

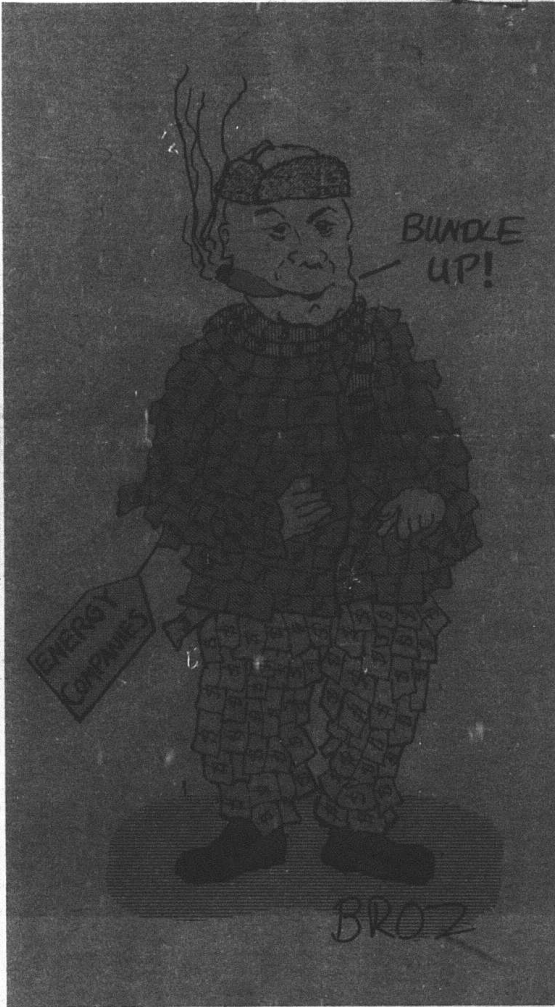
# WORKERS' POWER

WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS DECEMBER 12, 1977 #235 25c

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## GUESS WHO WANTS A FREEZING WINTER?

ACQUISITIONS SECTION  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
816 STATE ST.  
MADISON WI 53706



UNLIKE millions of American families who are pinching pennies to pay higher fuel bills this winter, energy producers and big business are afraid the winter will be warm.

"The big problem may turn out to be a lack of storage space if the winter turns out to be mild," complains a businessman's newsletter, *Economic Week*.

*Economic Week* reports that industrial users have bought and stockpiled massive quantities of coal and oil to avoid closing down this winter.

"In the case of natural gas... significant new production has been brought in during the year from offshore wells," and is already in storage.

Despite all the warnings last year that the U.S. was running out of fuel, supplies reappeared when energy giants got the right price.

Last winter's shortages occurred because the energy producers held

back production for years, waiting for higher prices.

After they extorted the prices from the government, production boomed. Profits are already being salted away.

Warm weather, a blessing to the rest of us, would cool the energy industry's fortunes.

Having produced too much gas, their prices would drop and profits might collapse.

The way December has begun, it looks like Exxon, Texaco and the others haven't much to worry about.

But ordinary families, the elderly on fixed incomes—we have to worry about heating our homes and financing those profits.

**Their gain, our loss.**

## National Coal Strike Begins

IN WEST VIRGINIA, they jumped the gun by the thousands.

On Monday, December 5, the day before the contract between the United Mine Workers and the Bituminous Coal Operators expired, thousands of coal miners walked off the job.

That same day, on the evening news, CBS-TV interviewed miners who thought there had been

enough strikes. Recent wildcat strikes over cutbacks in health benefits have bitten into their pocketbooks.

But both the miners who jumped the gun, and those who worried about their pocketbooks, agreed on one thing. The strike was unavoidable. It is necessary. The operators have left the miners no choice.

The billionaires and corporate giants who run the coal mines would not give an inch on medical

benefits, the right to strike, or other key issues. These operators seemed to think the miners owed them something.

So, on Tuesday, December 6, all members of the United Mine Workers observed their traditional policy of **No Contract, No Work**.

To find out what the miners think about the issues, see page 3.

# Treated Like Rats

by Karen Kaye

Consider the plight of the Vietnam veteran. Sent to Southeast Asia to fight and die. Brought back home to a country without jobs for them.

Now another indignity. A report released December 5 by the National Cancer Institute revealed

that a drug given daily to tens of thousands of U.S. troops in Vietnam causes cancer in rats.

**An Army spokesman said that although the drug was being used experimentally, GI's were not informed of this.**

The drug, dapsons, was being tested to find out if it would prevent

a severe type of malaria which resisted normal medications. It is a standard treatment for leprosy.

Dr. Cipriano Cueto of the National Cancer Institute, said that while the study does not prove that dapsons causes cancer in humans, their results would justify following the medical history of people who

took the drug, to see if they developed more cancers than the general population.

An Army spokesman said the Army doesn't "have the foggiest idea" of how many GI's took dapsons. Finding out would take a month of intensive research.

The drug was used mainly in the

Central Highlands and the five northernmost provinces of South Vietnam.

Most of the thousands of veterans who have less than honorable discharges get reduced Veterans' benefits, or none at all.

**Unless you consider being treated by a cancer-causing drug a benefit.** □

## HOW WHITE RHODESIA "CIVILIZES" AFRICA

The government of white-ruled Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) tells the world it is fighting to "maintain civilized standards."

Here is an up-close look at the kind of standards the Rhodesian government is protecting. Black prisoners, rounded up near the Botswana border, are questioned in the noon sun, while a white cavalry officer clicks a pistol in their faces.

This photograph was taken by J. Ross Baugham of the Associated Press. He got permission from an American mercenary officer to ride with a Rhodesian cavalry unit.

He had to smuggle several of his pictures out of Rhodesia after the government seized the rest. No other western journalist in Rhodesia has ever bothered to go out and get the real story of Rhodesian troops' atrocities in the countryside.

Baugham witnessed the beating of one African nationalist prisoner, Moffat Ncube, and was later told the prisoner had died. He also saw prisoners being questioned with ropes tied around their necks and pulled by horses.

Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith says he wants a peaceful settlement with so-called Black moderates. He says he wants to hold "free elections" with law and order controlled by the Rhodesian Army.

Take another look. With the white army patrolling the villages and the voting booths, how much of a "free vote" would these villagers have? □



### Workers' Power 235

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## If you don't think capitalism causes high blood pressure, read this...

Harvard Medical School and Converse Rubber Co. got together recently to do something nice for workers. They wanted to help workers get more relaxation from coffee breaks so they would work better on the job.

Instead of drinking coffee, workers at Converse were divided into

One of the groups got 15-minute sessions where they were taught to relax by concentrating on repeating the word "one" over and over again.

The Wall Street Journal reported: "At the end of two months, the relaxation-response group showed the greatest drop in average blood pressure... plus the

greatest improvement in job satisfaction and ability to deal with others."

Beautiful results. Finally, capitalism has developed the perfect technique for doing away with alienation and creating worker-management harmony.

Not quite. With a straight face, the Journal article continues: "Lay-

offs affecting 15% of the work force hit unexpectedly near the end of the experiment, forcing blood pressure up in all the volunteers—but the relaxation-response group showed the fastest recovery."

Well, if this story makes you so mad you can't see straight, just relax and repeat over and over: "One...one...one..." □

# 160,000 COAL MINERS DIG IN FOR LONG STRIKE

by Jim Woodward

"NOW ONE TIME we had company doctors," said Elmer Webb, a retired West Virginia miner, "and I have seen where a family would need medical attention, they'd take a shotgun and go and get the company doctor and march him home. I personally have brought one to my house."

"I don't want no company doctor. I want my own doctor, or an independent doctor where he's not subjugated to the company and do their biddings all the time."

Webb, the leader of the District 17 Pensioners Group, was explaining what he thought was the number one issue in the coal miners strike which began December 6. He and several other miners

contacted by Workers' Power all put restoration of full health and pension coverage as the top priority this year.

Most observers expect the strike to be a long one.

On one side are the 160,000 miners, members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). They are in a relatively weak position this year, because the percentage of coal mined by UMWA members has dropped to nearly 50%.

In addition, stockpiles at electric utilities and steel mills are high, generally sufficient for at least 2-3 months. And many miners had their savings wiped out during this

summer's wildcats.

On the other side is the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA).

The BCOA is not run by small time operators. Leading its bargaining team are representatives of some of the biggest corporations in the country: William Miller, United States Steel; Peter Ferretti, Consolidation Coal (owned by Continental Oil); W.W. Hartman, Peabody Coal; and John E. Katlic, Island Creek Coal (owned by Occidental Petroleum).

Represented among these companies are the richest families in America—the Rockefellers, the Morgans, and the Mellons.

The operators are in a particularly militant mood this year. They think they have the union over a barrel and can dictate terms of the contract. Indications are that they are wrong.

One thing the operators want is a clause docking the pay of miners who engage in wildcats.

The major demands on the union side are restoration of the health cuts and a right to strike clause. Other important issues are equalization of pensions and changes in the grievance procedure.

## MISCALCULATING

The operators may be miscalculating the situation. One thing they are pleased about is the union's well-publicized internal divisions. But a number of those who opposed UMWA President Arnold Miller in the past have served notice that the operators should not count on these divisions to weaken the union.

Jack Perry, president of West Virginia's District 17 and a frequent Miller critic, said recently that as long as Miller remains firm on the issues, "if he wants to go bear hunting with a switch, I'll go with him."

Also in District 17, the leader of a group trying to recall President Miller announced that his organization was "calling for unity."

"We're behind the International, pushing them, and we want everybody else to be too during this contract," said Bill Bryant, leader of the Miners for Recall group.

Bryant told Workers' Power that his group had gotten 12,000 signatures on recall petitions as of December 6. He said they would quit petitioning until after the contract is settled.

## PENSIONS

In addition to restoring medical benefits, Bryant said equalizing pensions is a top priority.

Elmer Webb agreed. He explained that during the last negotiations, two groups of retirees were created: the 1950 group and the 1974 group. Those who have retired since 1974 have considerably higher pensions.

Webb, who retired with black lung disease after 38 years in the mines, said that when they set up the two groups, "they divided our membership."

"We don't need no divisions, we need unity. If you take one child in the family and favor that child over the other one, you wouldn't have unity in that family very long. And

that's just the same way in our organization."

## RIGHT TO STRIKE

Another issue that has been well publicized recently is the right to strike. The UMWA convention in Cincinnati last year mandated the leadership to write the local right to strike into the contract.

It now appears this may be becoming a secondary issue. Paul Lemon, a young miner from Marianna, Pa., noted: "You've had 5000 wildcat strikes in the last three years, so obviously you need something more than the right to strike, cause although you don't have it in this contract, you still utilize it."

Webb said the same thing: "We always struck when we got ready anyhow. I don't see that as a great issue."

Union leaders, in public statements, say they expect a long strike. Miller says it will probably last three months.

Undoubtedly, such a strike would cause great hardship for many miners. Webb, who thinks it will last 6-7 weeks "until the stockpiles begin to go down," agrees. But he adds, "Sometimes you have to make a great sacrifice in order to achieve what you want."

Bryant thinks that most miners can't afford a long strike. "But they'll weather it," he says. "It's been done before." □

## The Health Care Issue



UNTIL JULY 1, members of the United Mine Workers of America had one of the best systems of health benefits of any major union.

Virtually all medical expenses were paid, the miner could go to the doctor of his or her choice, and a system of high-quality, non-profit medical clinics was established throughout the coal fields.

In mid-summer, however, the trustees of the UMWA Health and Retirement Funds announced deep cuts in health coverage. Each miner would have to pay up to \$500 in medical bills a year.

The cuts led to a two-month long wildcat strike, demanding restoration of full health coverage. At its height, 85,000 miners were out.

Health care and pensions are funded by operator contributions based on the number of hours worked and tons of coal mined.

## BAD PLANNING

Trustees—one from the union, one from the coal operators, and one neutral—blamed previous wildcat strikes for the inadequate income which caused the health cuts.

In fact, as considerable evidence has shown, the wildcats were only a small part of the problem. Poor planning on the part of the union, the operators, and the Funds trustees was much more important.

Paul Jackson, an actuarial consultant who was involved in the 1974 contract negotiations, says the financial loss from wildcats "wasn't enough in and of itself to cause a problem."

"I can't say I'm surprised the Funds are in trouble. I told them [the trustees] three years ago that I thought the calculations were off and that they were trying to provide too rich a set of benefits for the level of income they had to work with." Jackson was quoted in the Wall Street Journal, December 1.

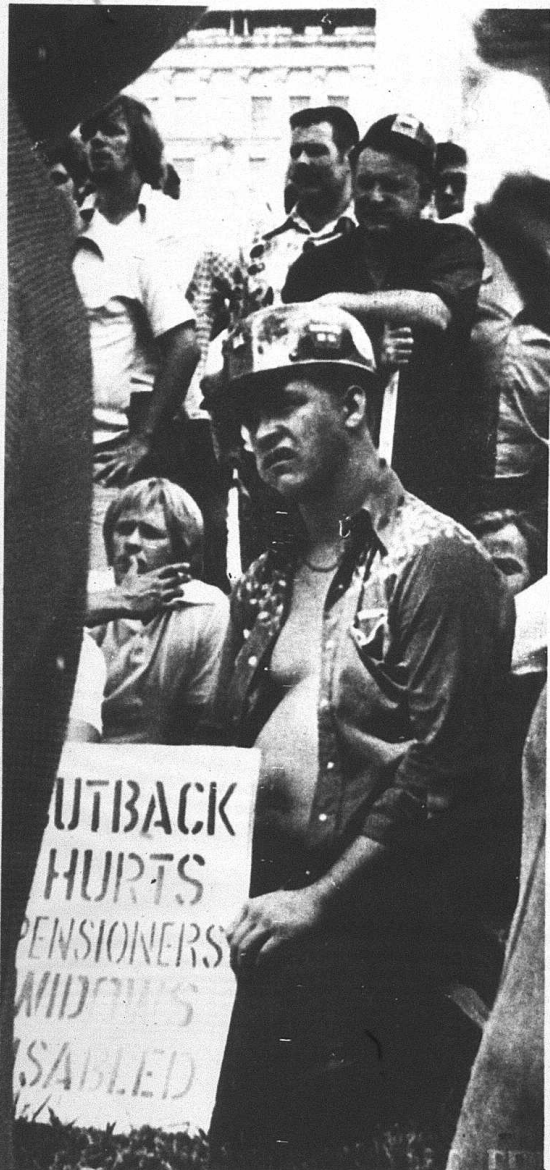
So the basic problem was that the union and operators didn't agree on a high enough contribution level to sustain the benefits.

Whether or not the operators had planned this all along, the effect is the same—they are using the cuts as a club over the miners' heads.

## PENSION CUTOFF

That situation has now been escalated. As the contract strike began December 6, the trustees cut off all medical benefits for the 800,000 persons covered by the UMWA Health and Retirement Funds. They also said many pensions would either be cut or eliminated entirely in January.

As Elmer Webb, the retired West Virginia miner put it, "There's going to be people that's going to die in the next six weeks for lack of medical care because they don't have the money. I think it's a shame that they use leverage like that to make a financial gain." □



Medical cuts have been the hot issue among coal miners for six months. The cuts led to a 2-month wildcat strike, and this protest in Washington.

# WHO'S BEING SOLD OUT IN THE MIDEAST?

by Dan Posen

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has followed up his visit to Israel with plans for a new series of negotiations in Cairo.

Meanwhile, leaders of several other Arab states have formed a "rejection front" to oppose Sadat's visit and attempt to isolate him in the Arab world.

A series of rapid and sometimes confusing events is unfolding. But what stands out is that the government of Egypt seems to be moving toward a separate peace agreement with the State of Israel, no matter what other Arab leaders say or do.

## PRIZE

Sadat has a big stake in a deal with Israel. For him, the big prize is buying time to deal with Egypt's collapsing economy.

Egypt's foreign debt is an incredible \$16 billion. This has caused most western bankers and investors to stop investing there.

Military spending has eaten up all possibilities for economic growth.

By promising economic progress and peace, Sadat's trip has made him enormously popular inside Egypt.

**Workers and peasants, who fought police and troops in food riots just a year ago, now feel that Sadat's peace policy may mean the end of years of poverty and misery.**

## PALESTINIANS

But Sadat's "peace" policy is no plan for peace at all. In order to close the deal with Israel, he has shown he is ready to sell the Arabs of Palestine down the river.

The Egyptian government has taken quick advantage of its recent

popularity by cracking down on the Palestine Liberation Organization and on possible opposition voices.

The offices of the PLO in Cairo have been closed. Its radio station has been seized.

Recent articles in Egyptian newspapers even seem to be encouraging the people of Egypt to blame the Palestinians for the lives and resources Egypt has lost in four wars against Israel.

But the Palestinian people are the ones who have suffered the most from Israeli occupation.

They have lived in refugee camps, suffered under Israeli military rule and even faced torture and death for the crime of wanting to return to their own homes.

**Now they are being blamed for the wars that the rulers of Israel and Egypt have fought against each other!**

The Palestinian people have every right to be bitter over Sadat's so-called peace initiative.

## NO REAL PEACE

But all this doesn't mean that Sadat will actually succeed in ending the Middle East crisis by a deal with Israel.

**It is more clear than ever that Israel is interested in "peace" only if the Palestinian people surrender all rights to live in their own country—forever.**

The Israeli government will make clear it will not accept any



A Palestinian woman and school children in Damour, Lebanon last April. They are among the three million Palestinian Arabs—whose rights and homes have been stolen.

discussion of political rights or a national homeland for the Palestine Arabs.

There will be no removal of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank. Israeli government blueprints already call for tens of thousands of Jews from Israel to settle there over the next 30 years!

**These long-range plans call for all Palestinian population centers to be guarded by rings of Israeli settlements and highspeed military highways.**

The State of Israel believes it can bribe, threaten and finally convince the leaders of surround-

ing Arab countries to accept a settlement that wipes out the rights of the Palestinians.

Sadat's visit to Israel was a huge step in that direction.

But no matter how much Sadat gives away to the leaders of Israel, Israel has no intention of giving up its own massive military machine or its occupation of Palestinian and other Arab land.

Sooner or later, Egyptian workers and peasants will realize this—and that Sadat's promises of peace and prosperity are hollow.

That is when Sadat's real problems will begin. □

## WHAT'S BEHIND THE "REJECTION FRONT"?

Sadat's visit to Israel has created a major split in the Arab world. But the anti-Sadat forces, called the "rejection front," don't provide much real support for the Palestinian struggle.

**The main "rejection front" country is Syria. Last year the Syrian government sent its army into Lebanon, when Palestinian resistance fighters and left-wing Lebanese forces were about to smash the anti-Palestinian right wing.**

There are 30,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon holding down the Palestinians.

The leader of an organization called Saïqa, which claims to be a Palestinian liberation group, was the first to say Sadat should be assassinated for visiting Israel.

But Saïqa is actually a Syrian puppet organization which helped Syria occupy Lebanon and started gun battles inside Palestinian camps to enforce Syrian control!

**The other rejection front states, Libya, Algeria and South Yemen, have no real military weight. And the rejection front states have no agreement on any political strategy or program.**

The split in the Arab world has left the Palestinians in a weak position. And the rejection front offers no serious threat to Anwar Sadat's plans.

But this does not mean that Sadat or any other Arab politician will be able to force the Palestinians in the Lebanese camps and the West Bank townships to give up their struggle. □

# Bermuda: Black Militants Hanged To Save Tourist Profits

When the Bermudan government executed two men December 2, they thought they would show the world that Bermuda is a perfect vacation spot that tolerates no

disruptions. Erskine Burrows was hanged for the murder of a former governor in 1973.

Larry Tacklyn allegedly killed

two supermarket executives in a holdup. Tacklyn was convicted by a split jury vote of 6-3!

The hangings sparked a week of rioting by angry young Black Bermudans.

**Burrows and Tacklyn were leaders of the Black Power movement in Bermuda.**

They were executed to keep Bermuda a profits paradise for the tourist industry, which is controlled by white British and American hotel and resort owners.

## CRUMBS

The 60% Black majority of Bermuda lives off the crumbs of that industry.

The lucky few are shop owners or assistant hotel managers. The majority are hotel servants, waiters or unemployed.

Protecting the tourist industry was also the reason for the emergency airlift of hundreds of

British troops to Bermuda. Bermuda is what's called a "Crown Colony" of Britain.

Britain appoints the governor (Sir Peter Ramsbotham) and controls Bermuda's police, army, and foreign affairs.

**The militant Black movement was formed to demand independence—so that the Bermudan people could be the masters of the resources and profits of their own country instead of its servants.**

The first large-scale Black rebellion in 1968 shook Bermuda. It scared the pants off the elite merchants of international tourism.

Now the Bermuda establishment says everything is back to normal, and the good times and profits will begin flowing again. They know that North American tourists will soon forget the ugly details of two young Black men being put to death.

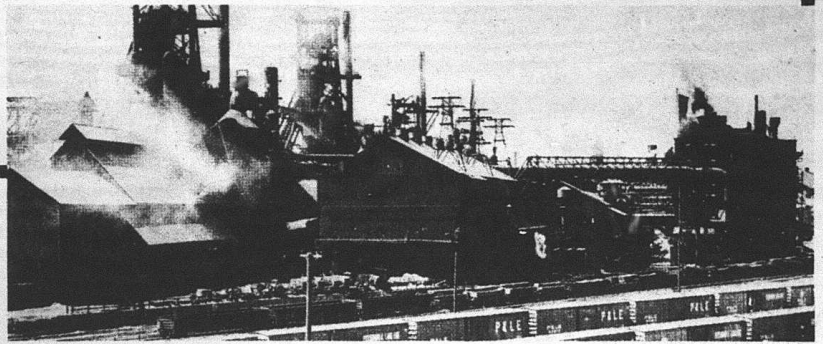
But the young Black people of Bermuda will not forget. □



Young Black people took to the streets against the executions of two persons in Bermuda.

# Carter Steel Program Aids Profits, Not Jobs

## You Get No Extension On Your Life



Clairton Coke Works

by Candy Martin

"ALL MY LIFE I have manipulated people and money," Anthony Solomon explained in a recent conversation with the New York Times.

Solomon is the man President Carter chose to head up his government task force on the crisis in the steel industry.

And with a life history like that, it's not hard to imagine what kind of a steel-aid proposal Solomon came out with last week.

The newly-announced government plan offers tax breaks, loan guarantees, and other aids to the corporations in a package that is meant to increase their profits by \$900 million a year.

But it ignores the crisis of tens of thousands of steelworkers who will celebrate Christmas on the unemployment lines.

### TRIGGER PRICES

While the new plan includes no strict import quotas, there will now be a system of "trigger" or "reference" prices. This amounts to a certain "allowable" price level for imports which will be used to cut out lower-priced steel.

It will eliminate the most competitive foreign steel, giving domestic producers more freedom

to raise prices. Higher prices will mean less demand for steel and even greater unemployment.

There are other concessions to the steel companies' blackmail besides tax breaks and reduced competition. Some changes in antitrust procedures. Modification of pollution regulations. More investment aids.

The government thinks that by playing "see-no-evil" it can make the real causes of the crisis in steel simply go away.

The crisis of outmoded, uncompetitive plant and equipment. The refusal of the steel giants to invest, expand, and modernize. Weak world-wide demand. Enormous joblessness. The lack of needed production of housing, hospitals, bridges.

But that crisis will not go away, no matter how the government and corporate chairmen try to cover their eyes and hide.

### SLASHES

In recent months, there have been major job slashes at Bethlehem's Johnstown and Lackawanna Works, Youngstown Sheet & Tube, Alan Wood Steel Co., Armco Steel, and Jones & Laughlin, among others.

By the end of last month, 100,000

workers in the metals industry lost their jobs according to Iron Age, the steel industry's own voice.

Launching a massive propaganda campaign over the last few months, Big Steel tried to place the blame for the heavy unemployment on foreign competition.

Some rank and file steelworkers particularly in District 31, saw through the imports smokescreen. Yet many of them thought Carter might be on their side when the President resisted the industry's demands for heavy import controls and higher prices.

All along, of course, the President had his own reasons for resisting the steel companies' demands for quotas. He is there to look out for big business interests of the entire country, not steel alone.

And most capitalists knew that import controls would only lead to bigger economic problems and trade wars for them.

Now it is clear that Carter has chosen a plan that will not hurt those broader capitalist interests opposing quotas. But at the same time he will protect the steel magnates' interest in higher prices, greater profits, and reduced competition.

He has chosen to see not a crisis of steelworkers without jobs, but a crisis of corporate profits. □



Frank Valenta (standing), USW Dist. 28 Director, talks to steelworkers at environmental meeting.

CLEVELAND — A few dozen steelworkers attended a meeting here December 3 on Jobs and Environment. It was one of a series being held in the midwest by the Environmental Protection Agency (Region 5) and the United Steelworkers.

The meeting was inspired by the Environmental Committee at United Steelworkers Local 1010, Inland Steel, East Chicago, Indiana. This committee is aggressively going after the company to clean up its pollution, in contrast to most of the rest of the union.

Mike Olszanski and Jim Ross of Local 1010, along with several officials of the EPA, led the discussion. Most of it focussed on the coke ovens, which produce the most severe health problems confronting workers in the basic steel industry and residents of surrounding communities.

### LIFE EXPECTANCY

Ross, who works on Inland's coke batteries, gave one example. The average life expectancy of a coke oven worker who retires, he said, is six months to two years. This is because the emissions from coke ovens cause high rates of cancer and other diseases.

Olszanski showed pictures of Inland's modern "smokeless" coke batteries, which were belching out huge clouds of foul-looking smoke. He explained that the company does not hire enough people to keep the equipment operating properly. If the air is to be kept clean, Olszanski said, jobs will have to be created, not destroyed as the steel companies charge.

One steelworker in the audience said he thought the present anti-pollution law is "a good law, but I don't think it's enforced." He said compliance deadlines for the companies "keep getting extended and extended and extended. But people are getting sick and dying every day. You've got no extension on

your life. When you're gone, that's it."

### BUILD A FIRE

The officials from the Environmental Protection Agency explained what the law is, and some of the ways steelworkers could get involved.

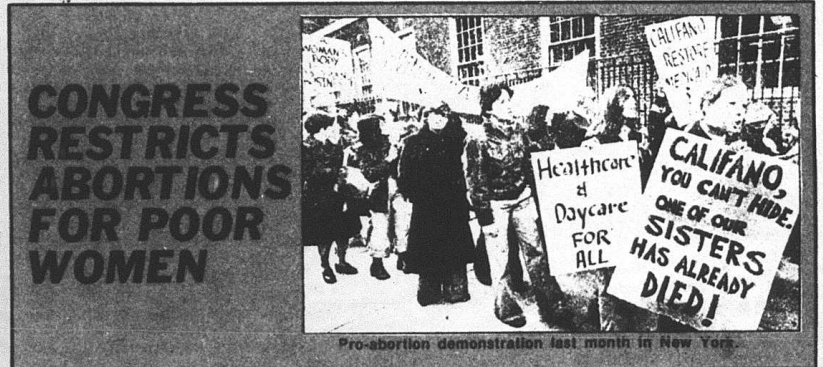
But, to the visible discomfort of some of them, Olszanski explained the way things really work: "These guys [EPA officials] are listening. You've got to keep them listening. You know the government bureaucracy is slow—they've got red tape and they've got their own bosses. But there's some good guys here—you've got to build a fire under them."

One steelworker asked whether President Carter's recently-announced plan to aid the steel industry would mean relaxing environmental controls. One EPA official replied that the President hadn't sent down the details yet, "but I think we'd be naive to say this isn't one of the things they're looking at."

Another official attending part of the meeting was Frank Valenta, director of United Steel Workers District 28. Instead of talking about how pollution affects steelworkers, Valenta expressed concern about how pollution controls were affecting the steel industry. "I think if it could be proven that they don't have the money for those controls," he said, "there should be a government program to provide subsidies for them."

Members of Local 1010's Environmental Committee will be involved in meetings similar to this one throughout the midwest. Steelworkers who want to learn more should write to: USW Local 1010 Environmental Committee, 3703 Euclid Avenue, East Chicago, Indiana 46312. □

Jim Woodward



Pro-abortion demonstration last month in New York.

Well it's over. On December 7, the House and Senate reached a compromise on an amendment that will outlaw the use of federal money to pay for abortions.

The great debate raged for five months in Congress, and it's supposed to be a victory for the liberals.

In one corner, the liberals. They fought for a compromise where the government would pay for abortions in cases of "forcible rape or incest" that had been "promptly" reported. Or in cases where the pregnancy would result in "severe and long-lasting injury" to the mother.

Isn't it great having liberals on Capitol Hill?

You're supposed to think the liberals won a victory. But it's a shuck. In fact, the passage of this amendment is a severe and reactionary setback for women.

You'd think abortion is illegal in this country.

But it is legal! Abortion is recognized as a woman's right to choose, to control her own body.

Sure, poor sisters still have the right to abortions. But rights don't mean a damn thing if you can't pay.

Poor women will be forced to bear children they don't want or can't afford.

Or they will seek cheap abortions from "back alley butchers." And they will die.

Still, the conservatives are not satisfied. Rep. Henry Hyde, the author of the amendment, thinks the concessions are too sweeping.

"This is a compromise language which I cannot support. It's trading a life for a health condition. If it were a life for a life, then I could accept it."

In other words, Hyde wants a pregnant woman to be dying before he would be willing to pay for her abortion.

Congress has attacked abortion rights. But the issue is not closed. Women have already been in the streets demanding full right to abortion. We will win! □

E. Clarke

# "I think it cha

by Elissa Clarke

"I think it changed my life!" That is how one woman described her weekend at the Workers' Power Women's Conference.

At the end of the two-day Conference, Gay Semel, National Secretary of the International Socialists, said: "This Conference brought together Black women, white women, lesbians, straight women, young, old. What do we have in common?"

"We are all struggling for liberation as women. We are all struggling for liberation as human beings."

"For the first time I feel—not just as an intellectual idea—but in my heart that we are going to build a working class women's movement in this country."

"That it's going to be Black, white, young and old and it's going to be able to change the future!"

The Workers' Power Women's Conference was held in Cleveland on December 3 and 4. The Conference had a theme: women face a crisis today, but we are fighting back, and there is a way to win!

## WOMEN ARE UNDER ATTACK

Yes, women always face problems—discrimination in hiring, low wages, sexism, isolation as housewives.

But there's something else too. Gains that we made ten years ago are under attack.

- We won the right to abortion; today they are cutting federal money so poor women cannot get abortions.

- We won jobs in industries where no women worked before; today there are no jobs. Women are being laid off.

- We fought for equal pay; today the difference between men's and women's wages is greater than it was twenty years ago.

- We fought for equal rights; today they won't even pass the Equal Rights Amendment.

- We fought for affirmative action; today it's being challenged in the courts.

### SPEAK OUT

Enid Eckstein, a member of the International Socialists (I.S.) Women's Commission, explained that the system is in crisis and women are under attack. Then she asked:

"How many of you have had the door slammed in your face because you're a woman? How many of you have ever had trouble getting a job?"

"How many of you have had trouble getting decent health care? How many of you have had trouble with your man?"

The women in the audience raised their hands to each of these questions. And they stood up to speak, to testify about the oppression that they suffer because they are women.

Joyce, a woman from Detroit, said: "It took me two years to get



food stamps—two years!

"You go down to the welfare office and you sit and you sit and you sit. And you beg for your money."

"But while you're sitting there, you get to talk to the other women in the welfare office, and they all come up with the same story: Carter's not doing a damn thing about it. He's just making it worse."

Lisa, from Maryland, said: "I wasn't worried when I got laid off from my job. I thought now I'm really going to go out there and get a good paying job. I was going to go to an auto plant."

"It got very discouraging. I went to all these factories that were paying \$2.50 an hour, and they all had signs up: No Applications Being Accepted."

"One day I read that the state of Maryland had openings for cafeteria help. Well, cafeteria help wasn't my goal, but I was willing to take any crummy job I could get."

"I went down there first thing in the morning; there were 150 women ahead of me."

"Unemployment is 7%, but—hey!—I'm one of them."

A woman from Pittsburgh said: "I'm a deck hand on a ship. I work on the coal barges. The boats go out for seven days. No women have ever worked there before."

"I work twelve hours a day—and then they expect me to have the coffee hot and fresh all the time!"

A steelworker said: "Women have a hard way all the way around. When my husband and I separated, I had to go out and get a job right away."

"At Republic Steel, they harass me. They make me work harder than anyone else."

"I figure maybe it's because I'm past 35. They're hoping they'll break me down. But they won't!"

A Black woman said: "I'm unemployed. My problem is getting daycare."

"A lot of the jobs you apply for, they use your children as an excuse for not hiring you."

"I got a part time job, but after I paid the babysitter, it was nothing."

As these women stood up to speak out, the sum of their stories made a very important point: our problems are not personal, they are not isolated, and they are not our own fault.

We face these problems because we live in a society that discriminates against women. A system that puts profits before people. A system in crisis.

When the system is in crisis, it makes the most oppressed people pay. Working people. Black people. Women. Speedup. Unemployment. Low wages. Welfare cuts. Abortion cuts.

## BUT WE ARE FIGHTING BACK

But there is something important that happens when people are attacked: they fight back.

Today women are fighting back. It's still a small movement, but it is very significant and exciting.

The Workers' Power Women's



Conference brought together women who are involved in struggle. A panel of five women spoke about the fights that they are engaged in and the victories they have won.

Women like T.J., a young Black woman who is a leader of the Red Tide. "We focus on organizing in the high schools. We build campaigns, like the one to free Gary Tyler, a young Black dude. Lots of women who came around the Red Tide during the Gary Tyler campaign joined. I was one of them."

Robin, who built a strike by clerical workers in Chicago.

"We haven't heard enough about the women who say, 'Don't give me roses on Secretary's Day and then that insult of a paycheck the next day.'"

"There are thousands of women like this who have sparked small to major rebellions in offices throughout the country."

And Dorreen Labby, a steel worker, who spoke about the problems that women faced when they went into the mills, and the Women's Caucus that they organized.

Carol Paff, a member of Teamsters for a Democratic Union, who has helped to bring other wives into the struggle that their husbands face.

"Wives who get involved make our movement twice as strong, twice as unified," Carol said.

Kathy Kozachenko, a leader of the gay movement in New York and a member of Dykes and Tykes.

Kathy spoke about the discrimination that lesbians face when the seek custody of their children.

"Of all the lesbian mothers cases which go to court, 98% are lost by the mothers. The courts and the judges are our enemies."

## AND WE'RE GOING TO WIN

At the conclusion of the Conference, Gay Semel addressed the audience about socialism—the key to women's liberation.

"The oppression that women face is very real. We all feel it. We know what it's about. This system tells us that we're dumb, that we're passive, that we can't fight back. To overcome that oppression, we need each other's strength."

"We're fighting for freedom, but we can't have it. Why can't we



Loretta Ware, Detroit

"I've been listening. I know what's going on. And I've been thinking about getting more involved. The Conference's been pretty deep."

"My husband is real active in the union, and he's a member of the I.S. I help him so much on his job, you know, like I'm behind him—'Oh, because he is in there to help the people."

"I'm helping him, but I'm in the background. I'm going to be more up front from now on."

"I am a fighter. I've been home with the children, but now they're both in school. I got a lot of time on my hands. I'm tired of watching soap operas. I have a lot of energy to burn. I want to get involved."



Jeanne Rumsey, Detroit, grandmother of 10

"This is the first thing like this I've come to. My daughter goes with a Teamsters for a Democratic Union activist and she knew about this Conference. She asked me if I wanted to come, and I told her, 'OK, I'll try it.'"

"I wanted to come to see what my daughter was involved in. And I thought I might get involved myself too. You never know if you don't go."

"I've seen and heard lots of things that make me want to get more involved now."

"I think it's long past due that women get involved."

"You know, this isn't just a thing for one generation."

# Workers' Power Women

# nged my life!"

have quality childcare? Why can't we work under safe conditions? Why can't we have decent jobs at decent pay?

"Why can't a society that can put a man on the moon, why can't it feed our children?"

"The answer is simple. The answer is profits. It's the same answer that pays farmers not to produce while half the world starves.

"It's the same answer that lets old people die in quiet, cold desperation because the heat's been turned off because they couldn't pay.

"It's the same answer that lays off 5000 people at Youngstown Steel while there are already eight million unemployed.

"Capitalism will not liberate women because it's not profitable to do so.

"We need to build a mass, working class women's movement that will address the problems of women's oppression.

"But women can't do it alone. We need a society that is run in our interests. We need socialism.

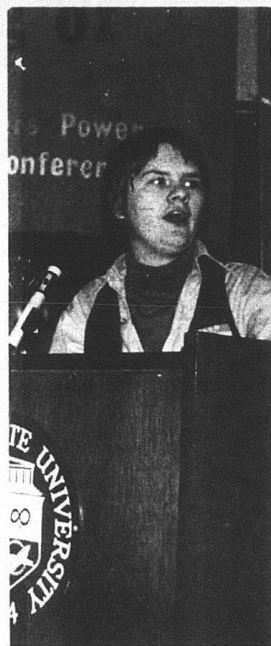
"Many of us are revolutionary feminists and revolutionary socialists. We want you to be one, too. We want you to join the International Socialists. We want you to join in the struggles of the future.

"We're not dumb! We're not passive! And—boy—do we know how to fight!"

## JOIN US!

Women from the audience stood up. The commitment that they expressed about joining the struggle was moving and inspiring. Nine women said they wanted to join the I.S.

Brenda, a woman from Ohio, put it this way: "I see changes in this country, and I don't like it. I've



been through everything from marriage, to welfare, to working in a male-dominated industry.

"This country's got to change, and I want to have a say in it. I'm sick of the whole business and I think I can do something about it!"

Portia, a young Black woman from Detroit, said: "It really has a strong feeling in my heart. I gotta join the struggle!"

Dorreen, a steelworker from Gary and a member of the I.S., said: "I was pretty burned out about coming to this Conference. I had a thousand personal problems on Friday.

"But to get here, and to experience this good thing with everybody... now I can go back and say, I'm building this movement that is bigger than myself.

It's really an upper."

Ruth, an older woman from Boston, said, "I see that women are really involved in this organization. At this point, I'm convinced, I want to be part of the I.S."

Perhaps it was summed up best when a young woman, Molly, from Cleveland, got up and said, "Women, wow, we're great!"

## Fighting Grannies Address Conference

# "My grandmother marched for women's suffrage, and it's time for me to pick up the flag!"



Tiny Green and Georgia Ellis

They come from a little Indiana town called Elwood, and they call themselves the "Fighting Grannies."

They've earned that name in a bitter, eight-month strike against Essex Wire Corp.

Two of the "Fighting Grannies", Georgia Ellis and Miriam "Tiny" Green came to the Workers' Power Women's Conference to share the story of their struggle.

The Essex plant is organized by the United Auto Workers, but the workers there, mostly women, make only \$2.76 an hour. And they say, "That's not enough."

## UNION BUSTING

Georgia Ellis told the Conference: "Essex is out to break the union. They specialize in this. They build these little plants on a little side road somewhere in a little bitty town and it's solder women, women who can't get other jobs, divorcees, widows, handicapped."

"But the Essex women surprised everyone: the company, the union, even themselves. "We thought that if we were nice and carried our signs around the company would give in a few weeks."

But Essex Wire Corporation didn't give in. The company is owned by a huge conglomerate, United Technologies.

The company brought in professional strike-breakers. The strikers have been arrested, beaten, shot, and wounded in their struggle to keep the scabs out.

If the scabs stay until April, the company can hold an election to oust the union.

The only offer that Essex will make to the strikers is the same 62c. Scabs get top seniority, strikers rehired "as needed."

"The women are furious. "Seniority is an earned right," Georgia Ellis fumed. "And at Essex you earn it, one lousy, hot, stinking day at a time."

"Our women earned every day of it. I'll be damned if I'm going to give it to anybody!"

The strikers are determined to stay out as long as it takes.

"Our international rep told us we should take the last offer because it was the best they could get," Georgia commented.

"We thought it over and we decided it damn well wasn't all they could get. You can't tell us that a union as big as the UAW with the muscle they have and the power they have couldn't do any better than to leave our jobs to scabs.

"We came out 100% and we're

going to go back 100%. That's what a union is all about."

When Georgia Ellis finished her speech, the audience stood up and cheered. Union members pledged that they would go back to their locals and build support for the Essex strikers.

Georgia said, "It's been quite a day. I've learned a lot of things at this Conference and it's been pretty terrific."

"You've got some pretty good fighters here, and I'd like to have some of you down on our picket line!"

Workers' Power will be helping to build support for the Essex strikers. Watch future issues for more information and suggestions about what you can do in your local.

The Essex strike is a strike for all women workers, and all union members. As Tiny Green said, "My grandmother marched for women's suffrage, and it's time for me to pick up the flag!"



Georgia Ellis, a leader of the Essex Wire Strike, Elwood, Indiana.

"Most of our women are of the age where basically our life was a cocoon. It was a soft, nice, protective thing.

"You went to work, you had your church and your close friends, and your family.

"Very few of us knew much about what was going on anywhere outside.

"But through our strike, the cocoons have opened, we've come out, we've learned that there are things going on in the world around us.

"I came to tell people here about our struggle. And I'm interested in other women's problems. For the first time in my life.

"I've found the Conference fascinating. The strength and determination I find that beautiful.



Geri Braun, Cleveland

"I came to the conference because I'm a steelworker, and I hope to learn a lot here that I can use in on the job organizing."

"All through my life I've experienced different kinds of oppression because of being a woman.

"Every job that I ever worked on, I would always try to get the better paying position, or something where I could learn a skill, and many times you couldn't get the jobs.

"As usually, if you could, they would try and force you out when you got it. A lot of harassment.

"And men expected me to be some typical stereotypical woman who's wimpy and passive and stupid.

"And it's through events like this conference that I've gained the confidence to do what I want to do with my life.



Frances Mitchell, S. Bronx, I.S. member

"Mainly I came because I'm a woman, and all the problems I have myself.

"I'm on welfare, and I don't have any type of real job training.

"I want to get job training, but my child is under two years old and I'm not eligible for the program till after six years old.

"I told them, what difference does it make how old he is. I'm not asking you for no babysitter, but still I have to wait till he's six years old.

"This conference is just great, so many women getting together. It just gives you the feeling everything doesn't have to remain the way it is.

"You don't have to just sit back and take things any more, you don't have to just fight by yourself.

# Women's Conference

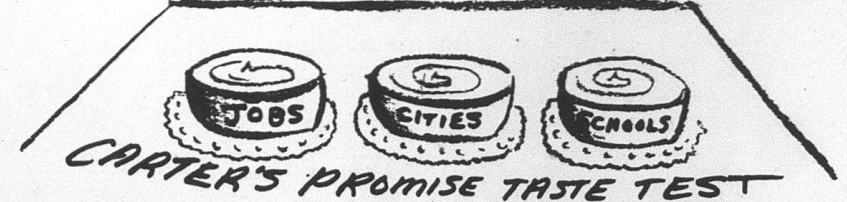
# BLACK LIBERATION

# BREAD...SURVIVAL... THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

by Al Ferdnace

Black is beautiful, Black is proud!...or so I've heard. But Black is a lot of other things too. Black is ugly, Black is betrayed by other Blacks. And if you are American and Black, you're mostly unemployed or underemployed.

Speaking for myself, I've found being a Black American can also be rather confusing. On the one hand, Blacks, even those who



work, are "shiftless and lazy" and those who are out of work, "don't want a job anyway." You can't win for losing.

Yet when you get right down to it, in spite of the stereotypes, there are only two basic questions that have faced Black Americans throughout our history in this country.

The first is how to come by that "daily bread" so many are willing to thank God for.

The other is how to live long enough to eat it after you've got it. All other questions (and there are many) arise from these two.

**LIMITED METHODS**

When it comes to "bread" either on the table or in your pocket, we are limited in the methods of attainment.

My mother was often heard to say, "if you don't work, you'll steal." And that ain't too far from the truth.

Of course, there's always welfare, some might add. But the point should be made that without money, land, or some other means of production, you and I won't be able to eat.

To some, this approach to understanding the situation of Blacks in this country may be labeled as oversimplified.

But who can deny that most Black Americans have nothing else to trade for food other than their labor?

The same can be said for the majority of the noncolored segment of the population as well.

In short, people in the working class are dependent on full employment, for full stomachs and the other necessities of life.

That brings us to the second question. How can you live, if you don't eat?

I mean, if your ability to eat is tied directly to the economic stability of the American labor market (in which you hope to sell your labor) then your ability to live without stealing or fighting is equally tied to it.

Again this dependency is more or less true throughout the entire racial spectrum in the working class, but Blacks are always closer to the "cutting" edge of scarcity in the American society.

For Blacks, a poor economy can easily mean the difference between life or death, for the present and future generations.

### WAIT YEARS?

If this seems to lean in the other direction, from oversimplification, to extreme, consider the present administration's answers thus far to the hungry and unemployed, both Black and white.

They speak of solutions that will bring relief in terms of years. Maybe you can go long without eating. I know I can't.

So out of the two basic questions arise others.

Like what can we do about it? Can we really exert the kind of power it takes to insure that we can continue to eat properly and live better?

The answer is yes! It will, of course, require some considerable re-evaluation of what Black is.

Today, ten years after Watts, twenty-three years after the overturning of the "separate but equal" doctrine, we find the following situation.

Blacks are still fooled by the image of "house niggers" in the position of authority.

We have followed them, hat in hand, through the "new Frontier," the "New Society," to the era of "Benign neglect and Watergate" to the Carter fiasco. Which administration has degenerated from "human rights" to the Neutron bomb.

This two-faced approach to Blacks and others in the working class is topped only by the insults labeled as remedial legislation.

The results are growing ghettos, growing unemployment, continuing police brutality.

### FACES CHANGE

Only the faces have been changed. We now have Black faces trying to sell us a package of goods. They say it's "butter" but I know it's "Parkay."

Continued belief in the two party system or the Democratic party may be seen as many things. But beautiful is not one of them.

Black pride can be best manifested in its ability to recognize itself as an important integral part of the working class people of this country and the world.

Black Liberation and all its attendant virtues can only be achieved in the liberation of the working class as a whole.

For us the way to "bread" and "life" is through socialism. Now that's really beautiful! □

## Labor Notes

by Jim Woodward



Employers at the Port of Baltimore are complaining that longshoremen returning from a strike are working "very slowly." Members of Longshoremen's Local 333 were forced back to work by a court injunction. After being on strike for two months, they had rejected the proposed contract because of local port conditions.

The nation's unemployment rate remained almost the same last month, at 6.9% officially. Also unchanged was the official unemployment rate for Blacks—at 13.8%, double the national rate.

In a departure from its usual practice, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) says it will seek a nationwide injunction prohibiting the J.P. Stevens Company from "engaging in conduct which interferes with, restrains or coerces employees regarding their federally protected right to join or assist labor unions." If granted, the injunction would require Stevens to notify all its supervisors they would be personally liable for violations of the order. The labor time the NLRB got a nationwide injunction was in 1948—and that time it was against a union.

The Pullman Standard Co. had a birthday party planned on Wall Street December 2. The company was celebrating the 100th anniversary of its listing on the New York Stock Exchange. Things like this are important to businessmen. Pullman's party was disrupted, however, by a delegation of striking Steelworkers from five Pullman plants around the country. The picketed the Stock Exchange, as well as major Pullman customers around town. Their message to Pullman president, former astronaut James McDivitt, was to "come on down to earth." A major issue in the strike is the company's demand to take away the right to strike over incentive pay.

The United Auto Workers union has filed for a union representation election at Volkswagen's plant in New Stanton, Pa. The VW operation is the first auto plant to be operated by a foreign company in the U.S. It is expected to eventually have 3000 employees, and to begin production in early April. Separately, UAW Local 1933 has rejected a proposed contract at a South Carolina stamping plant that VW is buying from American Motors.

If you're in trouble with the law and can get union bureaucrats to write "impressive letters" in your behalf, if you have "strong family ties," and if you've got a medical problem like maybe a kidney ailment, the judge will go easy on you. That's what Fred F. Field Jr. found when he was sentenced to one year in prison December 2. Field is a top official of the International Longshoremen's Association. He was convicted of taking \$125,000 that the United Brands Company smuggled in on banana boats for him. In return, he kept their bananas from being tied up by strikes. Field could have gotten up to 45 years in prison from a less sympathetic judge.

Electricians, machinists, cooks, and dairy farmers: The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health says it looks like the rate of cancer in your occupation is increasing. The government agency promises further investigation.

Employees of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) are picketing agency offices to protest stalling on job security negotiations. The issue came up because of reorganization at the EEOC.

At the same time, the Carter Administration is developing plans to make it easier to fire federal employees. The Administration complains it was able to fire only 200 workers last year for "bad performance," and wants to do better in the future.

What's happening where you work? Send items for this column to: Workers' Power, Labor Notes, 14131 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, Michigan 48203. Or phone 313-869-5964.



# Organize! - The Only Answer To Shrinking Union Power

by Kim Moody

Q. Mr. Meany, why is the total union membership not growing as fast as the country's labor force?

A. "I don't know. I don't care."  
Q. Would you prefer to have a larger proportion?

A. "Not necessarily. We've done quite well without it..."

That's what George Meany said back in 1972. And, with a few exceptions, most labor leaders would probably have agreed, though many would have had better sense than to say it.

That opinion is changing. It is changing from cold, hard necessity. The need to "care" has arisen from the fact that labor is not doing "quite well" anymore.

Labor's clout at the bargaining table has suffered in one industry after another. Settlements get smaller and smaller (see box). Non-union employers are on the rise.

In response a growing number of unions are launching or planning organizing drives.

J. P. STEVENS

The best known of these is the struggle by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers to organize J.P. Stevens. This campaign is already well under way.

Recently, 2,000 Stevens workers met in Spartanburg, South Carolina. They represented some 50 different plants in the Stevens empire.

Another serious southern organizing drive is being conducted by the Teamsters.

The target is Overnite Transportation, the nation's largest non-union freight company. And it's not just diamond-ringed, well-heeled business agents conducting this fight.

The union is hiring union truckers off the street to bring Overnite workers into the union.

Recently, the Upholsterers International Union joined the bandwagon by announcing their intention of a southern organizing drive.

The Upholsterers point to the J.P. Stevens campaign as their inspiration and the opening shot in labor's "Southern domino theory."

## BUILDING TRADES

Even the Building Trades unions proclaimed a nationwide organizing drive in the construction industry.

These unions, based more on exclusion than expansion, have not organized in the construction industry for decades.

They were the last unions to preserve "color bars," preventing Black or Latin construction workers from joining.

Now, these most conservative of unions plan to organize the unorganized, to bring into their fold thousands of workers they previously shunned.

What has brought about this change of heart?

Why have even the most conservative union officials, like Robert Gerogine of the Building Trades, declared, "The time has come to begin a coordinated effort to organize the unorganized..."

It wasn't a stroke of class struggle militancy, or even an attack of bleeding heart liberalism. It was survival instinct.

Look at the construction industry. For the past few years the contractors have waged a vicious,

and successful open-shop drive.

With a long-standing slump in construction, the non-union contractors have had an easy time getting people to work for less than union wages and conditions.

At the recent Building Trades Department Convention, one California official said of the non-union outfits, "Believe me fellows, they

are beginning to gobble us up."

A similar story describes the shrinking bargaining power of the once mighty Teamsters union.

An official of the American Trucking Association, the major employers group, told the magazine U.S. News and World Report that once he could count the number of non-union trucking

firms on the fingers of one hand.

"Now," he added, "I can point to 75 right off the bat. And they're the ones that are expanding the fastest."

Much of this is the result of trucking following other industries to the South.

The ATA's recent study of the industry shows that it is declining

along the East Coast and growing fastest in the South.

Non-union companies, of which Overnite is by far the biggest, have moved in and are now spreading North.

## TOUGHER STAND

This has encouraged unionized employers in the rest of the country to take a tougher stand against union demands.

So now, even the corrupt, complicit officials of the Teamsters union are beginning to do something about it.

The movement southward has been a major source of non-union employment in textile and furniture, which explains the organizing campaigns in those industries.

Even long-unionized giants like General Motors have opened southern plants and then resisted unionization.

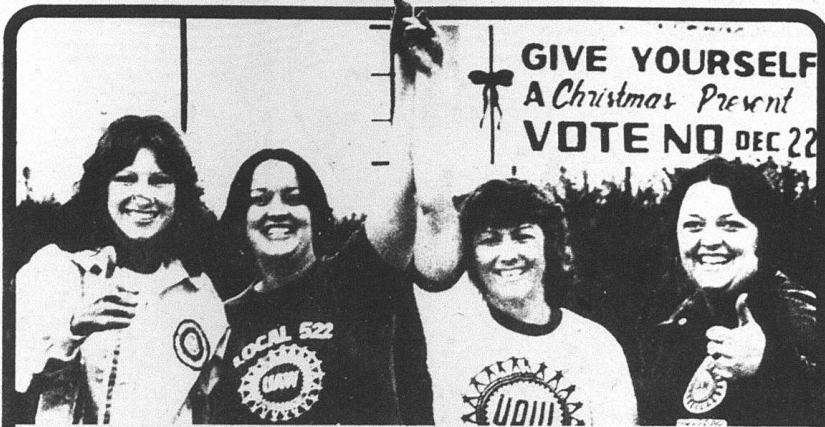
Recently, the National Labor Relations found GM guilty of several unfair labor practices during a 1976 campaign by the Auto Workers to organize a Delco-Remy Division plant in Georgia.

Labor's highly publicized effort to pass the Labor Law Reform Act, which would streamline representation elections and procedures, is a sign that these generally complacent, even pro-company labor bureaucrats understand the need to organize.

The rank and file has every interest in the success of widespread and aggressive organizing campaigns.

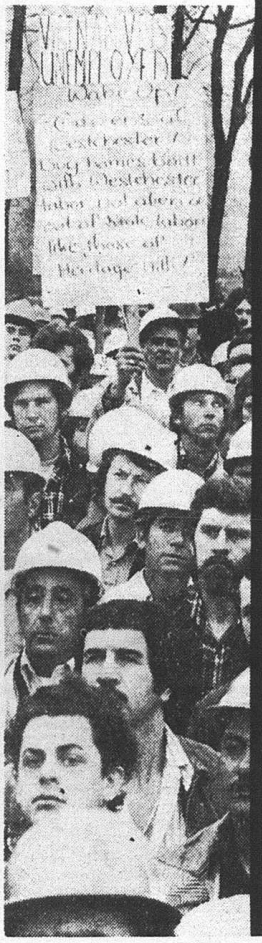
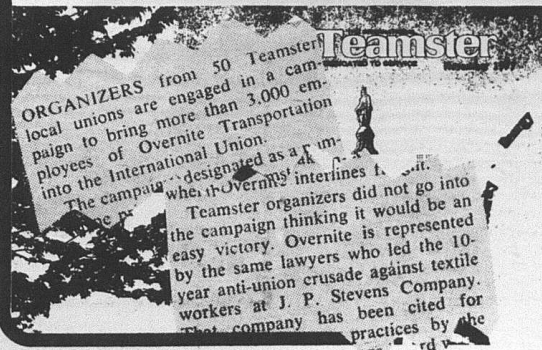
Union activists should demand that their union mount effective campaigns.

Organized workers can't afford to let the current campaigns be another case of too little, too late.



Organizing drives are on the rise. Louisiana UAW members (above) fight to organize GM. J.P. Stevens workers (below, left) are unionizing runaway textile plants. Teamsters plan to bring southern truckers into the union (bottom).

	Major Wage Settlements (% Increase)		
	1975	1976	1977
1st Yr. Increase	10.2	8.4	7.8
Yearly Average Increase for life of contract	7.8	6.4	5.8



## Building Trades In Retreat

The craft union philosophy of the Building Trades said that wages and conditions could be kept high by the union having a monopoly on labor.

Employers were to be compelled to use the unions' hiring halls.

In practice, the unions contented themselves with keeping a monopoly over non-residential construction projects. These tend to be financed by big business.

But big business got tired of high wages and union-managed work rules.

They simply went out and hired non-union workers, workers the unions had refused for decades to organize.

Now the Council on Wage and Price Stability estimates that as much as one-third of non-residential construction is non-union.

As a result, the unions have been forced to make major concessions to contractors still using union labor.

On the average, wage increases are down to 5.8% this year, from the 10%-plus levels of the early 70's.

In addition, several unions have given up long-standing work rules and conditions. Some construction unions have even taken pay cuts.

With the wolf at the door, even the narrow-minded leaders of these craft unions have seen the need to organize. □

# What your boss might be getting for Christmas



Ain't no bus fare with Egyptian motif. Ain't no bus fare with Egyptian motif. Ain't no bus fare with Egyptian motif.

This "Egyptian motif" lighter a steal at only \$185.

Wouldn't you look cool pulling this out of your pocket to light someone's cigarette standing at the bus stop?

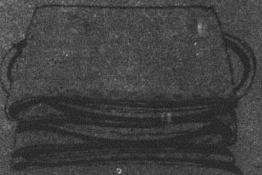
**SOME FOLKS** are born lucky. They manage to spend from cradle to grave in lavish luxury, without doing a lick of work.

The rest of us just manage to get by.

If you were filthy rich this holiday season you could buy some of these.

If you're not, see what we've got for you at the bottom of this page.

— W. Grimshaw



Gourmet Plate Warmer.



**KIMBE OPTIC**

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*Kimbe Collection*

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On welfare? Have trouble meeting your rent, buying clothes for the kids, putting food in their mouths?

On top of that you need new glasses? Next time your case worker comes over, tell her you need a pair of these.

Ain't got bus fare? Then you ain't got the money for this. \$49,000. Walnut veneer, handmade. Bar, TV, sauna, extra.



For the well-dressed cowboy: Ostrich-skin boots, \$600. Just the thing to wear to this chilli dinner for 12, \$60. Can't afford shoes? Chilli too expensive? How about a fabric cactus—just \$15.

# Where We Stand

## WE OPPOSE

- **CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION**  
We live under the capitalist system. The wealth produced by working people is stolen from us by private employers. They prosper from our labor.
- **CAPITALIST CONTROL**  
Capitalists use their profits only to make more profits. When they need fewer workers, they create unemployment. When they need more money, they speed up work, downgrade safety conditions, and raise prices. The capitalist system spends little on health care, a clean environment or social services, because these things make no profit.
- **OPPRESSION**  
Capitalism needs inequality. Because it needs profits, it can't provide enough for all. So it gives some groups of people worse jobs and lower pay, and labels them inferior. In particular, capitalism locks black people into the bottom of society, and spreads racist ideas to keep them there. Capitalism keeps women responsible for taking care of the work force when it is not at work, including children, who are too young to work. Women who work for wages have two jobs.
- **CAPITALIST GOVERNMENT**  
The government serves the capitalist class. Its only purpose is to protect the private profit system. It protects its interests abroad through economic control of other countries, spying and wars.
- **BUREAUCRATIC COMMUNISM**  
Russia, China and other countries with economies like theirs are also oppressive class societies, run by a privileged ruling class of bureaucrats. They are not socialist and must be overthrown by the working class of those countries.

## WE SUPPORT

- **THE RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT**  
The unions protect workers from their employers. But today's unions are run by privileged officials who sell out because they support the capitalist system. They want labor peace, not labor power. We support the struggle for rank and file control of the unions.
- **LIBERATION FROM OPPRESSION**  
Black people are an oppressed national minority in the United States. They have the right to self-determination—to decide their own future. The struggle of every oppressed group for equality is a just struggle—Blacks, women, gays, Latinos, American Indians. We are for the independent organization of oppressed peoples to fight for their freedom. Support from the entire working class movement will make the struggles of both—the oppressed and the working class movement—stronger.
- **SOCIALISM**  
Society should be run by the working class. The wealth produced by those who work should go to fill people's needs, not to private gain.
- **WORKERS' REVOLUTION**  
But the capitalist class will not give up their rule and profits voluntarily. Socialism can be created only when the working class seizes control of the factories and makes their own government. The working class will rule democratically because it can own society's wealth only together.

- **INTERNATIONALISM**  
The struggle for socialism is world-wide. We support every fight of the working class against exploitation, and every struggle by nations fighting for independence from foreign rulers. We support every struggle for freedom—from the people of southern Africa against racism and western colonialism to the struggle against bureaucratic rule and Russian imperialism in Eastern Europe. We demand complete independence for Puerto Rico from U.S. colonial rule.
- **REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**  
The most class conscious members of the working class have the responsibility to lead the struggle toward socialist revolution. To do this they must build an organization to put their consciousness into action and make their leadership effective.

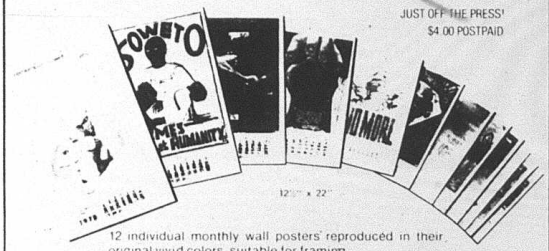
- **INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS**  
The I.S. is an organization of revolutionary socialist workers. We are open to all who accept our basic principles and are willing to work as a member to achieve them. We will work with us to build the I.S. into a revolutionary party, to build the movement to end exploitation and oppression and to create a socialist world.

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# VIEW FROM THE AUDIENCE

## damnation ALLEY

from Middle America

to Barbarism

by Mark Harris

In the 1950's, movies offered a real, if declining, competition to television, and there were a lot of them.

Today, the remaining major American studios concentrate on the few blockbusters.

A cheap movie is budgeted for \$750,000. A big film, like the upcoming *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, costs over \$25 million to produce and market, and will have to gross \$100 million before it is considered a success.

With so much capital tied up in each film, both the risks and the potential profits of each film are greater.

More than ever before, movies copy earlier successes, and the copies are usually worse than the original.

### SAD TO SEE

*Damnation Alley* is an awful film. It was sad to watch what Twentieth Century Fox made out of Roger Zelazny's interesting novel.

From the butchering of the original plot, the flat acting and the expensively produced but cheap-looking special effects, this film tells us more about what a big business thinks it can sell, than Hollywood's actual hits tell us.

**Damnation Alley**  
Directed by Jack Smight, starring Jan Michael-Vincent, George Peppard, Dominique Sanda, and Paul Winfield;  
Twentieth Century Fox.

The studios field very few films today, but spend more on each.

One major studio produced 13 films last year, down from a height of 60 after World War II.



In the wake of the financially successful *Star Wars*, anything that is science fiction-oriented stands a chance.

In Roger Zelazny's novel, the last remaining Hell's Angel is named Hell Tanner. Thirty years after a devastating nuclear war, Tanner is given a choice to stay in prison or cross *Damnation Alley* (which is virtually the whole stretch of American between Los Angeles and Boston) with a lifesaving vaccine.

In a stagnating capitalist society which is poised on collapsing into barbarism, Tanner is a fully developed barbarian. He is, in fact, a product of pre-nuclear war capitalism as much as the locale of the novel.

In the process of carrying the vaccine he develops his character.

### LIFE-STYLES

But in the film, Jan Michael Vincent plays Tanner, who now has no first name. He is cast as a hippie Air Force officer paired with George Peppard as a stereotyped older tight-ass lifer.

The film revolves around their meaningless struggle of lifestyles.

One is a hippie and free, the other is straight.

Alone, they and two strays they pick up along the way cross a much smaller *Damnation Alley* to a surprisingly undisturbed Albany where everything is early 20th century America.

Four characters mutually inconvenienced by the nuclear war make it back safely to Middle America. Who cares.

### CONSERVATIVE

Most science fiction novels are fairly conservative.

A strong individual saves a passive, endangered humanity by using daring, wit or a series of accidents.

Often scientists with specialized skills that ordinary folk don't possess are portrayed as heroes.

There is often a gap between ordinary people and these supermen.

Nevertheless science fiction has real possibilities as an art form that reflects life—it needn't be either stupid, camp, juvenile or conservative.

But when Hollywood gets ahold of a science fiction script it can be destroyed.

Even *Star Wars*, for all its marvellous techniques, waffles between being bubble gum and being reactionary.

*Star Wars*' last scene, in which an all-male assembly of revolutionaries greets the heroes, is cribbed completely from the 1930's film, *Triumph Of The Will*, by Leni Riefenstahl, one of Hitler's top propagandists.

### STAR TREK

Fans of the terrifically popular *Star Trek* have waited eight years for a movie sequel of the series: at this point Paramount Studios, which owns the film rights, has been unable to put together a package.

The studio wants something that will sell, and is not sure that the even limited cleverness of the TV series will be financially successful for them.

And the hyped-up *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* is more a religious and mystical film than it is a portrayal of real human beings and their problems.

Author Kurt Vonnegut once said that the key to success in writing good science fiction was knowing nothing about science.

Science fiction novels, where they have been very good, have gone quite a distance in explaining the world in a new and clear way.

Science fiction movies, on the other hand, have so far just mystified the world. □

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# JOAN LITTLE'S LIFE AT STAKE

Joan Little, the Black woman who became a symbol for the struggle against rape and racism in America, was arrested in New York City Wednesday.

**She had been in hiding since her second escape from a North Carolina prison.**

The first time she escaped was after a white prison guard tried to rape her in her cell. She killed him in self-defense and fled, knowing what would happen to a Black woman if the prison authorities found her.

## THE SYSTEM'S REVENGE

She was acquitted after a long trial. A tremendous defense movement and demonstrations all across the country made it possible to beat the murder charge against Joan Little.

**But the North Carolina courts and prison system were determined to take their revenge.**

Little was returned to prison on her original breaking and entering conviction, even though it was obvious she had already suffered enough.

Then the prison authorities repeatedly denied her parole, which would have been granted to any other prisoner.

They cancelled her work-release job after she was sick and missed work for two days.

When conditions became unbearable, Joan Little fled again.

She now faces several charges in New York resulting from her capture. But the most serious threat is that she will be extradited back to North Carolina.

**There is no question that her life would be in danger there.**

The prison authorities can add

years to her sentence. They can do anything they want to her.

Dozens of Black prisoners in southern jails disappear every year. If Joan Little is murdered, the authorities could say it was because she tried to escape again.

## FREE JOAN LITTLE!

Noted civil rights lawyer William Kunstler told Workers' Power that Joan Little's extradition to North Carolina "will be resisted to the hilt, it would be dangerous for her down there."

"We will present numerous specific facts to prove this."

There is a precedent in New York for refusing extradition, the case of a Georgia chain-gang prisoner named Robert Elliott. Governor Smith agreed it would be dangerous for him to go back to

Georgia.

"Joan called last night and expressed her fear of going back, about what might happen to her."

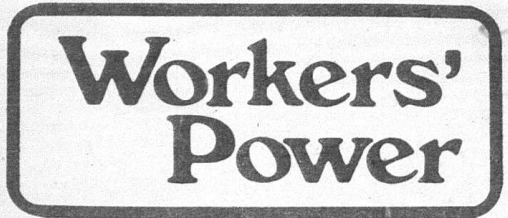
The movement to free Joan Little must be re-mobilized. She must not be returned to the hands of the same racists and rapists who have

already tried to destroy her.

The New York courts and the Governor must be stopped from sending her back. She has gone through enough injustice and brutality already.

Joan Little must go free!

Dan Posen



# South African Court Whitewashes Biko Murder

**"No one guilty."** But the people of South Africa did not need a white court to tell them who was responsible for murdering Steve Biko.

They already know who was responsible, and what has to be done about it.

The official South African court verdict is in.

No one was responsible for the death of Black Consciousness movement leader Steve Biko.

That's what presiding judge Marthinus J. Prins ruled following the official inquest. Steve Biko just died, that's all. No one caused it.

Not the security police who beat him to a pulp and left him lying unconscious in his cell September 7.

Not police Colonel Pieter Goosen, who left him lying in his cell shackled to the wall, after the

beating.

Not the officials who had him driven 750 miles to another prison, lying naked in the back of a jeep, then threw him in another cell where he died.

Not the two doctors who wrote false reports saying Biko was in good health.

## 21 DEATHS

The court ruled that no one could be held responsible. That also means that no one can be held responsible when the same thing happens to other Black detainees being held in South African detention cells.

The same thing has already happened to 21 Black South African prisoners in the last year.

While the judge was delivering his verdict, South African police arrested Steve Biko's brother Kaya and his cousin Solomon.

No one knows what has happened to the 700 people rounded up in the latest South African crackdown, when the Black Consciousness movement and Black newspapers were banned.

The court ruling makes official what Colonel Goosen said in his testimony: "The security police do not operate under any laws."

But that ruling makes little difference to the Black people of South Africa. They did not need a white court to tell them who was responsible for murdering Steve Biko.

They already know who was responsible, and what has to be done about it.



Biko's funeral: the biggest Black demonstration in South African history.

# New York Killer Cop Goes Free

by Larry Smith

On Thanksgiving Day in 1976, Black 15-year-old Robert Evans was murdered by a white police officer, Robert H. Torsney in the Brooklyn section of New York City.

Torsney and his partner were answering a radio report of an armed man in an East New York housing development where Evans lived with his family.

Upon leaving the building the officers were approached by young Evans and five other youths. Evans stopped to talk to officer Torsney, who then shot the youth in the head.

Racial disturbances broke out in

East New York when news of this murder became known.

Torsney was charged with murder and his bail was posted by the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association. The former chief counsel for the association became his defense lawyer.

On October 31, 1977, Torsney was found not guilty by reason of insanity by an all white jury.

In the last few years there has been a series of killings of Black youths by white cops. The murder of ten-year-old Clifford Grover by an officer Shea is one of the more notorious examples. Shea, like Torsney, got off scott free.

Torsney is to be placed in an

institution under the jurisdiction of the State Mental Hygiene Department to undergo testing. It is felt by legal experts that Torsney will be released after the minimum 60 days period required before an appeal for discharge can be made.

The defense argued that Torsney suffered an "epileptic psychomotor seizure" at the time of the shooting. This is claimed in spite of the fact that Torsney has no previous record of epileptic attacks or nervous breakdowns.

The Torsney case is another example of the sham that is called American justice. The verdict says to every racist cop that you can get away with murder.

You don't have to pretend that the victim attacked you or you saw what looked like a gun. If you are a cop, you can kill, plead insanity and be out on the streets to do it all over again.

## EDUCATION

The verdict is also an education in the role of the police and the communities they patrol. The cities of America are very dangerous places where crime is on the rise. The police forces of those cities are large well-armed bodies supposedly organized to wage war on crime.

But young Robert Evans was not a criminal. He was a young man in

a difficult time struggling to reach adulthood in a dangerous environment.

He was one of the citizens that the police force is supposed to "serve and protect."

In reality the police neither serve nor protect the people in the communities they roam. The police are hired by an oppressive and exploitative system, American Capitalism, to serve its needs and protect its interests.

The police are like paid thugs—that serve as an army of occupation inside the Black community.

Now being a paid thug for the system you are given a license to go hunting.