

N. Y. COMM. FOR TRADE UNION
ACTION and DEMOCRACY
799 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003

THIRD CLASS MAIL

the rank and file in action

Labor Today

Volume 15, Nos. 7 and 8

July and August 1976



JUAN CHACON

BILL LUCY

ED SADLOWSKI

Labor in '76

WILLIAM LUCY: MAKE IT CLEAR TO CONGRESS

This country wants social legislation

Interviewed by Hudson Wells

(NOTE: William Lucy, as Chairman of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and Secretary-Treasurer of the State, County and Municipal Employees, is one of the leading figures in the U.S. labor movement. He was one of the key pushers of the April 26, 1975, March On Washington for full employment and a major organizer of efforts to pass the Hawkins-Humphrey Full Employment Bill. In this interview, he discusses the movement for full employment and some of the electoral strategies that must be pursued. A member of the Democratic National Committee, he does not skirt the need for labor's independent political action. He is interviewed by LT's Washington Representative, Hudson Wells, a former vice-president of the Maryland-D.C. CIO.)

LT: Brother Lucy, President Ford tells us that the economic situation is improving. What is the CBTU's reaction to that?

LUCY: Over the last two or three months we've seen great proclamations that the recovery is on the way, the recession or depression has ended. And, in fact, what we're seeing is the capacity of the Executive Branch of Government to manipulate the economy to the extent that we assume



that it's getting better. Bear in mind that while the GNP shows sporadic kinds of increases, the inflationary pressures and inflationary trends tend to indicate that there's sort of a slowing down. This, in fact, is not true. There's every expectation that food prices will increase; there's every expectation that energy costs will increase.

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President Ford says that unemployment really only affects those people without jobs, which is a gross understatement. And if, in fact, the game plan of the Ford Administration is to maintain a 7 to 7-plus percent unemployment through the year 1976 and even 1977, we can see that the life of the country is not getting better.

The currently published high rates of unemployment do not even begin to measure those people who have simply stopped looking for a job because there's no job for them. Nor do they measure those people who are really in need of full-time employment but can only find part-time jobs. But the unemployment statistics measure the people who are qualified at that point in time to draw unemployment benefits. If you've written off large segments of the work force because they no longer qualify, that they have exceeded their benefits, then you can manipulate that figure to anything you want.

But if you get into the inner city, and into the urban community, you would find that there is 13½ to 15 percent unemployment as a NORM. The city of Detroit must be approaching 20 percent unemployment itself, and the various parts of the city may even go higher. New York City would be lucky if they could have a 7½ percent unem-

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ED SADLOWSKI: TOWARD PROGRESSIVE UNIONISM

District 31 elections, a mandate for change

Interviewed by JIM WILLIAMS, Co-Editor
LABOR TODAY

(NOTE: Recent local union elections in District 31, United Steelworkers, saw a sweep of pro-Sadlowski forces win election. Rank and filers felt this marked a significant rebuff of the policies of USWA President I.W. Abel and a real consolidation of the rank and file in District 31. If nothing else, these elections have strongly increased the chances that Sadlowski will seek the top post in the Steelworkers' Union. Finding any Steelworkers' District President in his office is no easy chore--a lot of them are out on the golf course. To find Sadlowski, you still have to go out in the street--and find steelworkers. Do that, and you'll find Sadlowski. This interview took place in a coffee shop at 7:00 a.m. Sadlowski had already been going since 5:30 a.m.)

In the District 31 elections, many candidates who supported you in the last election won. How can this be read? Is it some kind of mandate?

It's a mandate. It's a mandate for change and for change on the shop floor and a mandate for change in the internal administration of the unions. It's a reflection of a desire for change on the local level all the way up to the national level. A lot of these local candidates were my supporters and I hope I read it right that the membership associates these new people with me and vice-versa.

What kind of changes are the members looking for? What kind of union do they want to see it become?

I think they want to see it become a more progressive, militant union--something that's going to bargain with management. I think, in a philosophical sense, they want to see the union become what they thought it was when it started out in the 30's. I think also that they want a greater say in the internal aspects of the union. I think they're fed up a lot with the leadership from the top.

The recent District 31 conference passed



a resolution for the six-hour day in steel. What is the importance of this?

I think there may be some projections of this at the bargaining table, but with the bargaining posture we find ourselves in with the ENA, I don't think we're going to be able to accomplish that. I see more and more people advocating the six-hour day. First of all, we're going to have to break down that kind of mystic barrier, which a lot of workers share, that there's something sacred about eight hours. The six-hour day is ultimately a way of employing more people. Technologically, we're at the stage where it's long overdue.

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'Busing is not the issue,' says George Meany

by GEORGE MEANY
President, AFL-CIO

Following is the text of remarks by AFL-CIO President George Meany in a filmed message to a May 19 Washington, D.C. conference on "Desegregation without Turmoil," sponsored jointly by the Community Relations Service of the U.S. Department of Justice and the National Center for Quality Integrated Education.

Few issues in our time have generated as much heat and confusion as this matter of simple justice: public acknowledgement that every American child, regardless of race, creed or color, has an equal right to the highest standard of education available. There should be no doubts, no resistance, no need for court orders to achieve this basic, democratic goal.

And in many cities where the justice of desegregation was recognized, there were good faith efforts, careful planning, fair and workable procedures--teachers, parents and children were kept informed every step of the way--and the forecasts of turmoil proved groundless.

The problems not only proved surmountable, most didn't even exist, except in the imaginations of the fearful.

Fear caused the outbreaks of violence that have characterized every reactionary attack on desegregation from Little Rock to Louisville and Boston.

Fear of the unknown. Fear on the part of people that they are somehow, in some way, being pushed around again. Fear that others are gaining an unfair advantage. Fear arising from ignorance and misunderstanding. Fear exploited and inflamed by those who seek power positions for themselves and who are willing to destroy communities as long as they end up controlling the wreckage.

During the Little Rock troubles and for a long time after, the rest of the country smugly and stupidly marked time. In the North and the border states too many considered racial discrimination exclusively a problem of the South. Many northern liberals flattered themselves that their part of the country was somehow more reasonable, more deeply committed to democratic values, that selfishness and

exclusiveness and distrust of strangers ran less deep.

Well, they were wrong. No region has a corner on virtue or goodwill or common sense. There are saints and sinners and peacemakers and mischiefmakers everywhere.

And there is discrimination in the North. And the courts have ordered it be abolished in the schools because it violates the Constitution.

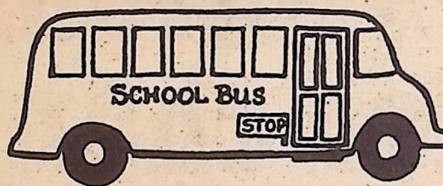
And so, there has been civil disorder and hate in Boston and Louisville that is almost identical to that in Little Rock nearly twenty years ago. Some politicians and candidates have ignored the issue of equal justice and quality education. Demagogues have vented their spleen on busing, as if busing were the real issue.

The facts prove that busing is not the issue.

More than 40 percent of the children of this country ride buses to school every day and only 3 percent do so because of court orders.

American taxpayers spend a billion dollars a year to keep the school buses running. They do it because they want quality education for their children, and they have been consolidating schools and school districts and expanding busing for 50 years with that end in view.

Well, it works. The big yellow buses have improved the quality of education for millions, and there isn't the slightest reason to pretend, suddenly, that school



busing is somehow, in itself, harmful or undemocratic.

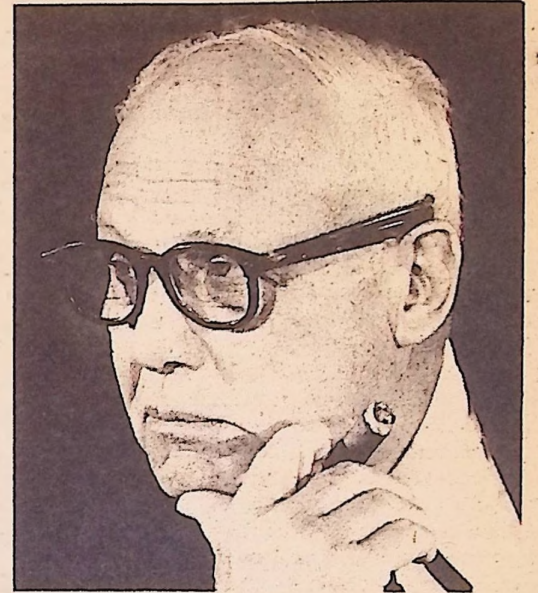
No, busing is not the issue. The issue is quality education. The issue is the right of every child to have equal access to that quality education.

Ideally, that child ought to be able to get quality education in a neighborhood school. But if the community refuses, if a federal judge finds the Constitution is being violated and orders busing as the only way to obtain that quality education, then there must be busing.

I don't pretend to have any quick solution to the problems of Boston and Louisville.

The judges had no other recourse under the law. They did their duty. It is the communities that failed their obligation: first, to quality education for all; and second, to adequately prepare the people--the parents and children--for the task of living up to the law of the land.

As a result, fear--and the anger and hatred that fear begets--swept those cities. Oppor-



tunists and demagogues, who flourish on disorder, rushed to the soap boxes and we all know the results.

But those results could have been avoided. Such tragedies can and must be prevented in the future, by involving the entire community in the search for equity.

In every city where the courts have ordered action to desegregate the schools, the churches, service clubs, civic organizations, civil rights groups and, certainly, the unions, must be mobilized. They must accept responsibility for sharing in the planning of school assignments, bus routes and schedules and all other aspects of a workable desegregation program. They must head off any appearance of gerrymandering or buck-passing aimed at favoring any neighborhood over any other.

Above all, they have to keep their members informed. They have to demonstrate at all times that the contemplated changes are being proposed in good faith. That the aim is to provide the best quality education for all of the children. And that nobody is getting more or less than a fair and just share.

The AFL-CIO is fully committed to help to build such bridges and create such forums in the cities where school desegregation is under way. We intend to help, as well, in many other cities, including those in which the courts have not acted. In our view, ensuring justice for school children is a job that should be done willingly and promptly in every community, without waiting for orders.

Union members know, through their experience at the bargaining table, that there are no problems that can't be solved if there is good faith on all sides and if all parties are looking for solutions, not for conflict.

We in the labor movement are determined to find solutions that are just and fair, that meet the constitutional and moral requirements of equality. And I am sure that all the organizations represented in this conference share that determination. We've a big job to do, but together, we shall overcome.

**Labor
today**

Volume 15, Nos. 7 and 8 July and August 1976

LABOR TODAY--"The Rank and File in Action!"--is published monthly except August by Labor Today Associates, a non-profit Illinois corporation, 343 S. Dearborn Street, Room 600, Chicago, Illinois 60604. Phone 312/922-5560. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607 AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

1 year \$3.50; 2 years \$5.00; 3 years \$7.00
FOREIGN \$6.00 per year Air Mail Only
Printed in U.S.A.

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STEELWORKERS WANT MILITANT UNIONISM

R&F backs Chacon against bosses, International & CIA

by ENRIQUE OLIVAREZ
USWA Local 937

LT: Juan, you just came through a very rough campaign in your local union. What can you tell us about it?

CHACON: Well, I think I was not only fighting the local copper companies, but also some of the opposition from the International Union. They were very much opposed to my re-election three years ago. Immediately after I was elected they sent a staffman in here who in plain words stated, "I am here to spy on you, not to do any work for the local union." (Rep's name was Alfredo Montoya.)

A new staffman has been assigned to service the local and in the year and a half that he has been here I have not been able to get his help to establish a good program for the local union. On the contrary, in the last year he has made every effort possible to campaign against me for local union election. But thanks to the good understanding of the local's rank and file members, they have not fallen into this slimy trap.

During the last three months of the campaign the company (Kennecott) representatives played a very strong and active role in the campaign against me.

LT: This was the tenth time you were elected local union president. What are your plans for the future?

CHACON: I think that a strong shop steward system should be developed. Something that is the backbone of any organization.

Secondly, I am an announced candidate for district director of District 38, USWA. I see where many changes have to be made in the entire district. If elected I shall attempt to make the changes which I feel the rank and file want made. They want to fight. They want to struggle.

I am a strong believer in the rights of the rank and file to have a say in approving contracts and in approving the staffmen that will represent them. I feel that both of these very important issues are greatly lacking in the district as well as in the union as a whole. In fact, the companies are attempting to make the selection of union staffmen. This is how cozy they feel with the leadership of the union.

A shop steward's school should be conducted throughout the entire district by experts who know the history of the labor movement intimately and who will teach it and encourage it without pulling their punches. In the last two years that I've been president of the local, we haven't had one single offer by Frank McKee to carry out this type of program. On the

contrary, according to his staffmen, he has his mind set on a wider membership and larger amounts of dues money and not on service to the membership.

LT: What about the question of funds for the campaign. Your opposition says you haven't got it.

CHACON: It is true. I know funds are required to carry on a good campaign in so large a district. So far I have three announced opponents; each is requesting \$25 per month per staff member to carry their campaigns. I consider this to be blackmail and payoff for staff jobs. We have the rank and file program. We are in a fighting mood. We have the rank and file sympathies. We have the confidence



that the rank and file will contribute their hard-earned dollars toward our campaign. It'll be their campaign as well. We are asking our supporters to contribute one dollar per week for the duration of the campaign. These contributions can be made to the Chacon Campaign Committee, P.O. Box 407, Tucson AZ 85701.

LT: You feel that the district position is very important. Just how important?

CHACON: I consider District 38 to be the backbone of the non-ferrous industry. I would say that 90 percent of the copper mines are located within the district. It is also the district where the largest part of the Chicano basic workers are concentrated--in steel, for example. I am also convinced that Chicanos can play a very important, uniting role in our entire union.

District 38 can also be a decisive element in influencing pro-labor legislation in the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah and maybe others. This kind of a program could also have a good pro-labor effect in other districts.

LT: Are you acquainted with the organization by the name of Labor Council for Latin American Advancement? What do you know about this organization?

CHACON: From what I have heard and read about this organization, I consider it to be a company element that has developed in the last few years. It is being led by weak labor leaders who are not looking for the welfare of the rank and file but are looking for personal status regardless of the cost to the ranks. I think that these people who play this role must be exposed and driven out of the labor movement wherever possible. The rank and file has the power to do it.

LT: You are closely acquainted with Mac Barraza, Jacob Mercado, Alfredo Montoya and Roy Santa Cruz. Have they ever offered you any help or advice in your struggle?

CHACON: No, as a matter of fact, at the beginning of this interview I stated that Alfredo Montoya played a primary role in the International's campaign to defeat me in 1973. Jacob Mercado appeared for the company during the 1974 walkout strike at Kennecott.

On 7 February 1976, these so-called leaders met in Phoenix to work out the strategy of their three-year campaign to defeat me as president of Local 890. Again, they have failed.

LT: It is being said that LCLAA and these people are a CIA front organization. How do you feel about this?

CHACON: I wouldn't be a bit surprised, because certain directions certainly indicate it. I am sure that with a strong rank and file organization eventually these bad elements will be completely exposed. And if proven to be a fact, my recommendation would be to get rid of them.

LT: How does one convince workers that the companies and the State Department combine efforts to destroy or weaken a trade union?

CHACON: Well, we know that several books have been written of late on the subject of how these things took place in Latin America and in other parts of the world. They do happen within the country as well. For example, two parallel instances have happened in relation to Local 890--in 1963 when I was defeated by S.Q. Merino, and again in 1976 with Romero. Kennecott gave my opponents all the time they wanted to roam the plant at will; on the other hand, I was denied this privilege when I was campaigning in 1973. But in spite of this I had many rank and filers who supported my union program and carried it throughout the plants. And of course we have the whole history of the old Mine Mill struggle when the State Department and the companies joined together to break the union. Even our own union--the Steel Workers of America--joined in this conspiracy. At that time it was done openly. And if we do not wake up fast enough those days will appear once again. This is why I urge the rank and file to organize and to solidify the ranks.

President Abel's ENA program is designed to follow the same MacDonald line: to deliver the union to the control of the companies. The characters have changed but the line, the policies, are one and the same. The anti-union equation is the same; it goes something like this: company management plus class collaborationist labor leaders plus the State Department and politicians all put together spells the disappearance of the labor unions. It happened in Chile; it happened in Spain. Kennecott and the Anaconda Mining Companies were and continue to be in the very center of these movements in Chile.

William Lucy (continued from page 1)

ployment rate--it's actually higher. And every major urban community around the city is the same proposition.

The second problem is what that figure does to urban America--what these high levels of unemployment mean to the urban communities. What you face then is a question of tax shortfall by virtue of workers not working and therefore not being able to pay taxes--there is thus a reduction in public services in the public sector and service-oriented occupations where you find a substantial number of Black and other minority workers. Once you're laying off in the private sector, then begin laying off in the public sector, you have a detrimental impact on the quality of life here in this country.

LT: Can you comment on the CBTU's program in relation to this, particularly in relation to the Full Employment Bill?

LUCY: First of all, we had recognized that there had been a depression long before the Ford and Nixon Administration wanted to acknowledge its existence. We take the position that while inflation exists it is not the major problem we're faced with. The issue before America is jobs--and as flat as that. We have supported and are currently supporting the Hawkins-Humphrey Bill because what it does is not just talk about jobs in the abstract, but it makes it a principal responsibility of the Federal Branch of Government to use resources in a manner that would be job-creating in nature. By that we mean working both in the private sector in terms of this stimulative impact of spending; secondly, in the public sector, as a means of providing jobs. And while some would not like to say that the government should be an employer as a last resort, if we're going to have a healthy economy, then the government has to guarantee jobs for everyone.

Aside from the job aspect of the Bill, it's really an economic planning act. It gives us the ability to chart our future in terms of the use of the federal revenues and the maintenance of a stable economy. That puts the burden on the Executive Branch to come forward to the Congress with a program for spending that would maintain a three or four percent level of unemployment. We think that it is very significant, in 1976, not just to have it debated, but to have it passed. Most of us are familiar with the 1946 Full Employment Act that was gutted long before it got down to the specifics of how it was to function. We think the jobs issue has to be at the top of the agenda.

Look at what goes into the economy of urban America. What are the things that an average home-owner, worker, pays for. There have been studies that indicate clearly that the consumer spends 70 to 75 percent of his or her net income on basically four items: housing, clothing, energy, food. And no matter what level of income the consumer receives, he or she is possibly paying the same percentage. So there's got to be a very serious look taken at a consumer program that would tend to stabilize these four or five areas of public expenditures so that one can at least have a reasonable chance of living with some degree of decency in urban America.

Fourth, there has to be a national approach to the whole question of health insurance. Health care at this point in our society is obviously dependent upon one's economic station. So that the Federal Government has a responsibility in two areas. One, to come forth with a national health insurance program. Second, to go back to the matter on issue: total welfare reform.

Just the fact that we would move toward a full employment economy would generate a greater flow of dollars in the economy and as a result there'd be a greater demand for consumer goods. As a result, more jobs would be created in that manner. I think one additional thing that we had advocated and advocated very strongly was that a very serious look be taken at tax reform and at tax reform measures.

There needs to be a greater thrust toward shifting the corporate contribution back into the tax structure as opposed to the trend that has the worker or the consumer paying a substantial portion of the tax load. And as a result of tax reform, the kind of loopholes that could be closed up would generate additional--billions of--dollars.

Then I think we zero in on what is the proper level of defense spending for a peacetime economy. We're faced with the fact of having to choose between reduced defense spending or reduction in social programs or domestic programs as a result of the shortage of dollars. It is our feeling that you could probably cut 10 billion dollars out of the defense budget and really not jeopardize the security of the nation as a whole. There's considerable discussion



whether or not the B-1 program is a program that we absolutely need, or whether or not the Trident submarine program is one that we need.

LT: What's the situation right now of affirmative action--is it proceeding? Do you have additional programs to suggest on that?

LUCY: We are continuing to keep the issue of affirmative action alive. We're somewhat disappointed by the fact that affirmative action as a whole took sort of a back seat by virtue of the economic conditions that are as distressed as they are. But we sort of read into that a reluctance on the part of the Ford Administration to pursue affirmative action aggressively as the intent of Congress had made it.

LT: Obviously it's taken a lot of public pressure to get HR-50 where it is right now. Where is the pressure coming from to hold back this legislation? Is it coming from corporate power?

LUCY: I don't think there's any question about the Republican theory of economics--

and Ford's track record indicates very clearly that he does not believe in a full employment economy. They feel that inflation is a more important factor than employment and thus the procedures by which he has chosen to not only continue fighting inflation but to wage his own Ford war on inflation really dictate a high unemployment economy.

LT: Is it a big business mentality, would you say?

LUCY: Sure, it's a big business mentality. It was proven in Hoover's time and Nixon was well on the way to proving the same facts. The Eisenhower years were indicative of the same kinds of trends, and Ford after Nixon. What we have is the corporate theory of the economy, and that always works to the detriment of working people because the first and foremost thing in the minds of the corporate community is their level of profits that must be taken off the top before anything else can be given consideration.

LT: What do we have to do? How must we organize to fight for this kind of program?

LUCY: What we have to do is--like any other program--develop a constituency for it that gives the elected officials a reason for following it. I think we've said before that elected officials never led any charge, they've always decided which way the wind was blowing and simply got a hold of it. Across the country we've got to develop not just the understanding of the need for the program but to make the point that the overall program will in effect make the country a better country.

LT: Do you see a necessity to build up a large movement for support of these programs and for a certain independence of politicians, and whose direction should it be to put pressure on the politicians to challenge them to fulfill such programs?

Certainly. The thing that we've been lacking for seven, almost eight years, is Executive Branch priority and the Congressional backbone to go against that absence of priority. By that I mean that we've seen 44 to 50 vetoes by the President of many bills that deal with the specific kind of program we're talking about here. And yet in a Democratically controlled Congress not only have we not been able to override many vetoes, we've been losing many Democrats on just the basic issue itself--let alone the veto vote.

That Executive Branch thrust is critically important. It has to be made clear to those who are in Congress that the country as a whole wants these programs and if they, as legislators, don't see fit to vote for them, we'll have to find others who do feel more inclined to support these kinds of programs, and see if we can't elect those people to Congress.

So that in this year--1976--we have to demonstrate, and demonstrate very clearly, that there's a strong demand for social legislation. Unless we get it this year, I really don't see much reason for an awful lot of people to continue to relate to the Democratic Party. The Party has to come forth with a tangible program that the urban community can understand clearly as the rationale for its support. And it goes both to the building of a new movement, it goes to the strengthening of existing movements and it goes to a coalition effort that is necessary to demonstrate to politicians, irrespective of what party, and to mobilize around the issues that concern us, so that, come November--and even beyond November--there's a working constituency for these kinds of programs.



the rank and file in action

by **FRED GABOURY**
National Field Organizer TUAD

NEW BEACHHEADS OF POWER IN USWA

Today there are a number of new beachheads of rank and file power in the United Steel Workers of America. Candidates pledged to sacking the "no-strike" ENA, productivity drives and to aggressive contract enforcement now hold office in key locals around the country. Although they are still scattered from Ontario to Birmingham and from Fontana to Buffalo, the map of the USWA was, nonetheless, re-drawn when the rank and file movement won a number of important victories in local union election contests during April.

The roll-call of victories includes Juan Chacon, re-elected President of Local 890 in Bayard, New Mexico, and Joe Bautista, elected Financial Secretary of his local in Fontana, California. The list also includes Sam Triggs, first Black President of Local 1183, Buffalo, New York, and Leonard Lewis, the first Black worker ever elected President of Pullman-Standard Local 1466 in Bessemer, Alabama.

The rank and file trend was most clearly etched in District 31, the union's largest district, anchored by some of the industry's largest mills and local unions.

Jim Balanoff was swept into the Presidency of Inland Steel Local 1010--with some 17 thousand members, the largest USWA local--by a 2 to 1 margin over the combined vote of eight other candidates. Paul Kaczocha led a sweep at Bethlehem's Burns Harbor facility that brought seven other under-25-year-olds onto the Executive Board of Local 6737. John Chico led a slate that drove U.S. Steel's most brazen apologists from control of Local 65 and, in the process, became that local's first Chicano president. A slate headed by Norman Purdue dumped a scandal-ridden leadership in the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Local 1011.

The upsurge in District 31 brought new leadership to the 1,500 members at Danley Machine (Chicago's biggest machine shop), to the membership of Interlake Local 1657 (some 95 percent Black), to the NIPSCO local in Gary and to uncounted others among the district's nearly 300 locals.

Taken as a whole, these victories mark a new stage in the development of the rank and file movement. The gears of the Abel machine were stripped. New foundations were laid for even greater challenges in the on-going battle to build a fighting labor movement.

The experiences of these nearly 6,000 local union elections reaffirm at least two of the basic tenants of rank and file unionism. In addition, they serve to underscore and shed new light on the problem of building rank and file unity.

The most thorough house cleanings came in those locals where rank and file caucuses had established themselves as leaders of consistent struggle on the shop and local union floor. Last minute efforts and patch-work slates failed to produce.

Wherever aggressive, unflinching and confident campaigns were mounted, rank and file candidates were able to defeat the vicious red-baiting campaigns that were the stock-in-trade of the corporate-government-Abel combine in their last ditch efforts to stall the rank and file onslaught.



The problem of building unity is not so easily summarized, however. Before conclusions can be drawn, there is need for more probing.

There is the experience of Republic Steel Local 1033 in South Chicago where James Lyons was the rank and file candidate for President. Lyons was a member of the Grievance Committee with a long record of militant struggle. He had headed both Sadlowski campaigns in Local 1033. James Lyons is Black. James Lyons lost.

Or consider Local 1014, representing some 12,000 workers at U.S. Steel's mammoth Gary Works. Between 35 and 40 percent of the membership is Black and so is Bill Todd. Todd is the former vice-president of the local and ran, with Sadlowski's verbal support endorsement, for president on a reform slate in the April election. Bill Todd lost.

Thus, every reform slate in the large basic steel locals in District 31 won--except those who ran a Black for President. And the question is, "Why?"

In general, the program of the rank and file movement deals with questions like the Consent Decree and gives leadership in the fight for plant-wide seniority. These are important steps forward in the fight against racism and the racist practices of the steel companies.

In an election campaign, the fight against racism must be translated into the fight for representation of minority workers at all levels of decision making. In order to be won, this concept must become a central demand of the entire rank and file movement--it must be fought for by the entire movement. This did not happen in the recent USWA elections.

Unless this weakness is overcome, the field will be left wide open to those who will further exploit racial division as the surest means to deny the full measure of strength--and, thereby, victory--to the rank and file movement and its candidates. The challenge to all who hope to pose a winning fight against the policies of the Abel leadership is very simple:

Take the lead in the fight for minority representation at all levels of decision making. Use the upcoming elections for Convention delegates and the elections next year for International officers and Executive Board members to advance Black, Chicano and women steel workers within the structure of the USWA.

That's the way to guarantee that the fresh breezes of April will grow into the hurricanes of next winter! That's the sure way to re-map the USWA!

NSRFC CALLS FOR Democratic U S W A

CLEVELAND--A conference of the National Steelworkers Rank & File Committee has called for a major push at the upcoming United Steel Workers convention in Las Vegas for democratic reforms and a fighting stance in the 1977 contract negotiations.



George Edwards

Steelworkers from 38 locals and 16 states heard NSRFC Co-Chairman George Edwards call for an end to the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) and for membership ratification of contracts, and the shorter work-week as the "number one" contract objective. Edwards also called for "plant-wide seniority in order to end discrimination in the steel industry." Edwards urged a major effort to assure Black representation in the top leadership of the USWA.

A rank & file steel program

LORAIN, Ohio
THE NATIONAL Steelworkers Rank and File Committee is dedicated to revitalizing the United Steel Workers of America (USWA). We are part of a broad rank and file movement of steelworkers who want to see our union strengthened and made more democratic.

WE BELIEVE that changes should be made in the policies of the USWA in order to serve the real needs of the men on the job, whether in the mines, mills or factories of the United States and Canada. Herewith we present our program to make a better union:

- Repudiate Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) and guarantee the right to strike.
- Job security through voluntary inverse seniority on layoffs, guaranteed annual wage, and the end to all job combining and eliminating.
- End cooperation with all company speedup and crew-cutting (productivity) plans.
- Reduce the work week to 30 hours at 40 hours pay with no compulsory overtime.
- One year contracts.
- End accommodation with company discrimination.

Repudiate the consent decree. Implement full plant-wide seniority with no strings attached and full back pay to victims of past discrimination.

- Guarantee proportional representation to minorities and women on the International Executive Board.
- Support Canadian autonomy so that Canadian steelworkers can decide their own affairs while maintaining close ties with the International.
- Right to ratify all contracts and any other national agreements with the companies.
- Require only 15 local union nominations for International office.
- Elect all staffmen.
- Right to full union membership regardless of political belief

- All delegates to conventions must be working, on-the-job union members. No staffmen as convention delegates.
- No cooperation with government boards or committees that freeze wages or increase speed up.
- Support and money only for candidates for political office who have demonstrated their support for the needs of the rank and file.
- Hold new elections to replace Ford and Rockefeller.
- Resolve all grievances in 30 days, with the right to strike locally on unresolved grievances.
- One grievance man for every 25 members.

--National Steel Workers Rank and File Committee

Active fight needed to st

by HUDSON WELLS
Washington, D.C.

Gus Hawkins' baby is a strapping youngster now--getting somewhere in the world. Augustus Hawkins is a Black Congressman from California. His baby is House Resolution 50, a bill conceived to guarantee a job to every American able and willing to work. It could become the most advanced piece of social legislation since the New Deal.

Hawkins' Bill was conceived before the outbreak of the severe depression that began in 1974. It was introduced in July of that year with scant attention by labor, the media or anyone else.

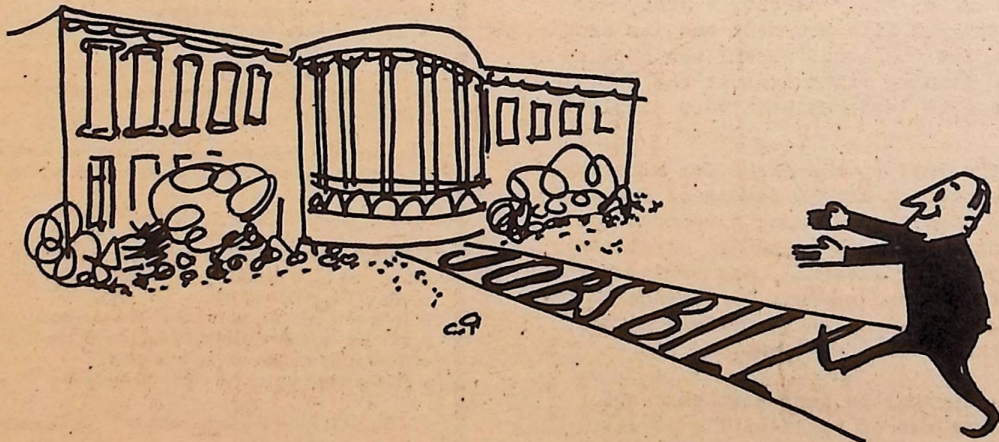
Today the bill has the support of the Democratic leadership of both Houses. It has been endorsed by all Democratic candidates except George Wallace. Civil rights leaders support it. So does labor, from the rank and file to George Meany. It has a good chance of passage this year.

In its early days, Senator Hubert Humphrey, who had been induced to put his name on the Senate companion bill (S-50), didn't lift a finger to keep the infant alive. The top labor hierarchy, while giving lip service to full employment, even engineered the introduction of a far weaker bill designed to undercut HR-50.

But Gus Hawkins fought back. His main base of support among legislators was the Congressional Black Caucus, which endorsed and made the bill its top priority. In the early months about 100 Congressmen added their names to the proposed legislation.

One national organization--the National Coalition to Fight Inflation and Unemployment--hit the streets and the shopping centers in support of such meaningful full employment legislation. In mid-1975 it delivered a five-foot stack of signed petitions to Hawkins on the Capitol steps.

At a conference in November called on another matter, members of the Black Congressional Caucus, along with leaders of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, put the issue squarely to Meany's representative. When the AFL-CIO man protested that Meany was in constant consultation with Hawkins, one of the Congressmen retorted that he himself had not been successful in getting a call through to Meany in six months.



Somehow the message got through. Negotiations were soon under way to produce a revised bill that would satisfy Hawkins and his supporters on the one hand, and Meany, Humphrey and the Congressional leaders on the other.

The result was a revamped HR-50. It was laid before the country at a glittering press conference in March of this year. Humphrey was front and center as spokesman for the new alignment of forces.

Miraculously, what had been known to most as the "Hawkins Bill" was now being called the "Humphrey-Hawkins Bill."

It became obvious that the legislation was beginning to fit a strategy to bolster chances for electing a Democrat as President in 1976. More than that, it meshed with the personal strategy of Hubert Humphrey to become the candidate.

The strategy included a scenario that would have the bill passed by Congress in the course of the campaign and draw a veto by Jerry Ford prior to the election. The Democratic convention would put full employment high up on its platform, in contrast to the position of Ford and Reagan that unemployment is good because it keeps prices down. The enormous popularity of the full employment concept would help put a Democrat in the White House.

But long-time friends of HR-50 had a question. Many had considered that even the previous versions were not without defect and had called for "strengthening amendments."

Had the compromise agreed to by Hawkins, in order to get his bill passed, weakened it--or even removed its guts?

SURGERY ON HR-50

At one time the bill had had a target of reducing the jobless rate to three percent in 18 months. The revised bill projected a four-year period for the same goal. The right of an individual to sue the Government if denied a job was gone, along with a provision for a "standby job corps." The old bill guaranteed a job for all "able and willing" to work. The new language was "able, willing and seeking," increasing the chance for hanky-panky at the employment offices. There was less emphasis on public service jobs and no plans for emergency provisions to provide them.

Nevertheless, old supporters continued to press for passage of the bill--and continued to call for "strengthening amendments."



Congressman John Conyers of Michigan, in testimony supporting the bill, has called for these points to be added, or restored, to the legislation:

- Shorten the goal for reaching three percent unemployment.
- Eliminate eligibility criteria on the basis of "the number of employed persons" in a household, etc., which discriminates against women and may drive male wage earners out of households.
- Restore the stronger language requiring the Federal Reserve Board to conform to the objectives of the act.
- Restore workable means of enforcing the right of employment through administrative or judicial relief.
- Give local planning bodies the capability to identify local employment needs and administer local employment programs.

Strengthen Hawkins bill ...

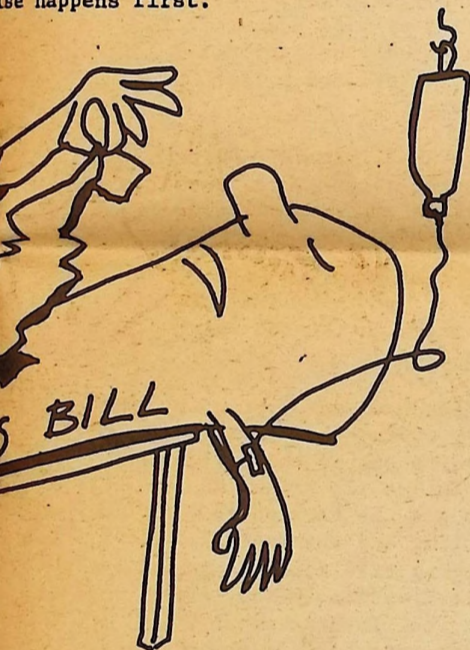
SOME IMPROVEMENTS

On the other hand, there were some actual improvements in the new version: in the wage standards, in the provision mandating youth job programs, and in the priorities set for jobs on the basis of need, which if implemented properly--would benefit blacks and other minorities. But, on balance, it must be said that the current version is weaker.

In the debate over the bill however, it is astounding that the main point is seldom made. It is this: neither version does anything beyond declaring a policy, setting certain goals, and establishing a kind of framework for future legislation. HR-50 can be enacted and yet not create one single job by itself. Everything depends on still further action by the President and by Congress.

GUTLESS WONDER

In this age of monopoly control of our economic and political life, the facts of life are such that this is exactly what will take place unless something else happens first.



That "something else" is the building of an independent grass-roots movement that will say to politicians of both parties, "Start legislating for us, or get the hell out!"

HR-50 will be another "gutless wonder"--unless additional legislation is passed and signed that actually creates the jobs in the private and public sectors, that sets the specific standards, that appropriates funds for concrete projects.

As it stands now, the bill:

- declares the right of adult Americans to a useful job at fair wages;

- sets a target of three percent maximum unemployment in at most four years;

- outlines a structure and process within which the President, Congress and the Federal Reserve are directed to develop goals, policies and plans for a full employment economy;



Left to right: Rep. Hawkins, Dr. Leon Keyserling--chief economic advisor on Bill; Murray Finley--Pres. Amalgamated Clothing Workers; Coretta Scott King--Pres. Martin Luther King Center for Social Change.

- requires the development of a comprehensive youth employment program;
- requires that the President provide job opportunities for those unable to find employment through reservoirs of employment projects (employer of last resort).

Actually, the revised HR-50 is considered by its sponsors to be much more than a jobs bill. It is envisioned as a major effort to introduce a much greater degree of planning into the national economy.

How successful such planning can be while leaving in place the present system of private monopoly ownership and control of business and industry is open to question. But the philosophy behind the bill certainly pits the enemies of inflation and unemployment against the "let 'em starve" advocates of low wages and high unemployment.

Most organizational effort for the bill is being channeled through a high level group called the National Committee for Full Employment, whose operative arm is the Full employment Action Council. Both groups are co-chaired by Coretta Scott King, President of the Martin Luther King Center for Social Change, and Murray H. Finley, President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

On the boards of the two groups are leading figures from practically all major civil rights groups and national

labor unions. There are prominent liberal economists, social-minded university professors and figures from the women's movement.

Two dangers arise however. One is that the drive may be channeled into an attempt to make HR-50 simply an instrument in the 1976 election of a Democratic President. The other is that action may be limited to pious declarations at \$25-a-head banquets and conferences of very important people. George Meany's withering influence is strong in the committee.

Unless labor's millions, and the millions of other Black, White, Chicano and Native Americans rise up and actively organize and fight, there won't be any HR-50 enacted into law.

The demand for passage of an improved HR-50 can be a powerful tool in organizing people at the grass-roots level for much more than full employment. It can lead toward a powerful movement that fights to convert the vast military expenditures into useful social programs, to reform taxes in the interest of working people, to whip inflation, to give aid to the cities, and to provide for health care programs and insurance for all.

It can help build that vast independent movement of working people and others which must one day free our political process from the control of corporate power.



I was looking at some of the initial policy resolutions of the Steelworkers Organizing Committee Convention in 1938 and there was the six-hour day. It's been a policy resolution for a long time.

You mentioned in passing the 1977 bargaining and ENA. What are you looking for in the 1977 negotiations?

I think the strong emphasis is going to be on money. The economic situation being what it is today with the cost of a loaf of bread. People are really uptight about money. Contrary to what most people think, steelworkers are not hacking it, they're just not making it. Everybody thinks the person in the mill is making \$20,000-\$30,000, and it's more like \$12,000. The government says a family of four needs more than \$15,000 just to keep their head above water.

A recent report says that U.S. workers are now making less than workers in five European countries.

Yeah, even Volkswagen is coming here now to open a plant. You know, the companies threw a lot of crap at us about "Where's Joe" and playing one worker off against the other. I wonder now if the Germans will be asking "Where's Heinrich?" U.S. Steel companies are not motivated by nationalism. They'd make all their steel in Belgium tomorrow if they found it would be more profitable.

Obviously, European workers have been pulling ahead of us on fringe benefits for a long time. For example, workers in France get 24 days paid vacation every year. Now it looks like they're starting to move ahead in across-the-table gains. Isn't part of the reason because workers in Europe are more organized than here?

Well, they are, but they're also organized in a different kind of way. In the steel industry in Europe, they're almost totally organized. Basically, the unions there are organized along political lines. It's unfortunate that we haven't sought ways to handle some of these bargaining questions politically like they have, by law. Health and safety shouldn't be on the bargaining table. It should be by law that the workplace is as safe as possible and be done with it. A lot of the social benefits like medical care shouldn't be on the table, they should be required by law. In Europe, the trade unions have created their own political parties. Early on they realized that everything they negotiated was being legislated away from them and so they organized politically. In the U.S. we've never done that. With a few exceptions, there's never been any push to try it. We have a very different history compared with Europe in a way. Our labor movement has tended to identify with the establishment, rather than try to change it.

If you look at any European country, at their Parliament of Legislatures, you'll find a substantial number of trade unionists, from a variety of political parties. But in our own Congress you'll find nary a one. Do you think it would make a difference if we had trade unionists representing us in government?

Compared to lawyers and real estate brokers? Hell, yeah! I don't think we'd have some of the mess we now have. Look at the tax question and the kind of tax structure we have. The legislators are corporate lawyers, tax lawyers and they are pushing laws that benefit the corporate interests. There are

INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS NEXT

Some facts on USWA elections

by AL SAMTER
USWA Local 1014
Gary, Indiana

The United Steelworkers Union is on the eve of one of the most important elections in its history. The victory of Ed Sadlowski and the anti-administration forces in District 31 has been followed by rank and file and anti-Abel victories in local union elections in District 31 and throughout the country in 1976. These victories have been achieved, for the most part, by slates of candidates whose platforms stressed union democracy; opposition to ENA no-strike deals and productivity clauses; an end to racism; and a program of struggle against the steel companies. The next step, one which is absolutely necessary if we are to change the direction of the union, is electing International officers dedicated to the same program.

FIRST STEP--NOMINATION

In order for a candidate to even get on the ballot he must first obtain the necessary number of local union nominations. This amounts to a primary election before the election. These nominations will be held in November of 1976. In order to gain a local union nomination, a candidate must have a plurality of votes cast at the nomination meeting. This means that, beginning immediately, rank and file committees must be formed to campaign in all locals to win nominations. The required number of nominations are five locals plus one local for each ten thousand members of the International Union for International officers. In 1973 the number was one hundred fifty. For District Director the requirement is five locals plus one for each ten thousand members in the District. Each local may only nominate one candidate for each office. The positions to be elected are International President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, three tellers and District Director.

PROTESTS

If your local union does not give notice of a nomination meeting by November 1, file a petition containing 25 or more signatures with the International Secretary-Treasurer before November 10. If your local has less than 250 members, the petition must be signed by at least 10 percent of the members. The International must send nomination certificates to the locals no later than 60 days before the election. All protests on the nominating procedure must be filed with the Secretary-Treasurer no later than 45 days before the election.

ELECTION

The election will be held in all locals on the second Tuesday in February, 1977. No-

tremendous inequities because the guys that supposedly represent the people actually represent corporate interests. Yeah, I think we'd be better off if we had bus drivers, housewives, ditch-diggers and steelworkers in the halls of Congress. It's a rare occasion when a guy comes off the shop floor and gets elected even to the state legislature.

If you walk into a Steelworkers' convention, you'll see that 25 or 30 percent of the delegates are Black or Latino. But if you look at the IEB, this is not reflected there. What's got to be done to get minority representation?



tice of the date, place and hours of the election must be mailed by the local Recording Secretary to each member at least 15 days prior to the election. The place, date and hours of the election and the place where the votes shall be tabulated must be designated at a regular local union meeting. If your local does not make the designation, notify the International Secretary at least 20 days before the election date.

The International Secretary-Treasurer will provide the ballots and they should be at the local union no later than two weeks before the election. There should be one ballot for each eligible member of the local. The ballots will be numbered. The numbered portion should be perforated and must be torn off before the ballot is placed in the box.

Each local union shall have a committee of tellers, consisting of the local union President, Financial and Recording Secretaries plus any number up to six additional tellers elected by the local union members. To qualify for election as teller, the candidate must have attended half the local union meetings during the six months preceding the election.

Each candidate may have an observer at the polls. The observer must be permitted to observe the handing out of the ballots and see the ballot box at all times. He must be permitted to see the face of the ballots during the counting and the face of the tally sheets during tabulating. Any protest must be filed within 10 days after the election, to the International Tellers. The protest must be filed by a member of the local union involved or by the candidate.

The rank and file forces should be in a position to provide knowledgeable observers to protect the candidates they are supporting. A record of all violations should be kept by the observers to provide evidence for any possible protests. The active rank and filers have a big responsibility in this election. The reward can be a new, democratic, fighting USWA.

the labor movement do in this situation?

I don't think you can change that by appointing people to positions. A person that's appointed is always under some kind of obligation. You've got to get people elected. We've got to get serious about electing minority people to leadership positions in the union. The membership has to become very serious about what they want to see. The tragedy in the Steelworkers is that any time a Black or minority person emerges, he gets channeled off into an appointed position and the movement gets dissipated and splintered.

SUPPORT THE WILMINGTON TEN AND THE CHARLOTTE THREE

Labor Day march for Human Rights

Special to LABOR TODAY

Thousands of workers and others will converge on North Carolina this Labor Day, September 6, in a National March for Human Rights and Labor Rights. The march, organized by the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, will bring alive the meaning of Labor Day in the most repressive anti-labor state in the country.

If Southern labor in general is the worst off in the United States, then North Carolina labor is the worst of the worst. Only 6.8% of that state's working class are in trade unions. Consequently, North Carolinians have the lowest take-home wages in the nation.

It wasn't always that way. By the end of World War II, the people of North Carolina had made it the most progressive state in the South. Organizing drives had brought union protection to a higher percentage of North Carolina's workers than existed anywhere in the South. Union strength--not the goodness of the textile and tobacco barons--accounted for the fact that North Carolina's wages were also the highest in the South.

But in the late '40's and 1950's when the corporations, together with the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations and the McCarthyites, launched their drive for the Taft-Hartley Law and other anti-labor legislation, North Carolina became one of the first states to enact a "right-to-work" law. The law still stands on the books. And, combined with the ideological tools of racism and anti-communism, the unity and fighting capacity of the labor and peoples' movements was destroyed.

No holds were barred as textile and tobacco corporations used the highway patrol, National Guard, secret agents, and stool pigeons to crush the labor movement.

Through bloody pitched battles and frame-up trials, the authorities were able to break the back of militant textile workers at Henderson, NC. in a 3-year strike, one of the nation's longest. Similarly, the militant Agriculture, Food and Tobacco Workers Union was destroyed at R.J. Reynolds in Winston-Salem, the country's biggest tobacco manufacturer. Henderson and Winston-Salem took their places in labor history alongside Gastonia and Marion, North Carolina, sites of early heroic textile organization drives in the 1920's and 30's.

Today, another battle is shaping up. At Roanoke Rapids, 4,000 J.P. Stevens workers are still without a contract after voting for the Textile Workers of America two years ago. With the merger in June of the TWUA and Amalgamated Clothing, new muscle is present for the fight ahead. Talk of a Stevens boycott is present throughout the union. The Labor Day march will highlight the fight of the Stevens workers as key to the drive to organize Southern labor. More than half a million North Carolina textile workers are unorganized.

Also central to the demands of the National March for Human Rights and Labor Rights is the freedom of the Reverend Ben Chavis and the Wilmington 10, and their co-workers, Dr. Jim Grant and the Charlotte 3. These freedom fighters are now imprisoned for a total of 282 years and 55 years respectively for their leadership of the civil rights movement in North Carolina. That state, incidentally, has more prisons--72--than any other state, more prisoners per capita, more women and youth prisoners per capita and more political prisoners.

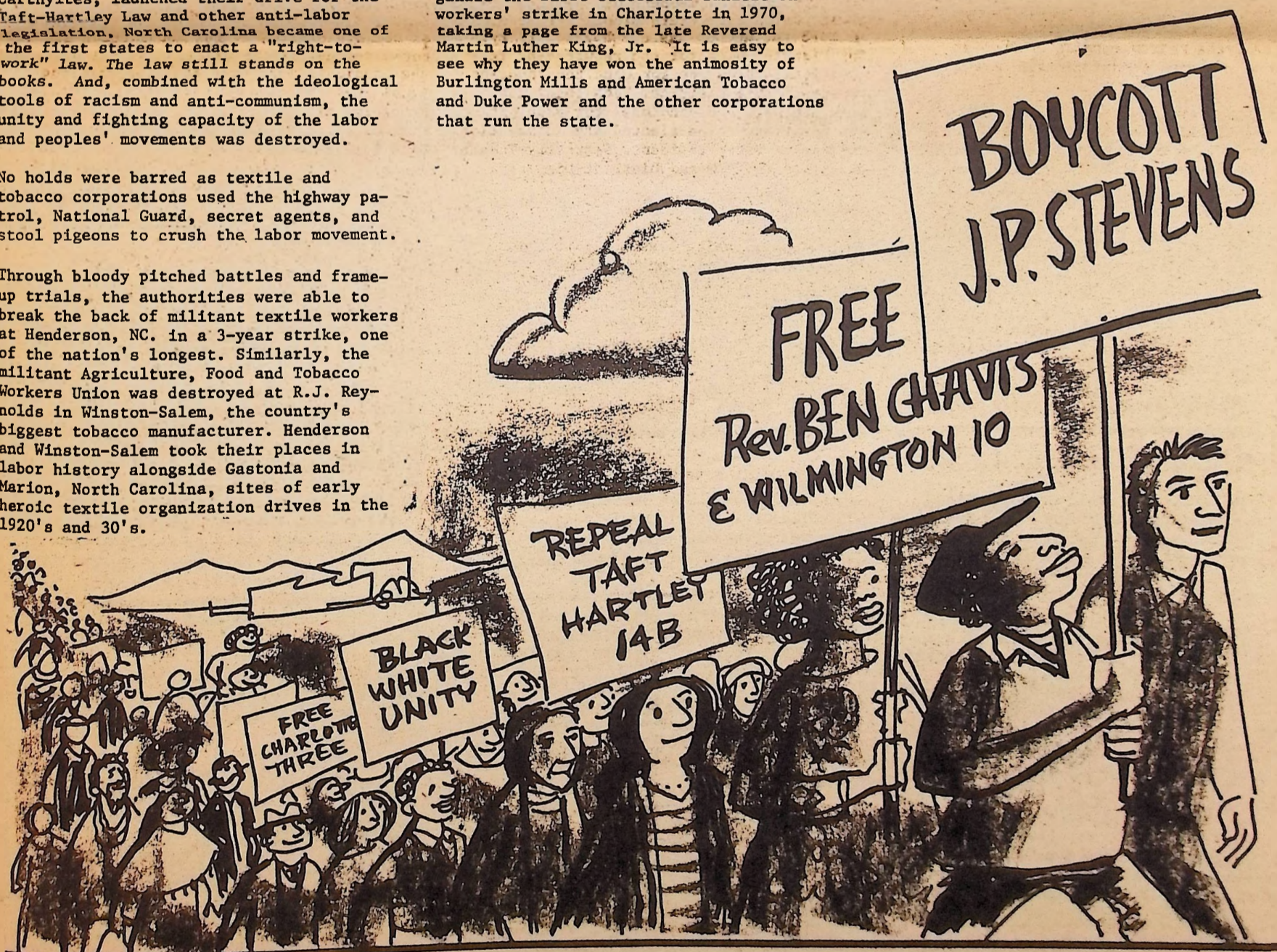
It is important to note that Ben Chavis used to be an organizer with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. He, together with Jim Grant, working as a VISTA volunteer, helped organize the first successful sanitation workers' strike in Charlotte in 1970, taking a page from the late Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. It is easy to see why they have won the animosity of Burlington Mills and American Tobacco and Duke Power and the other corporations that run the state.

Support for the Wilmington 10 and Charlotte 3 has come--in addition to that from the National Alliance--from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the United Church of Christ, the Congressional Black Caucus and other members of Congress, the National Council of Churches, the Baltimore Central Labor Council and dozens of other community leaders, churches and local unions.

On July 4, 1974, the National Alliance brought 10,000 people to Raleigh in the biggest demonstration the South had seen since the assassination of Reverend King. This Labor Day promises to be even more massive and important. Over 500 brothers and sisters are coming from the San Francisco area alone, 3,000 miles away.

Further information on the Labor Day March is available from the National Alliance, 150 Fifth Avenue, Room 804, New York, New York 10011. Telephone: (212) 243-8555.

All out for Labor Day in North Carolina. Support the J.P. Stevens workers, Defeat right-to-work laws and Taft-Hartley 14B. Free Rev. Chavis and the Wilmington 10, and Dr. Grant and the Charlotte 3!



MILITANT LEADERSHIP HASSLED

Editor of R & F paper fired in Cincinnati

by MARTIN BERLOWITZ
Cincinnati TUAD

As part of a campaign of harassment aimed at upcoming contract negotiations, the Cincinnati Time Recorder company has fired Ron Kidwell, editor of RANK AND FILE UNITY, and a former president and chief steward of IUE Local 776, which represents the CTR workers.

Gary Wise, IUE Local 776 President, has protested the firing and is leading a campaign with the rank and file committee to win Kidwell's reinstatement.

CTR workers normally sit down to perform their work. For Kidwell, who suffered a back injury a year ago, the chance to sit down is a relief from constant pain. On May 28, a particularly disliked supervisor ordered Kidwell to surrender his chair. Kidwell refused and after a heated exchange CTR Employee Relations Manager Joe Crow ordered Kidwell out of the plant and fired him.

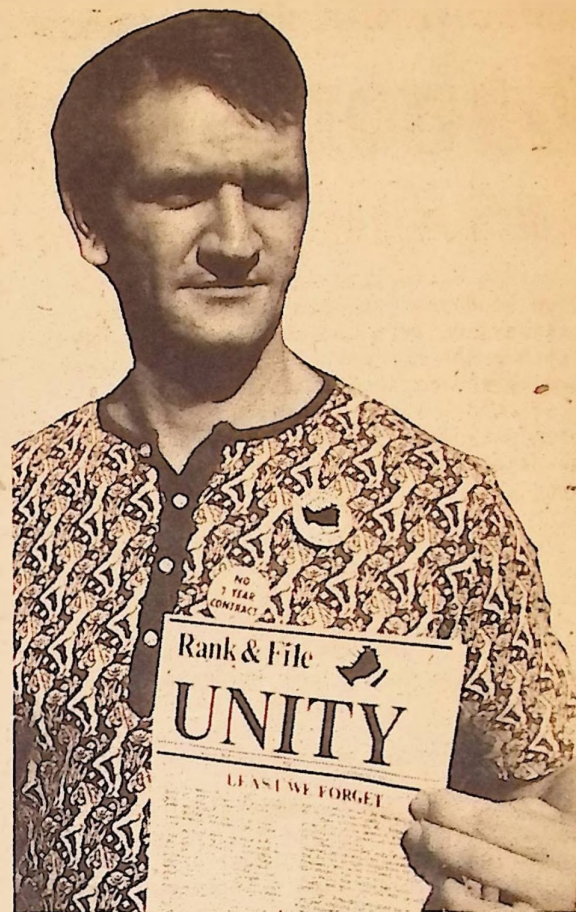
When work resumed the following day, the

walls and machines were plastered with slogans: "Ron fought for Local 776 and now we fight for him."—"Bring back Ron!" The Employees Relations Manager was met by workers with jeers and appropriate hand signals.

CTR, which makes time clocks, is part of a larger transnational corporation, which also exports its devices to South Africa. Workers describe the plant as something out of George Orwell's 1984, with toilet surveillance, and hard-nosed petty rules and regulations. (A cup of coffee at the workbench brings a threat of discharge.)

Local 776 is a relatively small local of about 400 members, about 20% of which are Black—with many others from Appalachia.

For years, the IUE leadership failed to resist management's harassment of the workers. Last March, however, a rank and file slate won election which seated Gary Wise as President, and Ernie Travis as Vice President. Travis is the first Black to hold one of the top offices in the local.



Following these elections, management has stepped up its harassment in an effort to blunt the growing militancy in the shop and to discredit the Local's relatively untried new leadership.

U. S. LABOR PARTY READY WITH RED-BAITING LITERATURE

Buffalo steelworkers protest firing of Rank & File leader

From District 4, USWA Rank & File

The membership of USWA Local 1183 at the TRW-J.H. Williams Co. in Buffalo is protesting the firing of James Berlin, editor of the local union newspaper and a leader of the rank and file. The company fired Berlin just ten days before the local union's elections on a charge of "falsification of employment application."

The company's last-ditch efforts failed to

stop substantial rank and file gains in the election, including the victory of Black steelworker Sam Triggs, as local union president. At the following membership meeting, the membership demanded Berlin's reinstatement. The local plans to take the case to arbitration.

The local union newspaper, under Berlin's editorship, was a big hit in the shop and received a letter of commendation from Ray Pasnick, editor of STEEL LABOR.

Berlin's firing came on the heels of a period of company harassment, which led Berlin to file grievances. Also, during the same period, persons with no connection to the labor movement, the "U.S. Labor Party" showed up at the plant gates with defamatory and red-baiting literature directed at Berlin—dovetailing the company's harassment efforts.

As a result of his firing, Berlin was not allowed to serve as Teller in the local union elections because the company would not allow him in the plant where the elections were held.

Berlin denies that his job application was false. He did, however, neglect to mention three minor jobs which he held for only a short time. Jim's work record for the past 26 months, however, had been excellent. The company found nothing wrong with his work until he became active in rank and file activities.

Local 1183 will continue to resist company efforts to defuse the union's effectiveness by harassing its leaders.

U. S. Labor party (continued from page 12)

a former member of their National Executive Committee, much of the information they gather is turned over to U.S. military personnel. Rose also reports that they have a school for teaching terrorist and goon tactics in New York.

WE think that there are a number of questions about these finks that your readers and other rank and file workers might want to ask. For instance: Where do they get all the money to pay for the nationwide telex system that links their offices? Where do they get the money to print New Solidarity twice a week? Who pays the rent for their offices and for their large staff of full time goons?

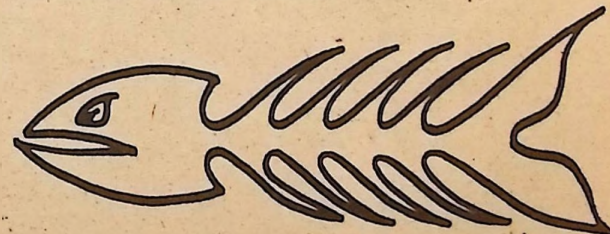
If you were to examine the U.S. Labor Party's financial report in their bi-weekly newspaper, New Solidarity, you'd find that their weekly income comes to

about \$6500, while expenses are \$28,000. This leaves a deficit of \$21,000 each week, or more than one million dollars a year. That's a lot of money. Where does it come from?

They claim that they get it by selling their rag, but New Solidarity only has 1500 subscribers! So it must come from somewhere else...

According to reports in two West German newspapers, William E. Colby, former head of the CIA, admitted that the Central Intelligence Agency gives \$90,000 a year to New Solidarity.

For your readers who may want to know more about these phonies and how to stop their tactics of disruption, they can write to Terrorist Information Project, P.O. Box 47, Ben Franklin Station, Washington, D.C. 20044.



ELECT WORKERS TO OFFICE

Labor's political independence and the '76 elections

LABOR TODAY has never endorsed a Presidential candidate in its entire 15-year history. We are not going to endorse one this year, either.

We take this position knowing that many of our friends in the labor movement will not agree with us and that many will argue that we should support the "lesser evil."

In 1976, it's pretty hard to determine just who the "lesser evil" is or why it deserves support.

Today working people are confronted with an economic crisis that is the worst since the 1930's. And it's not about to go away without decisive action.

Continuing unemployment of 10% calls for action! Unemployment among Black and Spanish-speaking workers is double that of white workers. Where is the demand for a shorter work week with no cut in pay? Where are the candidates who call for massive federal jobs programs? Where are the calls for a strengthened Hawkins-Humphrey bill?

One of the most glaring omissions of the 1976 elections is the virtual ignoring of the Black community by the major candidates. Instead, we are treated to calls for "ethnic purity" and racist attacks against using busing for integrated schools. Where is the outrage against an administration that throws the support of the federal government to the side of the book-burners and vigilantes?

The giant corporations have embarked on a union-busting campaign not seen in this country since the 1920's. They are seeking to gut every piece of labor legislation won in the hard struggles of the New Deal. Which of the major candidates are speaking up on this?

The living standards of the working people are taking a terrible beating. Unchecked corporate policies have driven consumer prices through the ceiling, and increased taxes to feed the military machine have driven our real wages back to 1965 levels. Where is the outcry of the Democratic or Republican candidates for President?

In light of this, to choose between "I'll never lie" Jimmy Carter, a 1968-model Humphrey, a battered old Ford and a near-derthal Reagan is no choice at all. To get bogged down here is to lose sight of the real task.

We think that workers, union members and labor leaders should take advantage of the time remaining before November to strengthen the movement for political independence and build a fire under the politicians to force them to confront the issues. Even at this late date, it is still possible in some areas for the labor movement to get independent candidates on the ballot.

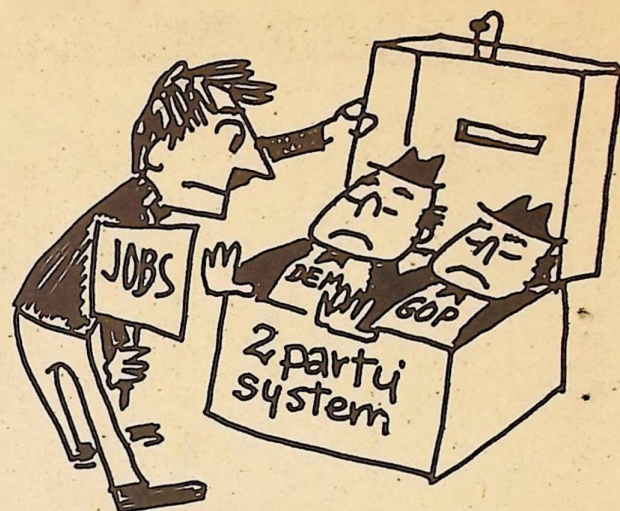
The legislative struggle is not limited to the ballot boxes and legislative halls. The progressive social legislation of the New Deal was not enacted through the goodness of politicians' hearts--it was won by a massive political movement that involved millions of people. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 would not have been passed had not a quarter-million people marched on Washington in 1963, or if the mass outrage following the bombing murder of four young Black women in Birmingham forced them to the wall. A mass movement can make believers out of the most unresponsive legislator.

The movement for political independence is growing in the labor movement. It is boosted by the growing strength of the rank and file movement. Coal miners, steelworkers, electrical workers, Black and women trade unionists and progressive labor leaders have begun the search for political independence as a way of furthering the goals of the labor movement. Some, like the United Mine Workers, are running their own members for office instead of supporting the corporation lawyers served up by the political machines. Others, like the United Electrical Workers, are calling for a new party based on labor.

Congressman Ralph Metcalfe's victory on Chicago's south side was made possible by a coalition of the Black community and the progressive labor movement. The role played in the Democratic primary by the Chicago Coalition of Black Trade Unionists is proof that organized labor in alliance with the Black community can lead a movement for political independence. It is this Black-white unity that is the key toward building a movement that can turn things around.

The election of a Spanish-speaking steelworker to the City Council in Lorain, Ohio was possible because the rank and file of USWA Local 1104 mobilized the steelworkers and the entire labor movement in the city.

Like never before, people are asking fundamental questions about the two-party system and whether it can be made to serve the interests of the working people. Growing numbers say that this control of both



major parties by big business has closed the door to effective participation by the working people.

When General Electric and other big corporations set up a political fund to give money to both parties, people wonder what difference is left.

As a result of big business control of the two major parties, we are constantly served up a choice of millionaires to vote for. This is like the situation in the early 1800's, when the two parties of those days, Whigs and Democrats, presented a "choice" between two slaveholders--until Abe Lincoln's new third party provided a real choice.

The current bankruptcy of the two-party system is illustrated by the fact that, despite overwhelming Democratic majorities, Congress has voted to override fewer than 10 of Gerald Ford's nearly 60 vetoes!

UMWA President Arnold Miller once said that there is really one one political party in the U.S., the "Money Party, with a Republican branch and a Democratic branch." Delegates to the 1975 United Electrical Workers convention heard the system described as "two company unions."

These conclusions are borne out by the fact that after decades of "rewarding our friends and punishing our enemies," the number of working people in Congress is still zero. Despite the years of collecting dollars for COPE, CAP and DRIVE, ringing doorbells and getting out the vote--the labor movement has remained saddled with the candidates of the business-dominated two-party system.

The United States is the only industrial nation in the world where the labor movement does not have its own party to run its own candidates for public office. As AFSCME President Jerry Wurf put it, "In most societies, the labor movement consists of a political party, a political press and the trade union movement." One of the weaknesses of the U.S. labor movement is that it "accepts the social, economic and political system unquestioningly," according to Wurf.

LABOR TODAY thinks the time has come for a break with the status quo. The growing cooperation between the labor movement and the Black community, as in the Metcalfe campaign, indicates that this is a real possibility.

Our policy of non-endorsement in this election is not a sigh of resignation--it is a call for all trade unionists to begin the nitty-gritty, grassroots work of building a new movement.



Who pays U. S. Labor Party goons?

Brothers Legg and Lyons are rank and file leaders of Republic Steel Workers Local 1033 in South Chicago. Brother Lyons was the Rank and File candidate for local president in the recent elections. Brother Legg edits the Local 1033 Rank and File Bulletin.

To the Editors:

LABOR TODAY has provided a great deal of news and information about events in the Steel Workers Union. We would like to tell your readers about a new development.

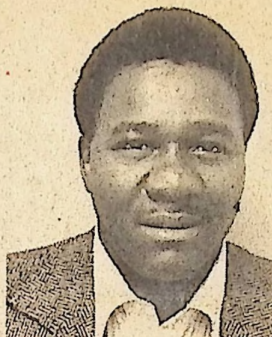
During the recent election campaign, rank and filers everywhere were the victims of all kinds of slanders and lies as the Abel machine worked day and night to keep their hold on our union. They not only squandered thousands of dollars of membership dues money but they worked with all kinds of unsavory, anti-union groups and organizations--beginning with the FBI and ending up with the U.S. Labor Party, formerly known as the National Caucus of Labor Committees.

Here is a brief quote from a U.S. Labor Party leaflet distributed at the Republic gate: "...The other side of the operation is the 'Rank and File Caucus' in the plant. Led by Communist Party members or periphery Jerry Legg, Richard Dowdell and James Lyons, their chief function is to ...act as a left cover for the FBI agents in the union bureaucracy... Legg and his cohorts, even if they themselves are not paid FBI agents, are carrying out the orders of the FBI leadership of the

Jerry Legg.



James Lyons



Communist Party... If you allow scum like Jerry Legg to act as the 'militant trade union opposition,' you are accepting the ridiculous austerity programs that they are paid to implement..."

At the bottom of the page there's another line: "NOW KNOWN AGENT: Richard Dowdell, Jerry Legg, James Lyons." The leaflet closes by saying, "Call them and tell them what you think of FBI agents," and then lists our phone numbers.

U.S. Labor Party members do more than write leaflets. They have been seen taking down license numbers and in a number of cities they've disrupted meetings and beaten up on rank and file and other activists. According to Greg Rose,

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