

the rank and file in action

Labor Today

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412

Sept. 1975



**Time
to shorten
the Workday!**

NO CUT IN PAY!

Short Workweek Can Ease Crisis

by ERNEST DeMAIO
World Federation of Trade Unions
New York City

If the Ford Administration, the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal are to be believed, we are in for a decade of large scale unemployment. Since, what they are dishing out is poison for the working class, they are probably understating what is in store for us. Unemployment they say, will not fall below 6% of the labor force and in all probability will average above 7% during this period. This is the picture, they point out, even if the economy improves, as they had hoped, by the summer of 1975. Obviously, an "improvement" that leave the workers out in the cold.

Undoubtedly, the U.S. workers are in for very grim times. In many respects, the basic economy is worse today than during the depression 1930's. A crushing burden of private and public debt of about three trillion dollars (\$3,000,000,000,000.) threatens to tear our weakened economy apart at the seams. Huge federal deficits caused mainly by burgeoning military expenditures fuels the raging fires of inflation and adds to the growing debt burden.

Clearly, the concept that profits come before the general welfare isn't working. If these dangerous trends are to be stopped and reversed, we must develop a program that puts the interests of the people first.

The overwhelming majority of the adult population works for a living. The civilian labor force is approximately 92 million persons. Of these, 82.4 million are non-agricultural workers who are employed. Subtracting the self employed and top managerial personnel leaves about 75 million who work for salaries and wages. The take-home buying power of these workers has dropped below what it was in 1964. The loss in take-home pay in 1974 alone was over \$30 billion dollars; the most massive redistribution of wealth from the poor to the rich in the economic history of the country.

According to the published data of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are about 8.2 million unemployed plus 4.5 million unemployed discouraged workers. There are millions more who are under employed working part time. Production is below 67% of manufacturing capacity. All this at a



time when hundreds of millions throughout the world including the U.S. desperately need the goods these idle workers and machines could produce.

What must be done, if we are to avert disaster, is to put America back to work and increase the buying power of the people. This can be done while at the same time we reduce the cost of government, thus permitting lower taxes and increased expenditures for social services.

In March 1975, 5.9 million insured were unemployed. In 1974, insured unemployed received an average of about \$63. a week. This means that less than half of the unemployed got about 40% of their weekly working wage. At today's prices, this is below the poverty level and too low to cushion the economy. The discouraged workers and others who are not getting unemployment compensation suffer even worse conditions.



The 42 million who are on public welfare are kept alive under demeaning and humiliating conditions. Yet the welfare cost of \$35 billion is bankrupting the cities, counties and states.

Welfare and unemployment compensation are not the answer. The American workers want jobs with dignity at useful work for living wages. They want and must have them now.

The corporations are the only beneficiaries of new technology, automation and cybernation. As they pile up more profits, they take workers off their private payrolls and throw them on the public payroll --unemployment compensation, welfare and food stamps. Productivity in the last four years (1971-1974 inclusive) increased 13.7%. Reducing the work week to 35 hours at 40 hours pay would put labor costs below where they were in 1970.

The answer, therefore, is as old as the labor movement, with some modern touches. We put America back to work by reducing the standard work week to 35 hours at wages equal to those now paid for 40 hours work. By doing this, we create over 9 million jobs. The federal and state governments will save approximately \$12.5 billion dollars in unemployment compensation which is mostly paid by the employers. At least another \$12.5 billion can be saved in welfare and food stamps.

Even a program of full employment, how-

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ever, will not end all welfare and food stamps. Pensioners, handicapped, dependent children and some others will continue to rely on these forms of assistance.

This is a saving of approximately \$25 billion. Government revenues from 9 million workers will be more than \$25 billion. Another \$7 billion will be paid into the Social Security, thus assuring the health of that fund.

To reduce the inflationary pressures, the military budget should be cut by eliminating all offensive weapons systems and their disposition. This would save the government about \$50 billion annually.

These measures add up to a reduction of \$75 billion in expenditures plus \$50 billion in increased revenues. Setting aside the Social Security funds, this gives the government a total of \$125 billion with which it can cut taxes and increase social services. Furthermore, adding 9 million workers to the payroll would add about \$48 billion after taxes to mass purchasing power.

There will continue to be lay-offs even with this program. Seasonal unemployment cannot be avoided. Profiteering and exploitation of labor are an inherent part of the capitalist system. Therefore, cycles of boom, bust and recovery will continue. When the above program is in effect, cyclical unemployment can be avoided by further shortening the work week without reducing the weekly pay, as much as may be needed to maintain full employment. This self adjusting approach will match jobs and purchasing power with production.

Nine million jobs will not absorb all the unemployed initially. However, the increased purchasing power of \$48 billion will generate the sales and production that will require the hiring of most of the remaining unemployed.

The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that \$15,000 in exports creates one job here. In 1974, the Soviet Union purchased \$4.1 billion worth of equipment from West Germany. The U.S. economy is three times the size of West Germany's. If U.S. sales to the U.S.S.R. were on the same scale as to West Germany, it would mean 830,000 jobs. By adding to this sales to other socialist countries, it would mean over one million jobs.

(continued on p. 3)



Blood On The Grapes!

from EL TOCSIN
Tucson, Arizona

The United Farm Workers of America (UFWA), led by Cesar Chavez, have won a great victory in California.

For the first time, farm workers, because of the long fight of the UFWA, will have the right to vote in secret ballot elections for the representative of their choice. The farm workers have had to fight a long and difficult struggle to gain this right, although it is taken for granted by most other Americans. They do not have this right to such a vote in Arizona.

Around 1000 people came out to hear Chavez in Tucson and to see the film, "We Are Fighting For Our Lives." The film depicts the struggle of the farm workers in the UFWA against powerful growers and the Teamsters Union, which has raided the fields and signed "sweetheart" contracts with the growers. The growers signed the Teamsters' contracts behind the back of the UFWA and no de-certification elections were held.

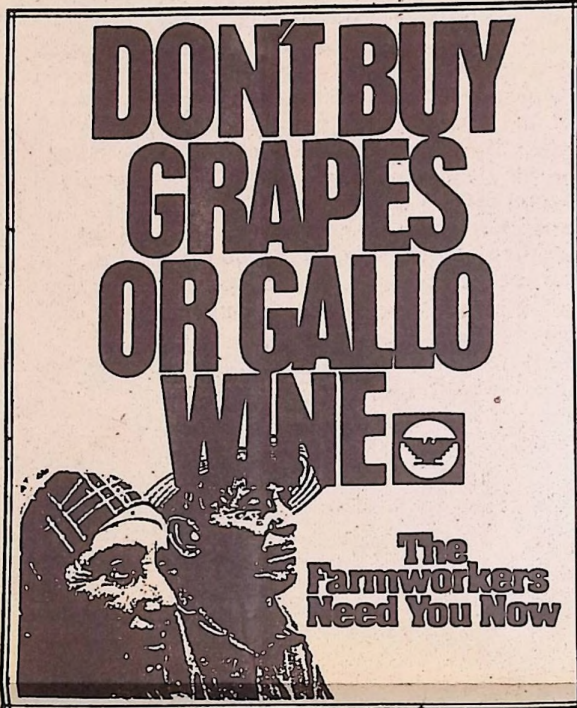
Chavez pointed out in his talk in Tucson that the guarantees contained in the UFWA contract were wiped out in the Teamsters deal with growers. "They were spraying pesticides on the workers again before the ink was dry," he commented.

The hiring halls, which ensured fair assignment to jobs and seniority rights--and which were hated by the growers--were wiped out by the Teamsters. The "labor contractors"--who peddle flesh for labor but do none themselves--were brought back. Chavez noted that one of these parasites who was shown in the film "is now a member of the Teamsters Union."

The Teamsters Union has been denounced for its actions against the farm workers by labor unions and associations all over the U.S.--and the world. Dock workers in some European countries refuse to unload the Teamsters' and other "scab" grapes and lettuce. Members of the Truckers For

Justice have refused to haul scab lettuce and grapes, and Chavez in return has supported the truckers fight against the oil companies. The 13.5 million member AFL-CIO is solidly behind the UFWA and Chavez.

Chavez said the UFWA is confident it will win all or almost all of the elections "if the elections are fair." But Chavez said support from all people is needed now more than ever. "We understand the Teamsters have announced they are prepared to spend \$10 million on the elections," he said.



He said the UFWA would continue its boycott of Gallo wines and other scab products until the elections are held and fairness is guaranteed. Chavez appealed for support in the boycott. "The support of the consumers is a powerful weapon," he said.

The Teamsters effort to legitimize their raids on the farm workers has collapsed. They opened, with great fanfare, a farm workers Local Union office, and hired a number of Chicano organizers. A few months ago, the Teamsters closed up the Local, fired the Chicanos, and dished out the farm contracts among various Teamster locals who have nothing to do with farm work.

The necessity of Chavez' call for strengthened support was underscored only a few days after his visit here. Eleven farm workers were shot in Texas.

In Texas, the UFWA in the Rio Grande Valley went to the International bridge to ask farm workers coming across the border to respect the strike and turn back. 3,500 of 5000 did go back.

Tony Orandain, UFWA organizer, learned that 500 workers had already been bussed to a field under strike; the UFWA went there and urged the workers to leave the fields; 300 of the workers came out. Because they had been bussed, they had to walk to the border.

The grower drove to the front of the line of workers, leaped out of his pick-up truck with a shotgun and fired. Ten farm workers were wounded. In his fury, the grower shot his own foreman, who was trying to get the farm workers back into the field. The grower was not arrested.

CESAR CHAVEZ DICE: '¡Hay Sangre En Las Uvas!'

desde EL TOCSIN
Tucson, Arizona

La union, United Farmworkers of America (UFWA), han ganado una grande victoria. Despues de una larga y dificil lucha, han ganado el derecho para los campesinos de votar en elecciones secretas en California

Esta ley ha pasado recientemente en California. Cesar Chavez desafia al Gobernador Castro para que haga lo mismo en Arizona. Los campesinos no tienen el derecho de votar aqui.

"Estamos pidiendo al Gobernador Castro a conceder a los campesinos el derecho de votar en las elecciones en Arizona como en California," Chavez dijo en su reciente visita a Tucson. "El (Castro) no debia estar contra el derecho de votar."

Como mil personas aqui en Tucson venieron para oír a Cesar Chavez hablar, y para mirar la pelicula sobre la union campesino UFWA, "ESTAMOS PELEANDO POR NUESTRAS VIDAS (FIGHTING FOR OUR LIVES)."

Chavez pidio a la gente de Tucson para soportar el boycoteo contra Gallo Wine, uvas y lechuga. Chavez dijo que el boycoteo es necesario en orden que las elecciones sean justas y honradas. Chavez dijo que las elecciones pueden ser ganadas por el UFWA, si las elecciones son justas.

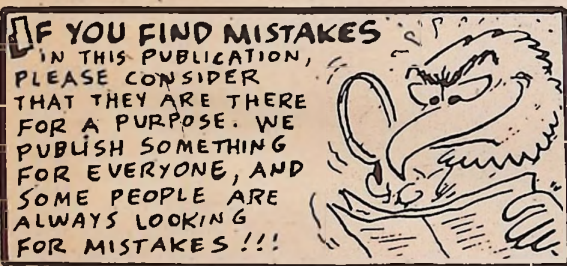
Los agricultores grandes y ricos, como Gallo, quebraron sus contratos con el UFWA y firmaron contratos de amor ("sweetheart contracts") con los Teamsters. Los derechos de los campesinos fueron perdidos. Los Teamsters y los agricultores tienen diez millones de dolares preparados para peliar el UFWA en las elecciones, Chavez dijo, asi el apoyo publico es necesario.

"Hay sangre en las uvas," dijo Cesar Chavez. Dias despues 10 campesinos, huelgistas, fueron heridos por un agricultor en el Valle des Rio Grande en Tejas. El agricultor no fue aprendido.

"Sabemos que ganaremos porque la causa de nosotros es justa," dijo Chavez.

"Estamos llamando a todos los que crean en justicia que apoyen la causa."

"There is blood on the grapes," Chavez said in his visit to Tucson, and it is literally true. It includes the grapes Gallo uses to make its wine.



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A New Hospital Caucus

by HELEN LIMA
SEIU Local 250
Oakland, CA

Hospital Workers' Local 250 (SEIU) is the largest local in northern California. It has 25,000 members. A union election campaign in which all the major officers were challenged showed rank and file strength. George Washington, the candidate for president on the Rank and File Slate, secured 37% of the vote against John Ring, the incumbent. Essie Walker, challenger for Trustee, secured 48.7% of the vote, almost winning. Other Rank and File Slate candidates did almost as well, and Pat Hendricks, candidate from the Slate for executive board from San Francisco, won her contest with 54% of the vote.

Elections in Local 250 occur every three years. This was the first time in the history of the local that an organized slate of candidates challenged the incumbents and put forward a program.

LEAFLET TRIGGERS ACTION

The contest began in January when two rank and file members distributed a leaflet calling other members to a meeting to discuss participating in the elections. The leaflet was signed by John Stephens, Chief Shop Steward at Merritt Hospital in Oakland, and Helen Lima from Herrick Hospital in Berkeley. The leaflet touched on some possible points for an election platform: the right to vote on union dues increases, progress reports on grievances, financial reports to the union members, and requesting business agents to be hired from the ranks of the union.

Forty-five members responded to the call, and a basic program and list of candidates were agreed on there.

RANK AND FILE SLATE

The program, as finally agreed on by all candidates, consisted of 6 points:

A vote on union dues - no increases without our being told the reason for the increase and/or without our approval.

A vote on all business agents, shop stewards, and negotiating committee members - No appointments by the officials.

Monthly financial statements - we want to know where our money goes.

Wages and Conditions for convalescent hospital workers should be brought up to Associated, Affiliated, and Kaiser levels.

A 35-hour work week campaign, as called for by International President George Hardy to create more jobs. We also need "no-layoff" clauses in our contracts.

Shop stewards in every department - Adequate training of stewards and an in-hospital steward council and newsletters to the members will help us effectively police the contracts.



The original Rank and File Slate had a candidate challenging the incumbents in every position except for some of the executive board posts in outlying counties. Local 250 holds 10 or so meetings a month in its widespread territory, and the Rank and File Slate made an effort to reach members at those meetings as well as in many hospitals, attracting many volunteers.

RED-BAITING TACTICS

Attacks on the Slate and attempts to divide and confuse them started immediately. A stoolpigeon was assigned by the union officers to infiltrate the Slate. The Slate was red-baited continuously and some were scared off the Slate. One person was lured off the Slate by promises made by the union president. Three candidates were challenged and ruled off the ballot on very flimsy grounds. The 37 business agents of Local 250 were told that if they expected to keep their jobs, they had better get out there and work for the incumbents. They did so, red-baiting being their main weapon for putting down the opposition.

Helen
Lima



Progressive labor's trade union arm, Workers' Action Movement, in Local 250 is centered in Kaiser Hospital, San Francisco. One of their members was on the original slate of 14 nominated by the rank and file. WAM managed to add further confusion to the election by putting forward their own candidate for Secretary-Treasurer and issuing their own material instead of cooperating with the Rank and File Slate.

A THOUSAND VOTES VOIDED

The election committee of the union decided on a mail ballot election, and the ballots were mailed out on April 9. The membership was totally unfamiliar with this method of voting and the instructions were complicated. Thus, out of 5,000 votes cast, 1,000 were voided because of technicalities.

The eight members of the Rank and File Slate whose names finally appeared on the ballot are representative of the basic union group who helped to organize and build the local. The Slate includes five Black women, two white women, and one Black man. Four of them work in house-keeping departments, one in nursing, one in linen room and one in a kitchen. Six of them have been in the union many years (15 or more), almost from its first appearance in areas outside of San Francisco.

The slate is convinced that its program will build and strengthen the union. They feel heartened by the response represented in the vote. They will continue to work in various ways to make the union stronger and more democratic.

DEMAIO (continued from page 1)

Workers temporarily displaced by the conversion of military production to peacetime needs would be cared for under the following program.

In seasonal and other unemployment, within the framework of full employment, the present seniority system can be amended to protect all workers.

The present seniority system is based on the LIFO principle of last in, first out. The major folly of this system is that the young and strong are laid off, while the senior workers who are hanging on for their pensions, are kept on the job to burn out at an earlier age.

The older workers would live longer, healthier lives, if they retired sooner on a living wage. Experience with "30 and Out" shows that this objective has not been achieved, because the ultimate pension plus Social Security which is actuarially reduced is inadequate under conditions of high inflation.

The more equitable approach is what is best for all the workers involved. Instead of laying off the younger workers where the Blacks, other minorities and women are concentrated, the older workers would be furloughed. They would be paid 95% of their working wages and continue to receive their Social Security and pension credits, and also be fully covered under the existing medical plans. When things pick up, they would return to their jobs.

This would stretch out the useful life span of the older workers. It will strengthen the unions by getting the support of the younger workers, Blacks, other minorities and women. It will relieve tensions in the plants and promote solidarity, because there would be no discriminatory lay-offs.

The furloughed workers would receive their income from the present state unemployment funds plus a federal supplement to bring income to 95% of their regular wages. Upward adjustments would be made when wages are raised. There would be no time limits on these payments. Nor would there be any need for individuals to report regularly. The companies would keep furlough and recall records which they would supply to the government agencies. These changes would require new legislation with a provision that the federal law would prevail where state legislation and union contracts differ.

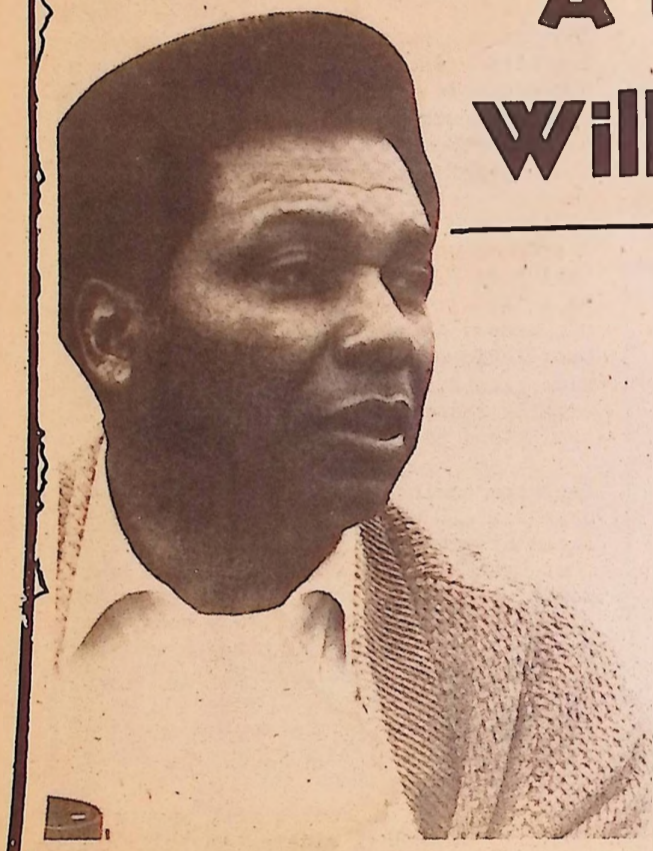
This approach is based on experience in other countries. In the socialist countries, there is a labor shortage, so lay-offs are insignificant. In France the government pays laid-off workers 100% of their wages for one year. There are variations, but other developed capitalist countries have systems superior to what is now in effect in the U.S.

Ernest
DeMaio



Pittsburgh Affair Honors

A tribute to William Finley



**A Lifetime of Service
in the Struggle to Advance
and Defend the Interests
of Coal Miners**

**A Fighter for Democratic,
Rank-and-File Trade Unionism**

**A Leader in the Struggle
for Equality and Justice
for Black People.**

All of us were of an age to remember the struggles of the 1920's as mine after mine across the coal fields was closed. Over-production was the excuse. Union-busting was the consequence. The Depression had brought hunger and suffering to the miners and their families long before it took hold of the country as a whole.

We remembered, too, the organizing days of the 1930's when it fell to the miners not only to re-build their own union, but through the Committee for Industrial Organization, to go forth and organize.

So it was fitting that a representative of the United Steel Workers should have a part in this miners' celebration. Ola Kennedy, a Black steel worker, read the greeting from Ed Sadlowski, the newly-elected director of that union's District 31. Brother Sadlowski's election, like that of Brother Miller's, had brought new life, and new hope, to the ranks of organized labor everywhere. In his message the steel workers' leader acknowledged the help the miners had given in organizing the USWA, and went on to say:

"Today we still fight the same bosses many of you do. We pledge to continue our own fight -- alongside you and other workers -- to win and deepen democracy in our own union."

Rayfield Mooty, co-chairman of TUAD and founder of the Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Steel Workers, had earlier paid tribute. Charles Hayes was there, to speak for the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workers, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Other unions and organizations had their representatives there, but -- it was the miners' day.

One of the most moving of the tributes was that of a young white miner, Talmadge Dean. He brought us all back to that day-to-day struggle that is still going on: the need to break down the barriers of racism, what Anne Braden called "the wall between." Young Talmadge, like those before him, was having to break through that wall of prejudice to reach his fellow whites -- "not bad fellows."

The presence there, at the banquet, of Blacks and whites together, as many of one as of the other, in tribute to one of their own -- a Black coal miner -- was in itself a testimony as to how that wall is being breached.

We who were there will not soon forget that triumphant occasion.

by JOE NORRICK
Veteran Steelworker, and
Coal Miner

"Black and white together, we shall not be moved" -- that is the way memory will store that great occasion, on May 31, in Pittsburgh, when 560 men and women, Black and white, came together to pay tribute to one of their own, William Finley, a Black coal miner.

The reason for coming together was his election to the Executive Board of District 5, United Mine Workers of America. He was the first Black ever to be so elected, and that fact is all the more significant because that district, which takes in the great coal-mining area of western Pennsylvania, is ninety-five per cent white.

The one so honored had spent most of his life living, working and organizing among those people. He was a baby when his father, a miner, moved his family from Alabama for what were to be the better opportunities in Pennsylvania. Alas, they were soon caught up in the great coal strike of 1922. Hardship followed upon hardship. Dreams of the boy's becoming a doctor gave way to the reality of the mines, out of family necessity.

Brother Finley first came to attention beyond his district when the rank-and-file struggle to win back the UMWA for the miners had acquired strength enough to challenge the corrupt leadership of Tony Boyle. Finley worked with Miners for Democracy. Arnold Miller, who led that struggle and went on to become president of the UMWA, was there for the tribute, as was Lou Antal, President of District 5. So, too, was

Joe
Norricks



Kenneth Yablonsky, who as attorney for the miners, carries on the work of his martyred father.

The personal tribute itself was reason enough for the occasion to be long remembered, but beyond that, it represented an even larger triumph. It was a celebration of that great take-over of a once great union by those determined it should become that again. And, beyond that, the tribute was significant for the entire labor movement. To this old miner, it was as if that movement was in stride again. On to Victory!

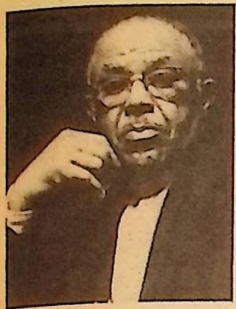
Ashton Allen, a member of the Teamster's Union, who presided, had had much to do with organizing the tribute, and bringing out not only miners and their families, but other trade unionists, by the "tables-full."

For some of us thoughts went back even further, back indeed to the Ludlow strike in Colorado in 1914, and the massacre, there of miners' women and children on that Rockefeller-owned property. I, for one, remembered how my father and other miners in southern Indiana, got their guns and were ready to march, if need be, to the assistance of the Ludlow miners.



R.C.

Black Mine Union Leader



'A Hard Road'

by RAYFIELD MOOTY
Co-Chairman TUAD

Brother Finley, I have travelled this road (of rank and file unionism) for many years. And I don't need to tell you that this road is not smooth. But by now, you have probably learned that it is rewarding. It is the only road to travel, and it allows you to stand on your own two feet. It doesn't allow no man to put bits in your mouth. It requires that you set your own course, and that you crush everything that stands in the way of freedom and equality for Black workers and everything that interferes with the unity between Black and white.

The statements of Brothers Dean, Hayes, Mooty and Sadlowski are drawn from the June issue of *Miner's Report*, a rank and file journal. *Miner's Report* is available from P.O. Box 5083, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15206, \$2/yr.



'Black & White Together'

by ED SADLOWSKI
Director
USWA District 31

(Brother Sadlowski's statement was read by Ola Kennedy, Secretary-Treasurer of the Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Steelworkers.)

Rank and file workers in all industries are better off today because of what coal miners did in throwing the corrupt Boyle leadership out of the United Mine Workers, a leadership which was in bed with the coal operators for so many years.

I extend my fraternal greetings to William Finley and to your historic meeting honoring him tonight. The election of Black leaders such as William Finley is important to the welfare of all workers--Black & white.

As steelworkers, we feel a very special solidarity with coal miners. In the 1930's, your union helped us to get organized. Today, we still fight the same bosses many of you do. We pledge to continue our own fight--alongside you and other workers--to win and deepen democracy in our own union.

For it is only when rank and file workers, Black and white, control their unions that we can win better wages and safe working conditions, jobs for all workers, and live in a more democratic society.

'Let's Take A Mile'

by TALMADGE DEAN
UMWA Local 1190
Ellsworth Mine, Pa.

When I was asked to make a speech here, I got some comments from some white miners. What some of them said to me was shocking--some of the comments I won't even go into. But one comment that was made to me, I am going to try to destroy here tonight.

What was told to me (by a very nice guy, too) was: "Well, Butch, you know how it is. Give 'em an inch, and they'll take a mile." Bring a man over to our country as a slave; next thing you know, he wants to be free. Teach him how to read; next thing, he wants to go to school. Then he wants to go to the same kind of schools the whites have--with quality education. "Give 'em an inch, and they'll take a mile."

Give a Black man the right to vote; and he wants to run for office. Give a Black man a job in the mines; he wants to belong to the union. Then he wants to run for union office. He wants to have an active, participating role in deciding his future. "Give 'em an inch, and they'll take a mile."

Well--if that's what you call "give 'em an inch, and they'll take a mile"--when the next inch comes, I hope it is all whites and Blacks together. Then the last mile is going to be easy as hell!

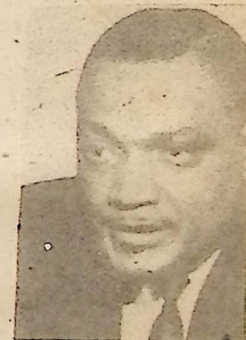
'We Are Struggling To Overcome'



by OLA KENNEDY
Ad Hoc Committee
of Concerned Steel
Workers
Gary, Ind.

As I look at the United Mine Workers, I see a union which has, in many ways, overcome. We are still struggling to overcome in our union, the Steelworkers. There are some of us who feel unjustly rejected and denied. But we're not without hope. I believe that those rejected stones will become the new cornerstones of our union and this nation. The labor movement must lead the way. It must lead the way for us because it is the greatest movement in this country.

'Not Hollering Loud Enough'



by CHARLES HAYES
Int'l Vice President
Amalgamated Meatcutters

I think sometimes the trade union movement is not doing its job--not enough, not hollering enough. We need people in the leadership of the trade union movement who are going to concern themselves with the plight of people who are suffering. So we're about the business of trying to encourage, urge, and fight--yes, if we have to--to get Black people in the policy-making bodies of the trade union movement.

Print Unions Seek Merger

by JOHN KAILIN
Co-Editor

(Brother Kailin is one of the founders of the Concerned Printers.)

Two years ago, some members of Chicago Typographical Union No. 16 formed the Concerned Printers Information Committee. We wanted to see what we could do to stop the newspaper corporations from knocking hundreds of us out of jobs at the major dailies.

When the International Typographical Union's 116th Convention was held in St. Louis last year, we attended as visitors. We were able to make a rank-and-file impact that led to adoption of a strong resolution on communications industry union unity, and to focus attention on the new corporate strategies that are aimed at breaking print-industry unions.

Union unity has become a matter of life and death in the face of mind-blowing technological advances that have begun to wipe out jobs represented by the four major printing unions. The ITU, for example, now represents only 70,000 working printers, and the Newspaper Guild only 30,000 editorial workers, though the printing and publishing industry has grown to 1,100,000, making it the 8th largest manufacturing employer.

Technological advance has changed the industry so that traditional jurisdictional lines separating the crafts have all but been washed away, leaving the unions competing for the same members. Thus while "speedy-print" shops and photographic printing have defined a vast new area for organizing, precious little new organizing has been accomplished.

No single union can overcome the problems posed by the current economic depression,

Abel Bids Junta To Free Unionists

by LABOR TODAY Staff

United Steelworkers' President I.W. Abel has cabled Chilean fascist dictator Augusto Pinochet, to demand that the military junta free five imprisoned copper union leaders now held in Chilean prisons.

Chile has been under a wave of fascist terror since September 1973, when a military coup overthrew the labor-backed government of Salvador Allende. The fascist junta then proceeded to destroy the labor movement, imprisoning and executing thousands of trade union militants.

"A free society does not imprison the representatives of the working people," Abel told Pinochet in his cable. "Our industrial union of 1.5 million steelworkers, the largest in the Western hemisphere, has long had fraternal relations with our brother and sister copper workers in Chile."

Abel demanded that the junta "restore full freedom to the leaders of the Chilean copper unions now imprisoned."

Abel also demanded that "constitutional government be restored."

but there is much that can be done to change the ITU's old craft-union, separatist attitudes.

Printers traditionally thought the quality of the trade could not be upheld by recruiting typists (mainly women) and low-paid tenders of fast-print offset machines.

So the union--like other printing industry unions--took a "don't-call-us, we'll-call-you" attitude to sister unions, and foot-dragged on organizing "the women."

As one ITU member describes the ITU's history, "We made the same mistake that the first horse-and-buggy maker did. He thought he was in the horse-and-buggy business. In reality, he was in the transportation business. Henry Ford knew otherwise. He knew horse-and-buggy was part of the transportation business."

"Printers are just learning that we're not in the printing industry--we're in the communications industry. We're learning that photographic type, computers, cathode ray tube terminals and, pretty soon, lasers, are the new tools of the communications industry."

The pattern through the industry is like the Chicago Tribune's: It owns eight newspapers, four television stations, three AM radio stations, one FM station and two CATV stations.

Concerned Printers felt that we should meet bigness with bigness. We called for "communications industry union unity for all who work in graphic arts or publishing or who work for the multinational or conglomerate employers in radio and television and the performing arts."

The practical stages we proposed were: first, to step up talks with the Guild, Graphic Arts (lithographers) and Printing and Graphic Communications (pressmen's) unions. Somewhere down the line, contacts should be made to exchange information with the Broadcast Employees and Technicians, the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists, Teamsters, Electrical Workers and Machinists.

Concerned Printers did one thing differently from many others who pressed for merger. We made our campaign a grassroots campaign. We gave leadership through the use of buttons and informational literature, even though we were not even official delegates to the convention.

We were greeted with stunning success, appearing with 500 "Merger Is Survival" buttons, printed fact sheets and resolutions. Looking at the convention hall from the visitors' gallery, the sea of blue-on-yellow buttons attested to the grassroots sentiment that had developed for merger.

Concerned Printers opened a hospitality room that drew dozens of delegates into serious discussion for three nights. Out of these discussions the resolution was reshaped and submitted. It was the only one of nine unity resolutions that stressed the communications concept, or that pressed for concrete solidarity in a don't-cross-picket-lines declaration.

When the convention merger committee issued its compromise resolution, the communications idea had stuck! "The best protection and salvation of our members



is to close ranks with the other unions in the printing and communications industry, and the sooner the better," said the resolution.

Developments since the convention show fast moves toward merger.

The ITU held several meetings with The Newspaper Guild resulting in a no-raid pact, and declarations by both presidents that their ultimate purpose must be merger, for the survival of each. Said Guild president Charles A. Perlik, "We've witnessed cross-pollination of bargaining committees . . . we've seen the formation of new unity councils."

Bevis told the Guild convention in July, "such cooperative efforts (as coalition or joint-bargaining, and joint-organizing) will lead us to a complete merger of our two organizations into one broad, graphic arts and communications industry."

Concerned Printers' activity at the convention was in a way the best answer to the challenge foreseen by Perlik when he said, "Merger . . . will come when, and only when, the grassroots of our two unions want it, and want it badly."

New OSHA Book Aids Bargainers

by LABOR TODAY Staff

Rank and filers seeking to strengthen their union contract to provide for tougher health and safety language have been provided an important new resource: Contract Clauses For Occupational Health And Safety, by the Industrial Health and Safety Project, Urban Planning Aids, 639 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. 02139 @ 75¢.

The pamphlet contains suggested health and safety clauses which might serve as a model for negotiations. They have been adapted from several contracts in use or proposed by several unions. They can be modified to suit specific needs, or they may serve as a source of ideas.

The pamphlet deals with five specific areas: duties of the company, union access to information; the joint safety committee; state and federal laws; education and research.

The pamphlet also gives guidance on specific dangers like lead, mercury or pesticides.

This pamphlet is one of several items on health and safety topics that are available cheaply from the project. Some are in both English and Spanish. A monthly newsletter, Survival Kit, is available for \$2/yr.

LT 'WORTHY OF MEANY

To the Editors:

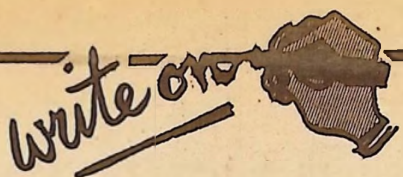
I have been a faithful reader of LABOR TODAY for several years now. But I was shocked and surprised by your coverage of the April 26 "Rally for Jobs" in Washington, D.C. Jim Williams' account of that event was worthy of George Meany himself -- a conservative smear job, filled with factual errors and wholly unsupported allegations.

I was on both field and the stage as a reporter. The estimates of the Washington Post and other establishment media were more accurate than Williams' figure: at least 2,000 people were involved in what appeared to me to be a largely spontaneous demonstration of rank-and-file dissatisfaction with the form and content of the rally.

Most of those who left the stands were union members. Many were Black and Puerto Rican. Even rally organizer Jacob Clayman, Secretary-Treasurer of the Industrial Union Department, knew why they were there. He later told reporters that while "some frustrated speakers, exhibitionists and the whole gamut of left-wing splinter groups" were involved in the disruption, most protesters on the field were "unemployed and full of anger & frustration."

I never thought I'd see the day when the reporting of PAI and the Washington Post was more accurate than LABOR TODAY's, but apparently that day has arrived.

Sincerely
Steve Early
UMW Journal



HOOKED ON LT

To the Editors:

I saw my first issue of LABOR TODAY in December, 1973 and I was hooked instantly. I thought those issues were great, but they just keep getting better. There is no other publication available in any form that equals LT as an organizing tool. We got our entire rank and file movement off the ground by distributing LT's in the plant. We started by passing just 10 copies. Now, we're up to about 100 copies. The input is great. LT is right on time! Keep up the good work.

John Sutherland, President
UAW, Local 858
Rock Island, Illinois

LIKED WOMEN'S ISSUE

To the Editors:

I have just read for the third time the July issue of LABOR TODAY, and felt an urge to write a note of thanks for your foresight in devoting an entire issue to working women.

The hopes, desires, fears, problems, and hopefully solutions of women workers, mothers, wives, and trade unionists who happen to be women were addressed with clarity and insight.

I wish to extend a very special thanks for the two articles on the Coalition of Labor Union Women. It was a far, far cry from last year's article after our founding conference which left me quite disheartened with LABOR TODAY.

Barbara Merrill, President
Chicago Chapter, Illinois Co-Convenor
Coalition of Labor Union Women



FARMWORKER VICTORY

To the Editors:

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the United Farm Workers, Cesar Chavez and the many people who have assisted their movement, as well as the members of the labor relations committee of the California Assembly that voted 7 to 2 approving a bill that will enable the farm workers to vote by secret ballot for the union of their choice.

The passage of this bill is a definite asset not only for the UFW, but also to the ideal that righteousness will succeed, that inhuman wages and working conditions cannot prevail in these United States of America.

J. Edward Dvorak
Vice Chariman Local 908, UTU
Lisbon, North Dakota

CIA'S DIRTY TRICKS'

To the Editors:

As more unionists are becoming aware of the cooperation given to big business and their henchmen, the CIA, by elements found particularly high up in the AFL-CIO, it's becoming more difficult for the sell-out leadership to hide. Recently in Albuquerque, an intrepid journalist with the 'Seer's Catalogue' (POB 4940, Albuquerque, NM 87106), confronted one such misleader during the convention of the LCLAA, a facade of an organization set up by Meany to try and dissipate the groundswell of militancy among unionists of Latin American origin. Jack Otero, main man in this operation has been identified by labor researchers as a CIA agent. Philip Agee's suppressed book, CIA Diary, leaves us with the impression that Otero is very dedicated to the business of labor spying.

The San Francisco based group, Union Committee for an All-Labor AIFLD, has zeroed in on this issue of foxes in the henhouse. It has helped to arm rank and filers with information and sources for ferreting out the facts, as well as calling for an end to the "mutual interest" premise on which the AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development) has been so shakily built. As an enthusiastic supporter of the aims of the Union Committee, I urge LABOR TODAY readers to bring this issue up in their own unions and also to contact the Committee for the bibliography and other materials they are preparing. Write: UCALA, 1269 Howard St., Suite 101, San Francisco, CA 94103.

John Cunningham
San Jose, California

'FINE WORKER'S PAPER'

To the Editors:

I feel that this is one of the first working class papers in our country and every worker should know about it.

I thought you might like to know about this.

Leonard Insogna
Wolcott, Connecticut

'WE'LL HAVE IT MADE'

To the Editors:

Congratulations and thank you for the very fine March issue. I would also like to thank you, as timely as this is, for the rank and file newsletter workshop. We found it very informative. Now, if we just learn to do it, we'll have it made.

Paul Kuczochka
USWA Local 6787
Burns Harbor, Indiana

WORKING WOMEN AND THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

In 1824, when women in the U.S. first went on strike, a Boston paper called it, "an instance of woman's clamorous and unfeminine declaration of personal rights which it is obvious a wise providence never destined her to exercise." She's been fighting to exercise them ever since, and Union WAGE, a working women's organization, has just published a pamphlet called Working Women and Their Organizations -- 150 Years of Struggle. It's available for \$1, plus 25¢ postage, from Union WAGE, P.O. Box 462, Berkeley, Calif. 94701.



A 'Wright-On' Book

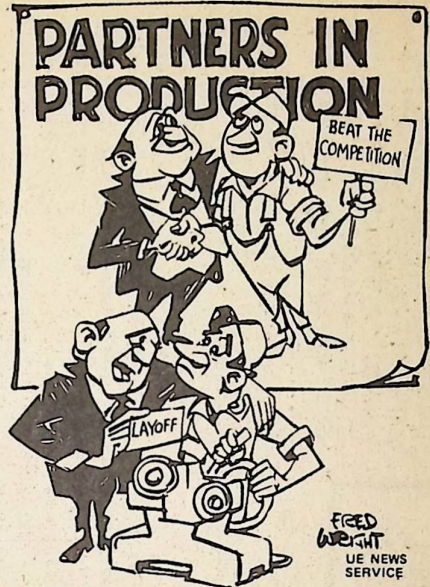
SO LONG, PARTNER! by Fred Wright,
published by United Electrical, Radio
& Machine Workers, New York, NY, 1975.
\$3.50.

by LABOR TODAY Staff

Fred Wright is to labor cartoons as Charlie Chaplin is to movies. For years his cartoons in the UE NEWS have been a major resource for rank and file newsletters, leafleteers and the "radical" press in general. Shunned by all but a few radical papers during the McCarthy period, Wright used the UE NEWS as a forum for launching his ever-to-the-point cartoons chronicling the ever-present struggle of the workers for a fair shake.

Wright's humor is very much like Chaplin's. Always the little guy is being ganged up on by the powers-that-be. Like Chaplin's tramp, Wright's characters give as good as they get. (Even though he was born in England, Wright seems to have a flair for Irish "gallows humor" -- the ability to make a joke out of a tough situation.)

As the iron curtain that enclosed the U.S. labor movement lifted a bit in the late 60's, Wright's cartoons began getting circulated again in "mainstream" publications like Steel Labor and the West Virginia AFL-CIO Observer. Now, his cartoons are enjoyed and appreciated by an ever-growing audience.



"So long, partner!"

Now, the UE NEWS has responded to this growing popularity with *So Long, Partner!* -- a large collection of some of Wright's best work. Its 95 pages are a real gold mine for editors, people looking for just the right cartoon to jazz up a leaflet, or people looking for a little working class humor. Its easy-to-use format makes it just right for all of these purposes. It belongs in every activist's home and in every union hall -- every place where the workers are getting ready to sock the boss a good 'un.



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