up with a majority in an eventual vote for the assembly, the very existence of such a national congress would immediately bring all of the oppressed strata together against the Khomeini bloc, and make it much harder for him to consolidate his hold.

Meantime, the workers have to start right now to strengthen their organizations. The workers' councils should be extended beyond the factories, to the

communities. They must be broadened to include all the workers and toilers of the society—the unemployed, the housewives, the youth, the soldiers, the peasants, and the oppressed nationalities. And they will have to be organized on a national level. If this is done, the workers will have an organization of their own that they can use at the appropriate time to fight for power.

The workers have to arm themselves. This should not be too hard now, since there are plenty of arms available. No one should surrender the guns that they do have, and those sections of the masses who are not yet armed have to get guns. The armed workers must be organized into a workers' militia based on the councils.

To lead the struggle of the workers to victory, a revolutionary socialist party is needed. Unfortunately, the decades of Stalinist domination over the workers have left their mark. There is no such party in Iran today. The workers will have to build themselves a party in the struggles that lie ahead. As in Chile, Portugal, Lebanon and countless other places, the workers show no lack of heroism, devotion and willingness to sacrifice. What is missing is a revolutionary organization to organize and lead the struggle and build it toward a seizure of state power by the workers. The absence of such a party may well mean the difference between victory and defeat. □

Iranian Women Fight for Freedom



Vowing to fight all attempts to drive women "back to dog status," the women of Iran have taken to the streets. Starting on March 8—International Women's Day—hundreds of thousands of women have been marching in Tehran chanting: "Down with Khomeini! We Shall Fight the Veil!"

Iranian women played an active part in the anti-shah revolution from the very beginning. But at the moment of victory, the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini wants to put them back in chains. To date, Khomeini's religious dictatorship has abolished coeducation and repealed a law protecting women from bigamy and arbitrary divorce. (Before the law was passed in 1963, men—but not women—could get a divorce simply by notifying a notary public.) Khomeini also ordered women to cast aside dresses and pants and return to the head-to-toe Islamic veil—the chador.

It was this last order that sparked the protests. And although the women have been jeered at, stoned and even stabbed by Khomeini supporters, the demonstrations have grown more militant with each passing day. Thousands of women took over Tehran's central mosque on March 10, while 15,000 other women seized the Justice Ministry. Two days later tens of thousands of women gathered in Tehran's soccer stadium for a rally. Among them were women in chadors, who said they had come to support the right of their sisters to dress as they please.

The demonstrations have forced Khomeini to retreat. He has announced that wearing the chador is a moral duty, but not an order. But the Iranian women have not been fooled. As of this writing, the demonstrations have spread to other cities.

The attacks on women are part of a larger attack (see accompanying article). Khomeini has called those who speak of democracy "fools and traitors." He has told the people to hand in their arms and leave "justice" to his Islamic courts. The barbarism of these courts has already been shown in the execution of at least 14 people simply for being gay.

More is at stake than the rights of Iranian women. The hard-won freedom of all the people is on the line. The women of Iran, with their militancy and determination, are showing the way forward for all those who face oppression at the hands of Khomeini's repressive dictatorship.

World in Revolution



U.S. sends military aid to North Yemen

U.S. imperialism is flexing its military muscles in the Middle East. On March 6 President Carter ordered a carrier task force into the Arabian Sea to back up the right-wing government in North Yemen. He is also sending it planes and tanks and has promised to send up to 300 military advisers within the next two or three years.

Carter's action followed the outbreak of fighting between North Yemen and South Yemen on February 24. North Yemen is a client of the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. South Yemen is a radical-nationalist regime supported by the Russians. Southern Yemeni forces have advanced 30 miles into North Yemen. Latest reports indicate the war is still going on. The crisis in Yemen involves one of the most strategic points in the Middle East. North and South Yemen are located at the bottom of the Arabian peninsula. The two states are close to the rich oil fields of Saudi Arabia, and they control the vital sea route between the Middle East and Asia. Consequently, the U.S. ruling class is anxious to maintain control over the area.

Carter is trying to shore up faltering U.S. prestige in the Middle East. The Saudi Arabian government and other U.S. allies in the Middle East were shaken by the fact that the U.S. was helpless to prevent the overthrow of the shah of Iran. They are wondering whether they can count on U.S. support if the Iranian revolution spreads and their own regimes become threatened. The Saudi Arabian government has hinted it might want to hedge its bets by improving its relations with Russia and with militant Arab nationalists. By reinforcing North Yemen, Carter is trying to prove that U.S. imperialism can still protect its clients.

French steelworkers battle mill closings

French steelworkers are fighting like hell against a government plan to eliminate 32,000 jobs. The plan has already cost over 20,000 workers' jobs. Especially hard hit has been the Lorraine area. On February 16, a general strike shut down Lorraine and was 80 percent effective in Dunkirk in the north. One week later, on February 23, workers occupied a television station in Longwy and broadcast their own news. Then a group of 5,000 people sacked and burned the headquarters of an industry association.

Most recently, on March 7 and 8, steelworkers of the Usinor Works (one of France's two giant steel companies) in Denain blocked the roads and canals and stopped an iron-ore barge. The police attacked and 1,500 workers counter-attacked, assaulting the police station with bulldozers and trapping the cops inside. The next day, 2,000 workers fought the cops from behind street barricades and wounded nine police with gunfire.

The battles have the French bourgeoisie worried. They are afraid of a repeat of the May 1968 worker-student rebellion. Since the battles in Denain, Usinor has suspended planned layoffs, and an emergency session of parliament has been called. It is likely that the government will back down on part of the plan to try to defuse the struggle.

Coup overthrows Grenada government

FLASH, March 13—Radical-nationalist forces led by the New Jewel Movement (NJM) overthrew the repressive government of Eric Gairy in Grenada today. At 4:15 a.m., the NJM forces seized the main barracks in Grenada and burned it down. After a half-hour battle, the Grenadan armed forces surrendered. Several cabinet members and senior police officials have been arrested. Police stations have also surrendered and mopping-up operations are going on.

A new government, led by Maurice Bishop, leader of the NJM, is being set up. Although the coup was a lightning putsch, the NJM is trying to present it as a people's revolution, saying that the new government will fight for people's needs. This government will most likely be a radical-nationalist popular front-type government. Last year, the Stalinoid NJM formed a "People's Alliance" that supposedly represented workers, intellectuals, small businesses, etc. The new government has referred to "patriotic forces" and promised that democratic rights and freedoms will be respected.

The new government has also stated that the police will not be disbanded—this despite the fact that the police under Gairy were known for their brutality. Gairy was close to Pinochet and his reactionary regime in Chile and had sent some people to Chile for training in police work, that is, torture.

The Revolutionary Marxist League, sister organization of the RSL, is preparing a statement on the coup. Its main points will be: welcoming the overthrow of Gairy; warning against intervention by U.S. imperialism; and urging the working class to take control of the situation and move the revolution forward.

As we go to press, Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin have agreed on a peace treaty. News reports are calling President Carter's trip to the Middle East a success. But Carter's maneuvers will not pacify the Middle East. On the very day the agreement was announced, Palestinian liberation forces in Lebanon fought artillery duels with Israeli troops across the border. Palestinian militants in the Israeli-occupied West Bank fought in the streets to protest the agreement.

Thirty years ago the Zionists conquered Palestine and drove the Palestinian people out of their homeland. The Palestinians have been fighting to recover their country ever since. Carter's treaty is aimed at crushing their movement and imposing an imperialist peace in the Middle East. But the Palestinian people will continue to struggle against the U.S. and its Zionist partners until victory.

—PB & WF

By PAUL BENJAMIN

On February 17, 100,000 Chinese troops invaded neighboring Vietnam. By March 2, Chinese forces had penetrated 25 miles into Vietnamese territory, capturing the provincial capitals of Lao Cai, Ha Giang, Cao Bang and Lang Son.

The Chinese government claims it is retaliating for more than 700 border violations by Vietnamese troops over the past two years. Government statements emphasized that the attack was a limited action, that China wanted no Vietnamese territory, and that it was willing to negotiate the border question. They have also claimed that Chinese troops would withdraw from the country after "punishing" Vietnam for its acts of aggression against China.

The Vietnamese government counted on its well-trained border militia to hold back the invaders. But it was forced to bring units of the regular army into battle to defend the strategic town of Lang Son. After Lang Son fell, the Vietnamese leaders declared a national mobilization. The government swore the Vietnamese people would keep fighting until they had driven the invaders out of the country.

On March 5, the Chinese government announced it had accomplished its goals and would begin withdrawing troops from Vietnam. The next day, Vietnamese authorities agreed to negotiate the border question once Chinese troops were withdrawn. It now appears that they have decided not to risk counter-attacks against the Chinese troops, which could provoke a new Chinese offensive. The major fighting in Vietnam appears to be over.

For the second time this year, the so-called socialist states in Southeast Asia have gone to war. In January, Vietnamese forces invaded Kampuchea (Cambodia), overthrew the Pol Pot regime, and set up a puppet government. Forces loyal to Pol Pot are waging a guerrilla war to expel the invaders.

Defend Kampuchea! Defend Vietnam!

The Revolutionary Socialist League believes the Chinese and Vietnamese ruling classes are both fighting unjustified wars of aggression in Southeast Asia. We condemn the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea. We equally oppose the Chinese attack on Vietnam.

The most important issue in Southeast Asia today is the defense of the independence of all nations in the



The battle near Lang Son.

region. We are for the self-determination of all the peoples of Southeast Asia. Consequently, we support the military efforts of the Pol Pot forces to drive out the Vietnamese aggressors. Likewise, we support the efforts of the Vietnamese people to defend their country against the imperialist designs of the Chinese ruling class and their U.S. allies.

Finally, we reject the claims of any of the regimes in Southeast Asia to be socialist governments. The peoples of Southeast Asia fought heroically to liberate their homelands from the stranglehold of French and U.S. imperialism. But these struggles were not socialist revolutions. The workers and peasants did not smash the capitalist state and set up their own. Instead, the middle-class radical nationalist leaders of the liberation movements set themselves up as state-capitalist ruling classes which control the state-owned industry and land. The present wars in Southeast Asia prove this. The so-called communist leaders are really state-capitalist rulers who are willing to drown the region in blood to further their own ambitions. We can understand exactly what these ambitions are by taking a closer look at the causes of the Southeast Asia crisis.

There can be no doubt that the Vietnamese ruling class means to expand at the expense of its weaker neighbors. They have reduced Laos to a vassal state, maintaining between 30,000 and 50,000 troops in the country. In February they signed a "friendship pact" with their puppets in Kampuchea, which allows them to keep troops there indefinitely. The Vietnamese rulers are trying to build an empire in Southeast Asia.

But the Vietnamese aggression in Kampuchea is no justification for China's invasion of Vietnam. The Chinese ruling class would like to restore to power in Kampuchea Pol Pot or other politicians friendly to China. But they have made it plain that this was not the main reason for their attack. The official Chinese government statement on the invasion does not demand Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea in return for Chinese withdrawal from Vietnam. In fact, it says nothing about Kampuchea at all.

Nor were the Chinese leaders acting simply to force the Vietnamese government to negotiate the dispute over their common border. The Chinese government all but openly admitted

CHINA—OUT OF VIETNAM

Defend Self-Determination for All Nations in Southeast Asia



Vietnamese artillery position near Lao Cai. Chinese troops later captured the city.

this when they stated that they planned to withdraw their troops whether or not the Vietnamese agreed to their proposals for negotiations.

Why China invaded

The Chinese ruling class has made no secret of its real motives for the invasion. These are two-fold. On a regional level, it is trying to re-assert traditional Chinese domination over all Southeast Asia. Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-p'ing), the real ruler of China, wants to slap down the new, aggressive Vietnamese ruling class for its attempt to contest Chinese supremacy in the area. Deng wants to prove to the Vietnamese leaders and the world at large who's the real master of Southeast Asia.

But this is only part of the story. Chinese imperialist schemes go far beyond Southeast Asia. By invading Vietnam, Deng is trying to force the U.S. to take the offensive in its worldwide imperialist rivalry with Russia.

U.S. imperialism has been in retreat for many years. The pace of its decline has been greatly speeded up since its humiliating defeat in Vietnam four years ago. Publications like the *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week*, which speak for important sections of the ruling class, are bewailing "The Decline of U.S. Power" and are particularly critical of the indecisive foreign policy of President Carter's Administration. The Chinese ruling class, which has moved into an alliance with U.S. imperialism, is even more impatient with Carter's weak-kneed defense of U.S. imperialist power.

Deng wants the U.S. ruling class to use force to maintain its world empire, just as the Chinese leaders are using force to fight for their domination of Southeast Asia. He is using the invasion of Vietnam as an example to his new allies in the U.S. ruling class. Deng attacked Vietnam despite its defense treaty with Russia. He is trying to prove to the U.S. ruling class that the Russian leaders are really cowards who will back off from a show of force.

Deng elaborated his strategy in a series of speeches over recent weeks. When he visited the U.S. in January, he emphasized the need to "place curbs on the Russian bear." During a stop in Japan on his way home, he openly

criticized the U.S. for not backing up its ally, the Shah of Iran, and allowing the Iranian masses to topple him from power. He also accused the U.S. of caving in to Cuban military intervention in Angola and Ethiopia.

Then in a speech following the invasion of Vietnam, Deng declared: "We cannot tolerate the Cubans to go swashbuckling unchecked in Africa, the Middle East and other areas, nor can we tolerate the Cubans of the Orient to go swashbuckling in Laos, Kampuchea or even in the Chinese border areas. Now some people in the world are afraid of offending them, even if they do something terrible. These people wouldn't dare take action against them."

Deng is calling on his U.S. allies to use their military and economic muscle to defend U.S. world domination, roll back the national liberation struggles that have undermined U.S. imperialism and counter the growing Russian influence in Asia and Africa. The Chinese rulers want the U.S. to abandon efforts to reach agreement (detente) with the Russian ruling class on an imperialist peace. And they are maneuvering to get the most blood-thirsty sections of the U.S. ruling class to take control of U.S. foreign policy and join with China in dominating the world.

Is this a proxy war?

But it is not only China that has imperialist designs on Southeast Asia. Both the U.S. and Russian ruling classes want to strengthen their influence in the area. The U.S. would like to use its alliance with China to regain a foothold in the region. Meanwhile, the Russian state capitalists would like to bring the area under their influence. Specifically, they want to get military and naval bases in Vietnam and to make the country economically, politically and militarily dependent on them.

In light of this, there is a real question whether the wars in Southeast Asia are "proxy wars." According to this view, what is really going on in Southeast Asia is a conflict between the U.S. and Russia, who are using their client states as tools in a struggle for control over the area.

This is wrong on two counts. First, it is not true that China and Vietnam are simply acting as puppets

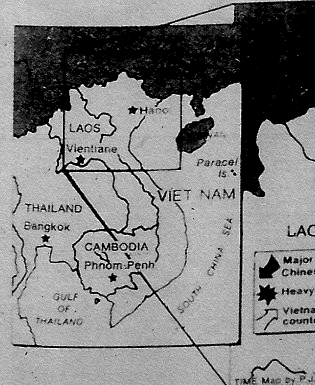
of the two superpowers. Although the U.S. and its allies are investing heavily in China, they do not control the Chinese economy or the Chinese ruling class. Likewise, the Vietnamese leaders are maintaining their own independence against Russia. The Russian rulers may supply economic and military aid to Vietnam, but they have not won bases on Vietnamese territory nor do they have much control over Vietnamese affairs.

Despite their alliances, both China and Vietnam remain independent states. Their rulers have their own interests and ambitions in Southeast Asia. They are fighting for themselves, not merely as proxies for their allies.

Secondly, the roles of the Russian state capitalists and U.S. imperialists in the Southeast Asian conflict are quite different.

The U.S. government gave behind-the-scenes support to the Chinese attack on Vietnam. President Carter and other government officials issued formal statements opposing the invasion. But it's hard to believe they didn't know of the invasion in advance or that they did much to stop it.

At the very moment when Chinese troops were advancing into Vietnam, Carter sent Michael Blumenthal, the secretary of the treasury, to China to open the U.S. Embassy there and continue talks on trade and investment with Chinese leaders. Moreover, Carter publicly warned the Russian government not to attack China in support of its Vietnamese ally as soon as the war broke out. The U.S. capitalists have every reason in the world to support a Chinese action—which Deng Xiaoping openly states is part of a strategy to



Teamsters Face Off Against Carter's 7 Percent

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters' (IBT) main contract with the trucking industry expires on March 31. This contract, known as the Master Freight Agreement (MFA), covers more than 300,000 truck drivers who work for 14,000 small cartage companies. This year management and the Carter Administration are putting a lot of pressure on the IBT leadership to settle within Carter's seven-percent wage guidelines.

A lot is at stake in this contract struggle. For years the Teamster contract has been an important pace-setter for workers in other industries. This year, says **Business Week**, "some 4.2 million workers will be affected by negotiations... up from 1.8 million in 1978." If the Teamsters can beat the guidelines and get a settlement that keeps up with inflation, the capitalists will have a lot harder time imposing the guidelines on other workers.

But the Teamsters face a big hurdle this time around. The Carter Administration is threatening to deregulate the trucking industry. This is a thinly disguised, head-on attack on the Teamster

union.

Up to now the hauling firms have set their own rates. They can pass on all their costs—including rising labor costs—on to their business customers in the form of rate increases, which are pretty much automatic. No cartage outfit engaged in interstate hauling can charge less than these rates. Now the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) intends to change all this.

Deregulation will place an unbelievable pressure on the 14,000 firms covered by the MFA. These firms are too small to fix prices on their own. So they will fight like hell to keep wages down, in order to compete in the deregulated market. And with the lower cartage rates allowed by deregulation, the number of scab outfits that don't pay union scale will increase at a fantastic rate.

What this means for truck drivers is lower pay and loss of jobs. Already in recent years there has been a huge increase in businesses hauling their own freight, hiring independent drivers, or even hiring Teamsters at wages a lot lower than the national MFA scale. Over the last 10 years, some 150,000 union-

ized truck drivers—roughly one-third of all Teamsters—have lost their jobs.

In this contract round the ICC is in effect saying to the Teamsters: "If you violate the guidelines, we'll deregulate the industry and open the doors to the scab outfits."

Indications are that IBT President Frank E. Fitzsimmons will cave in to this blackmail. Over the years he has exempted as many as 700 locals from the terms guaranteed in the MFA.

All the same, coming up with a package he can sell to the members won't be that easy. Last time, Fitzsimmons sacrificed all improvements on the medical plan, pensions, safety and grievance procedures. Now there is a lot of rank-and-file pressure for significant improvements in these areas. Any substantial improvement, particularly in pensions and medical care, would quickly push the settlement well over Carter's seven percent.

To make Fitzsimmons' job easier, Carter has exempted part of the welfare and pension benefits from the seven-percent ceiling. This exemption amounts to two percent



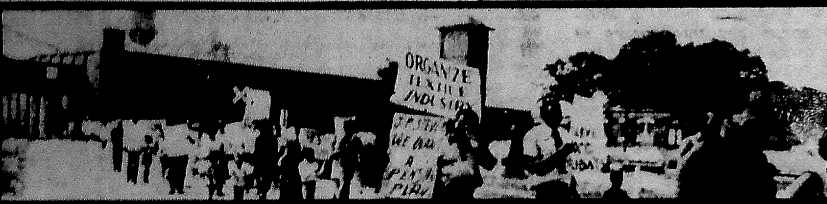
a year. But with inflation running at 10 percent, it's clear that the Teamsters need a lot more.

Carter and the trucking bosses have shown some willingness to "cheat" the guidelines by trading additional increases for promised increases in so-called productivity. But the ones who would be cheated in any productivity deal would be the workers. "Productivity" is a fancy term for the relaxation of work rules. It means bigger rigs, longer runs, less lay-over time—in a word, a

systematic attack on the health and safety of the drivers.

So how can the Teamsters fight for what they really need without getting clubbed by productivity schemes and deregulation? First and foremost, militant Teamsters have to fight to get the IBT to organize all the unorganized scab outfits. If the Teamsters can decisively smash Carter's wage guidelines in their upcoming contract, they can use this momentum to unionize the entire industry. □

LABOR IN STRUGGLE



4,000 march in Newport News

NEWPORT NEWS, Virginia—"88 All the Way! 88 We're Going to Shut These Gates!" rang out as more than 4,000 workers from across Virginia marched here on February 24. The march was called by the state AFL-CIO in support of striking shipyard workers, who are members of United Steelworkers (USWA) Local 8888.

The workers struck on January 31, because Tenneco, the shipyard's parent company, refused to bargain with the union—even though the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) recognized the USWA as the legitimate bargaining agent. Instead they took the union to court, charging fraud in the representation election. A federal court ordered the NLRB to hold hearings on the question. But if the NLRB rules in favor of the union, Tenneco could drag the case out all the way to the Supreme Court.

The company knows they will have to negotiate eventually, but they hope to weaken the union through a long strike. While the union admits that close to one-third of the strikers have gone back to work, the rest stand solid. They've sworn to stay out until they win. A victory in this strike would boost union organizing in the largely unorganized South.

Farmworkers battle California cops

Striking members of the United Farm Workers union (UFW) battled county sheriffs on February 21 at the Maggio Ranch in California's Imperial Valley. Cops on foot and in helicopters used clubs and tear gas against hundreds of roving pickets who were pulling scabs out of the lettuce fields. Eight workers were arrested on charges of assault. The UFW has been on strike against the lettuce growers since January 19.

The battle followed the February 10 murder of one of the strikers—Rufino Contreras—by a foreman at the Salkhon Ranch. In the four days between Contreras' death and his funeral, there was virtually a general strike in the area. More than 10,000 mourners attended the funeral. After that, the growers upped their wage offer from seven percent to 11.5 percent. But the union is asking for a 40-percent increase, from a minimum of \$3.70 an hour to \$5.25.

Unfortunately, the union leadership's strategy is to strike only 10 out of the 28 growers involved in the contract fight. The 18 not struck are making huge profits by raising lettuce prices as much as 150 percent, and more than likely kicking in money to the other growers to fight the strike. Meanwhile, the 4,200 strikers get only \$25 a week per family in strike benefits.

The growers are running a racist campaign in order to recruit scabs among Anglo students. But lettuce picking and packing is highly skilled work. So far, the strike has cost the growers at least \$20 million. Hopefully, it will cost them a lot more, as the harvest moves north to the Salinas Valley.

Undocumented workers unionize

A militant strike by Arizona citrus workers resulted this February in the first labor contract ever signed by a group of undocumented workers. The strike was led by the Maricopa County Organizing Project. The contract with the Goldmar Ranch provides a base pay of \$3.50 an hour for the 15 hourly workers. The 300 to 400 piecework harvesters, who used to get 60 cents for each bag of lemons, will get \$1.13 a bag now and \$1.35 a bag after September. The contract also provides health insurance and an economic development fund paid for by the bosses.

During the harvest, the workers live in the citrus groves, in danger of getting sprayed or flooded out.

Before the Goldmar strike, the workers used to picket to demand blankets and to make the bosses warn them before they sprayed or irrigated. Those strikes were lost because the Border Patrol arrested and deported the pickets. So the workers had to change their tactics. Instead of picketing, everyone sat down in the fields and did no work. The victory at the Goldmar Ranch is a big step forward in the struggle of undocumented workers for decent pay and conditions.

In brief...

Leaders of the **Retail Clerks International Union** and the **Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen** have agreed to merge. The new union will be called the **United Food and Commercial Workers International Union**. With 1.2 million members, it will be the biggest union in the AFL-CIO. . . **New York milk-strike** talks opened on March 7, after Teamster Local 584 allowed dealers to take stored orange juice and dairy by-products out of their New York and Long Island plants. When the strike started February 24, the union demanded a package that would have cost the bosses \$100 a week for each of the 2,000 workers. The union is now reported to have lowered the demands. . . **A New Mexico right-to-work law** was vetoed on February 20 by Governor Bruce King, following militant demonstrations by the working class. . . In Canada, the strike by 11,700 workers at the **INCO nickel mine in Sudbury, Ontario**, goes into its seventh month. The strikers are members of **United Steelworkers Local 6500**. The company wants to take away the cost-of-living allowance and grievance procedures. In Manitoba, 1,200 workers settled with **INCO Metals Co.** without a strike. . . **Miguel Cabrera**, a Teamster organizer in Puerto Rico, was acquitted on a frame-up murder charge. He was accused in the 1977 death of alleged CIA agent Allan Randall.

—AL & LT



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ing me the idl- m- led nes any be ty" ax- ans ess , a systematic attack on the health and safety of the drivers. So how can the Teamsters fight for what they really need without getting clubbed by productivity schemes and deregulation? First and foremost, militant Teamsters have to fight to get the IBT to organize all the unorganized scab outfits. If the Teamsters can decisively smash Carter's wage guidelines in their upcoming contract, they can use this momentum to unionize the entire industry. □



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the Retail Clerks International Union amated Meat Cutters and Butcher e agreed to merge. The new union will United Food and Commercial national Union. With 1.2 million ill be the biggest union in the ew York milk-strike talks opened on Teamster Local 584 allowed dealers orange juice and dairy by-products ew York and Long Island plants. ke started February 24, the union ackage that would have cost the week for each of the 2,000 workers. ow reported to have lowered the A New Mexico right-to-work law was ruary 20 by Governor Bruce King, ant demonstrations by the working anada, the strike by 11,700 workers at e mine in Sudbury, Ontario, goes th month. The strikers are members elworkers Local 6500. The company away the cost-of-living allowance e procedures. In Manitoba, 1,200 ed with INCO Metals Co. without a el Cabrera, a Teamster organizer in as acquitted on a frame-up murder as accused in the 1977 death of gent Allan Randall.

—AL & LT

Gay Activists Plan March On Washington

Date Set for October 14

We are everywhere
We will be free!
LESBIAN & GAY PEOPLE WEEK BOSTON 1978

Two hundred gay activists met in Philadelphia on February 24 and 25 to begin organizing a march on Washington for gay rights. The conference was organized by the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights of New York City (CLGR) and the San Francisco Ad Hoc Committee for the March on Washington (SFAHC). These two groups represented the main political current at the conference.

In addition, there were about 50 delegates from conservative organizations like National Gay Task Force, the Gay Business Association of Chicago, Dignity, and Troy Perry's Metropolitan Community Church. There were also representatives from independent campus groups, gay newspapers and magazines, and community service organizations. Several socialist organizations, including the Revolutionary Socialist League, were also present.

There were two main debates at the conference. The first was over whether to even have a march this year. The second was a dispute over the demands of the march.

Following morning workshops and three hours of procedural discussion, the debate on the march began late Saturday afternoon. The conservative groups opposed the march. They openly stated this in documents and letters written early in February. By the time of the conference, however, they were suggesting that the march be in 1980 or 1984 or sometime in the vague future. After three hours of discussion, which put the conservatives on one side and everybody else on the other, the conference resolved to organize a march on Washington on October 14, 1979. The vote was 110-56.

On the agenda for the evening session were the demands of the march and the structure to coordinate the organizing. The major proposal on demands was from the CLGR. It proposed three demands:

1) Repeal all anti-lesbian/gay laws.

An explanatory paragraph that accompanied this demand in the CLGR position paper made it clear that this referred only to sodomy laws. It said:

"Other demands, which are important, but are specifically limited to a particular segment of our community (freedom for gay prisoners, child custody rights for lesbians and gay fathers, etc.), or on which all segments of our movement may not be in complete agreement (repeal of solicitation, loitering, crossdressing, and age of consent laws, for example), should not be con-

sidered central demands, but left to individual groups to advance or not as they see fit."

2) Pass a comprehensive lesbian/gay-rights bill in Congress.

3) Issue a presidential executive order banning discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal government and federally contracted private employment.

The RSL, along with several other delegates, put forward two amendments to this proposal. The first was to add the following explanatory paragraph to the first demand—"Repeal all anti-lesbian/gay laws".

"The slogans and activities which build the proposed march on Washington should be clearly oriented to the needs and interests of working-class and specially-oppressed gay women and men. For example,

mands of the march should be 'Repeal all anti-lesbian/gay laws.' By this one of the things the march organization means, and will say in pamphlets and literature, is full rights for lesbian and gay youth including revision of the age of consent laws."

None of the amendments were accepted as friendly by the CLGR. In particular, CLGR spokesperson David Thorstad denounced the RSL for trying to broaden the demands of the march. According to Thorstad, we did this only because we had "an axe to grind" against the CLGR.

Other motions on demands were introduced and a debate began shaping up over "revise the age-of-consent laws" between those who wanted to broaden the demands of the

body can get together. But CLGR is dead wrong.

By limiting the demands to general slogans, we will end up limiting the appeal of the march. The only gays who see the sodomy laws as the most important issue are the relatively few white men with secure jobs at which they are openly gay. The rest of the gay and lesbian world is oppressed primarily by a dozen different and more complicated things. To win these other people to the march, or to the movement at all, we must fight for the things that deal with their specific oppression.

We must build a march that can attract all gays by making it clear that it is really fighting for them. By limiting the demands of the march, the CLGR wants to make it acceptable to liberal

and men that THIS march is THEIR march."

After the meeting Saturday night, the CLGR/SFAHC met all night and came up with a proposal on structure and some changes in the demands. The proposal on structure was taken up first when the conference reconvened Sunday morning. After three hours of confused discussion, a proposal on structure was adopted. This structure consists of two large and unworkable national bodies and one National Coordinating Committee, which will have the real power.

After most of the structure was settled, there was only about 30 minutes left for a hurried discussion of the demands. Apparently fearful of alienating the youth and others, the CLGR/SFAHC had added a fourth demand to their proposal:

"An end to social, economic, legal and judicial oppression of lesbians and gay people."

At a youth caucus meeting held just before the Sunday session this phrase had been proposed by a CLGR spokesperson as a substitute for any specifics. The youth voted to accept the substitution but only if other groups did too. By the time the motion was presented on the floor, however, it not only contained the general sentence, but included specifics on defending lesbian and gay parents and revising the age-of-consent laws.

The RSL, although it had argued for "repeal of age-of-consent laws" within the youth caucus, decided to support the new wording and withdrew its first amendment. Our amendment to change demand number three, however, was presented, but it was voted down with little discussion. The now-revised CLGR motion, like all the proposals from the leading group, passed easily.

When the conference closed Sunday evening, spirits were high because the first national action for gay rights, talked about for many years, was finally underway. Many of the youth felt particularly good because for the first time the rights of gay youth had not been totally swept under the rug.

The RSL will be spending the time between now and October organizing among the people we believe must lead the gay movement: the women and men in factories, the youth, transvestites, Blacks, Latins and others. We will be organizing for the march on October 14 and for the struggle against the system that oppresses us. We urge you to join us. □



May 1977: RSL contingent at protest against Chicago Tribune's anti-gay campaign.

we must be clear that we fully support the rights of gay youth, of lesbian mothers and gay fathers, and of transvestites."

Our second amendment was to delete the third demand about an executive order from Jimmy Carter and replace it with:

"Smash the right-wing attacks on lesbians, gay men and all oppressed people."

A spokesperson from the women's caucus then took the floor to report that they had voted in favor of a demand defending lesbian mothers and gay fathers. Finally, the spokesperson for the youth caucus amended the RSL amendment with some specifics about the age-of-consent laws, including the following sentences:

"One of the main de-

march, and the CLGR/San Francisco Ad Hoc Committee forces that wanted to keep it to a single issue. In an apparent move to cut this off, a delegate from the San Francisco group made a motion to adjourn, which narrowly passed, 38-32.

David Thorstad and some other supporters of the CLGR say that they personally agree that the age-of-consent laws should be repealed or revised. But they strongly opposed this demand for the march. Why? The CLGR/SFAHC believes that by limiting the demands of the march they can build unity among lesbian and gay people and get the largest possible march.

At first this sounds reasonable: Keep the demands limited to what everybody agrees with and then every-

politicians and "respectable" middle-class opinion. In exchange for this, they are prepared to downplay the needs of the majority of gay people. As the RSL position paper at the conference stated:

"We must make it clear that we are fighting for the liberation of ALL gay people. . . . This means, for example, that we must take a clear stand against all age-of-consent laws. We must take a clear stand for the right of transvestites to dress as they please. We must take a clear stand for the rights of lesbian mothers and gay fathers to raise children. These are just a few examples of the kind of march the RSL believes we need to build. We must make it unequivocally clear to the most oppressed gay women

SMASH THE RACIST WEBER SUIT!

(Continued from page 4)
model for affirmative-action programs in the skilled trades. It was the basis for the program included in the USWA's 1974 contract with Kaiser. This program won real gains for both Black and white production workers at Kaiser.

Before the agreement was signed, Kaiser had filled craft openings by taking "qualified applicants" from off the street. Black and white production workers had no chance to train for these openings. The new affirmative-action skilled-training program gives both Black and white production workers a chance to train for these jobs for the first time. It reserves half the openings for Black workers until the proportion of Black skilled workers is roughly equal to the proportion of Blacks in the surrounding community. This plan benefits all the production workers in Gramercy, and is a real opening for Black workers in particular.

This is the program Weber is asking the courts to shoot down. Despite the history of racism at Kaiser, and the benefits to all workers contained in the affirmative-action plan, two courts have already ruled in his favor. The Federal District Court in Louisiana decided that the Kaiser program was illegal in the absence of proof of past discrimination by the employer.

Obviously this verdict is a joke. The judge's ruling was based on the testimony of Brian Weber himself, two white Kaiser workers, and a white Kaiser company executive. The mass of evidence against Kaiser, including the government's 1971 and 1973 reports, was never introduced in court!

Throughout the case, Kaiser officials have testified that the company never discriminated at Gramercy. Instead, they claim, the company went out of its way to look for "qualified" Black workers.

Kaiser's main interest in the case is to protect its own profits. In 1973 the company was forced to pay \$255,000 in a civil-rights case at its Baton Rouge, Louisiana, plant. If the company admitted its racist policies at Gramercy, it would be wide open for further lawsuits for back-pay awards and other compensation to Black workers.

The U.S. government, which has intervened as a defendant (against Weber) in the case, has nevertheless spent most of its time covering up for Kaiser. The Justice Department and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission told the Supreme Court that few companies could be expected to admit past discrimination since to do so would leave them vulnerable to back-pay lawsuits. With "defendants" like these, it's no wonder Weber has gotten



Demonstrators in San Francisco protest the June 1978 Supreme Court decision in favor of Alan Bakke. The Bakke decision affected affirmative action in education and opened the door for further attacks. The Weber case attacks the gains of Black workers and the unions.

court rulings in his favor!

The Weber case is an attack on all working and oppressed people. Like the Bakke case, it is an attempt to roll back the gains Black people, women, Asians and Latins won through the mass movements of the 1960s and early 1970s.

Last year, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Allan Bakke in another "reverse-discrimination" case. Bakke had sued to overturn an affirmative-action program at the University of California at Davis medical school. His victory was a slap in the face to all oppressed people trying to overcome the effects of racist and sexist discrimination in the U.S. It directly affected the relatively small proportion of people who can afford to go to college, let alone medical school.

The Weber case attacks literally millions of workers. If Weber wins, companies all over the country will have an excuse to cancel already existing affirmative-action

programs, and reject new programs in the future. Black, Latin, Asian and woman workers will lose an important weapon in their fight for equal rights in upgrading and promotion. Those with no jobs at all will have a much harder time breaking through racist and sexist hiring practices.

Moreover, the Weber case is a direct threat to the trade-union movement. The affirmative-action program at Gramercy is part of the USWA's contract with management. By dragging the contract into court, Weber is giving the courts a chance to set legal limits on what demands a union can make in its contract negotiations. He is weakening the ability of all trade-union members to decide for themselves what their needs are and how to fight for them.

But the Bakke case and the Weber case have one thing in common. Both arose because capitalism cannot provide jobs and edu-

cation for all workers. Instead, workers have to compete with each other for the few jobs or places in schools that the capitalists offer.

Blacks, women and other oppressed groups have always been at the bottom of the list for the few opportunities capitalism has to offer. Affirmative-action programs can create small openings for some oppressed workers. To this extent they are a real, if very limited, gain for more oppressed sections of the working class.

But affirmative-action programs are a double-edged weapon. The ruling class uses them to set Black and white workers at each other's throats. Whenever this happens, the capitalists are the only real winners. Moreover, the bosses can use affirmative action as an excuse to interfere with union affairs. For instance, by claiming to support affirmative action, management can rip up seniority agreements which protect all workers from arbitrary firing or layoffs.

Because of this, every affirmative-action plan must be judged on its own merits. We support the principle behind affirmative action, but we judge any given program to see whether it benefits the capitalists more than the workers.

In the Weber case, the issues are clear. We oppose Weber's suit as a thoroughly racist and union-busting maneuver. We support the various marches, rallies and forums to defeat Weber.

At the same time, we believe it is the capitalist class as a whole, and not just Brian Weber, who is the real enemy in the Weber case. All workers—Black and white alike—will suffer as long as the capitalists decide how many jobs to offer, and who should get them. In struggles like the Weber case, we have to fight defensive battles to hold on to the gains we won in the past. But we also have to turn these struggles into an offensive which can smash the capitalist system and build a world in which all people can have decent jobs, education, freedom and dignity. □

left-overs

Starting with this issue of the *Torch*, and the next issue of *La Antorcha*, we will be using the Pinyin system of spelling Chinese names and places. This system was instituted by the Chinese government earlier this year. Using the Pinyin system, the name of the chairman of the Chinese Communist Party is **Hua Guofeng** (formerly Hua Kuo-feng). **Teng Hsiao-p'ing** is now **Deng Xiaoping**. Peking becomes **Beijing**. We will put the old spellings in parentheses for several months as a transition... **Good news!** On February 14, **The Body Politic (TBP—Canada's leading gay newspaper)** was acquitted of obscenity charges. However, the harassment of TBP continues. The state has announced that they may appeal the decision. **Meanwhile, the Toronto Star, which was responsible for much of the anti-gay hysteria leading to the trial, has continued a campaign of lies and slanders against the newspaper. TBP has filed a libel suit against the Star...** According to the *New York Times* of March 5, several days before the British parliament was due to discuss a bill liberalizing some of the laws against prostitution, prostitutes announced they would reveal the names of prominent clients—politicians and religious leaders—if the bill were rejected. We haven't heard what happened, but the sisters were right on in exposing the rulers' hypocrisy.

... Exactly 60 years ago on April 13, **Eugene V. Debs—a leader of the early union movement in this country and a founder of the Socialist Party and the Industrial Workers of the World—was imprisoned for having opposed U.S. entry into World War I, which he considered the bosses' war. On the day he was sentenced, he told the court: "Years ago I recognized my kinship with all living things, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest of the earth. I said then, I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." Prison broke Debs' health but not his spirit. He remained an opponent of the capitalist system until his death in 1926.**

—SE

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(Continued from page 10)
that they refuse to defend

ment.
In fact, Iran was one of the countries in the world who might think this was possible. The shah's military apparatus had 340,000 people—in a country of 34 million. In other words, every hundred people in Iran had the shah's armed force.

About 60 percent of these people whose career was the shah's regime. These were incredibly well-paid and were sorts of privileges to keep. Even the draftees were not especially when compared to the starvation level of the Iranian people.

But even an army as well paid as the shah's must be the working class and the ruling class is willing or a large army made up mainly of people. Therefore the vast ranks of the army are people from the masses and family backgrounds and family ties tie them to the masses. There is a good reason for to ally with the revolution.

On the other hand, officers, being in the army, have a chance at a steady income. They are scared to lose this. Because the soldiers are from the daily lives of their consciousness behind that of the people. Finally, armies are built on and the soldiers learn to sequences if they don't.

Therefore, if the soldier won over, they must:

- 1) Lose their material support of the ruling class.
- 2) Be shown by the masses that their interests

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HOW THE ARMY WAS DEFEATED

(Continued from page 10)
that they refuse to defend the government.

In fact, Iran was one of the last countries in the world where someone might think this was possible. The shah's military apparatus included 340,000 people—in a country of only 34 million. In other words, one out of every hundred people in Iran was part of the shah's armed forces.

About 60 percent of these were lifers—people whose career was defending the shah's regime. These people were incredibly well-paid and were given all sorts of privileges to keep them loyal. Even the draftees were not poorly paid, especially when compared to the starvation level of the majority of the Iranian people.

But even an army as elite and well-paid as the shah's must be drawn from the working class and peasantry. No ruling class is willing or able to create a large army made up mainly of its own people. Therefore the vast majority of the ranks of the army are people whose backgrounds and family connections tie them to the masses of people. So there is a good reason for the soldiers to ally with the revolutionary masses.

On the other hand, for many soldiers, being in the army is their one chance at a steady income. So they are scared to lose this. In addition, because the soldiers are separated from the daily lives of the masses, their consciousness tends to lag behind that of the people in struggle. Finally, armies are built on discipline, and the soldiers learn to fear the consequences if they don't obey orders.

Therefore, if the soldiers are to be won over, they must:

- 1) Lose their material stake in defending the ruling class.
- 2) Be shown by the revolutionary masses that their interests are the

same. Part of this means that the people must show the soldiers that what they are fighting for will be better for everyone, including the soldiers themselves.

3) Be convinced that the people are deadly serious about the revolution. The soldiers must see the revolution getting stronger, while the government is unsure of what to do and is getting weaker. Otherwise the soldiers will not want to break discipline, since for them, failure and a return to the old order would mean death.

How did this work out during the revolution in Iran?

One of the first cracks in the army came when the bank and government workers went on strike in December. From that point on, the army wasn't paid. All of a sudden the soldiers found that the regime couldn't come through on its promise of good pay and security.

By the first weeks of 1979, the people demonstrating in the street were making more and more approaches to the soldiers. These appeals showed the soldiers that the people were willing to accept them as comrades in the struggle—if the soldiers changed sides. Around this time, some number of soldiers started deserting. Others put flowers in their guns to show that they wouldn't shoot the demonstrators.

Meanwhile, the shah had proved incapable of stopping the revolution and, on January 16, left the country. In his place he left Shahpur Bakhtiar, a moderate-bourgeois politician, who was expelled from his own party upon accepting the post of prime minister.

Bakhtiar took over the government when it was on the defensive. The inability of the shah's government to take any decisive steps had shifted the balance of forces over to the revolu-

tion. As Henry Kissinger—one of the more astute bourgeois advisers—said in an interview about Iran:

"The fundamental challenge of a revolution is this: Certainly wise governments forestall revolutions by making timely concessions. . . . However, once a revolution is in train it cannot be moderated by concessions. Once a revolution has occurred, the pre-eminent requirement is the restoration of authority."

But restoring authority is exactly what the shah and Bakhtiar could not do, and the soldiers became less and less interested in fighting for a losing government.

The end came on February 10. On that day the Imperial Guard—the most loyal section of the military—attacked Dashed Tadeh Air Force Base, where a rebellious section of the air force was stationed. Civilians, armed with guns they got by attacking police stations and armories, surrounded the Guard. In the battle that followed, the Guard was decisively defeated.

This was the final stroke. Immediately, the Guard's defeat inspired mass defections from the army. At this point, the people of Tehran poured into the army barracks, seizing over 70,000 guns.

As the army dissolved, the generals ordered all units to get off the streets and stop defending the government. To a large extent this order just rubber-stamped what was already happening. With no support from anywhere, the Bakhtiar government fell.

The revolution in Iran shows once and for all that it is possible to defeat a large modern army. This is an important lesson for us here in the U.S., the heart of the biggest imperialist empire the world has ever seen.

The armed forces of U.S. imperialism are made up largely of working-

class people. Many are Black and Latin youth who have had to choose between unemployment and starvation or joining the army. As the class struggle heats up, revolutionary workers will have greater opportunities to reach out to and win over large sections of the military. If we do our work right, the forces of workers' revolution will be so strong that no force on earth can stop us. □

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