

the rank and file in action

# Labor Today

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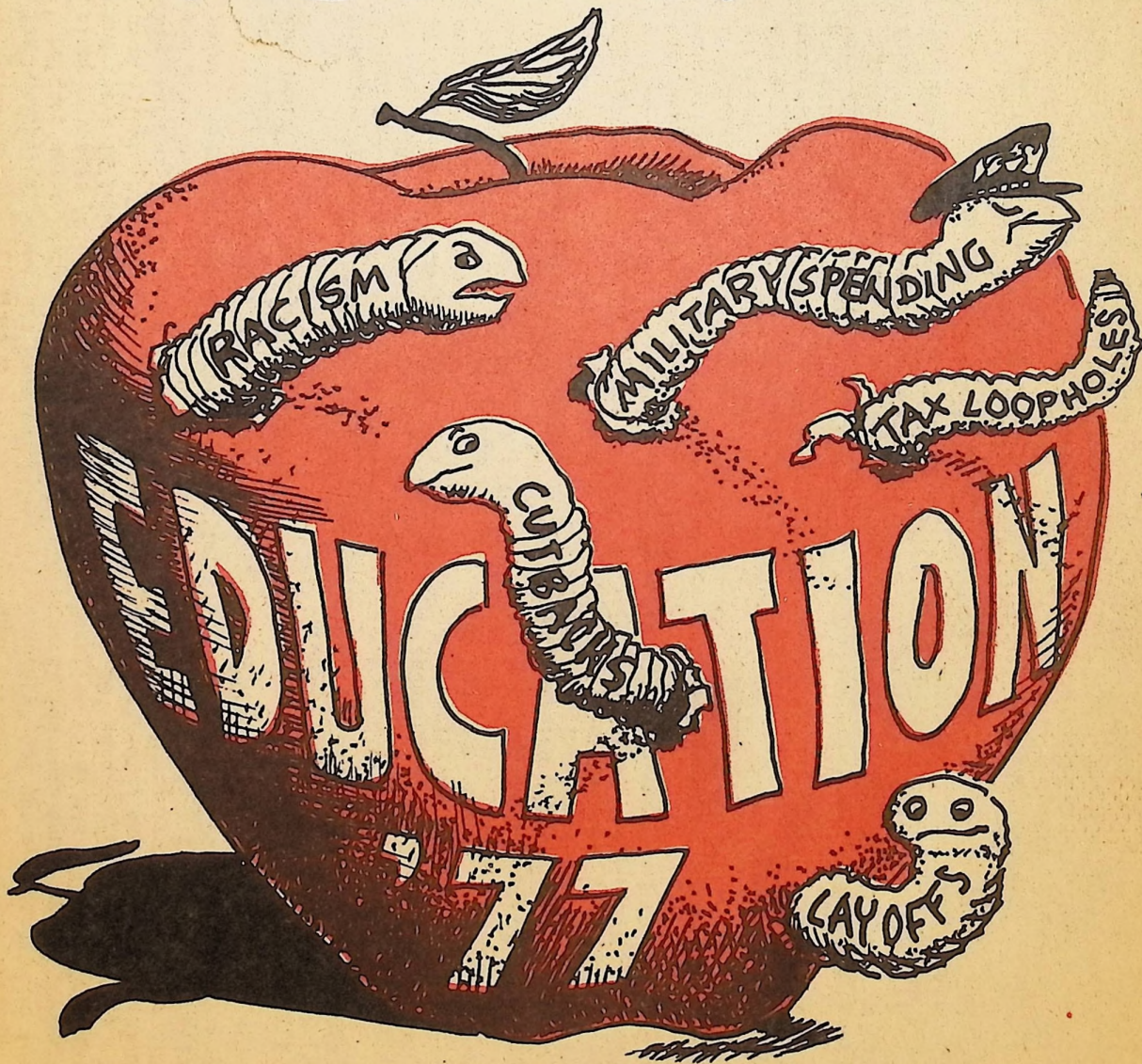
June 1977

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172 Coventry Rd.  
Staten Island NY 10304

Schools!

Schools!



## JOBS, NOT GUNS!

MORE THAN BREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES

# UAC sparks 'union spirit' for teachers

by ELLEN LAVROFF, Chairperson  
United Action Caucus, AFT

The United Action Caucus spearheads the rank and file movement within the American Federation of Teachers. There are rank and file movements in many international unions across the country--the United Auto Workers, the United Steel Workers, the Teamsters and the American Federation of Teachers, among others. They are growing and gaining positions of power and strength. Since the rank and file movement is becoming a force which must be recognized, it is important that the purpose and goals of their struggle be understood for members of the AFT as well as for members of other international unions.

The union movement has always been a humanizing movement, whether in the craft unions or the industrial unions. Unions have dedicated themselves to protecting their members on the job and to humanizing their working conditions. Before World War II under the leadership of men like Samuel Gompers, the union movement began gradually to direct its activities to supporting the "system." Partly, this was due to the "threat of communism" and other social movements which were hostile to capitalism. Unions then began to restrict their activities to what is commonly known as "bread and butter" unionism, i.e., to increasing the standard of living of their members.

Much was accomplished in securing a good living standard for organized labor, but the union movement retreated from facing the social issues of the twentieth century. It sacrificed the principles on which it was founded and the leadership which it had previously held in the field of social change. Unions gradually became more and more entrenched on the side of management. That is why there is a growing rank and file movement--social issues must be faced or even the great gains in the standard of living for working people in the United States will be lost.

The rank and file movement is a new wave of humanism in organized labor. We wish to deal not only with working conditions and job

*Chicago rank & file leads fight together with community.*



protection, but also unemployment among our ranks, speed-ups in the plants and growing safety hazards, many of them due to new chemicals and nuclear dangers. We want to maintain and even increase our standard of living and we support the shorter work week at equal pay with strict enforcement of non-obligatory overtime and overtime pay. We want to affirm the need to organize the unorganized and to organize the unemployed. We support early retirement with honor and dignity and that includes a living income. We teachers, in particular, wish to change the schools so that the student, not the rules, becomes the center of our activity and attention.

The rank and file movement serves the union members--the members' needs and demands provide the issues around which we center our activities. Too often "leaders" direct the members. If leaders listen and interpret what their members say, they are rank and file leaders. If leaders tell the members what they want, they are serving their own interests or someone else's. Much union leadership at present falls into the latter category. Rank and filers want an end to the present style of leadership.

Specifically, rank and filers do not want to work within a system which does not

serve all of us. If the system says that there is no money for schools, for public services, for help to the young, the impoverished, the minorities and the old, then we ask that the priorities be changed so that there is money. We are asking for less money for defense budgets--we want peace not war--and for a reduction in the soaring corporate and banking profits. Some of these issues have been discussed in recent issues of the UAC Newsletter.

Collective bargaining is one of the most important tools we have. The rank and file movement insists that its leaders use it to improve our lot. We are not interested in bureaucratic unionism where a few favorites benefit and the general membership does not. We want a working and leading union. We want to keep our gains and make new ones. We do not accept the premise that there is no money for us. What we propose is not easy and it is not simple. It will take the cooperation of many union leaders and the decision of the AFL-CIO to cease playing the coward and to face the changing times; to help us to get into the twenty-first century, not to stand in our way.

Rank and file unionism supports the greatest possible degree of democracy within the union movement. We want fair and honest elections, true representation of the members, full discussion of the issues at our conventions and fairness in the treatment of the individual delegates and union members. We believe that the secret ballot protects delegates from reprisals and ensures an honest vote. The United Action Caucus doesn't accept the rationalization that the local needs a voter print-out in order to see whether its delegates voted according to instructions. There are many ways to ensure that the local be sent an official record of the delegate's vote without ensuring that the National also receive one.

Rank and filers within the United Action Caucus also stand for merger with the National Education Association. There are some big problems involved in merger. The American Federation of Teachers insists on affiliation with the AFL-CIO and the NEA insists on quotas for minorities. At least, these are the two objections which have been given officially by both teacher organizations. There is cause to doubt these assertions, but one thing is certain--merger will never happen if we do not begin to talk. There is a crying need for good faith on both sides. Rank and filers

(continued on page 7)



*Oakland AFT'ers picket to demand bail for Angela Davis.*

## STRIKE, BOYCOTT CALLED

# Coors beer tastes like fascism

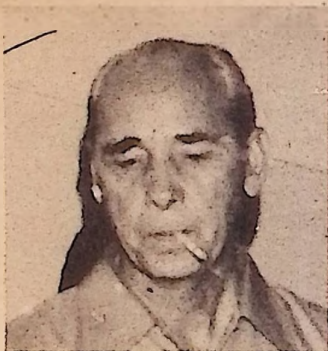
by AL MASSE, President  
Local Union #505  
Aluminum Workers International Union  
AFL-CIO

Golden, Colorado is the home of the Colorado School of Mines. Located between the steep walls of Clear Creek Canyon, Golden is also the home of the Adolph Coors Company brewery, container plant and process line division. Here, a few miles northwest of Denver, one of the most significant strikes in recent Colorado history--and perhaps the nation--began in early April.

The strike began when 1,500 members of Local 366 of the Brewery, Bottling, Can and Allied Industrial Union decided to draw the line after Coors officials decided to post a number of work-rule changes instead of sitting down at the bargaining table.

Standing 321 on FORTUNE magazine's list of 500 largest U.S. corporations, Coors is the nation's fifth largest brewer of beer. With 1976 profits reported at \$76 mil. Coors is a billion dollar-plus outfit and holds important government contracts for space and military hardware.

Adolph Coors Company was forced to sign its first contract with Local 366 in 1934 but the family--brothers Joe and Bill who run the company today are the grandsons of founder Adolph--never accepted collective bargaining as a way of life.



James Silverthorn  
President,  
Local 366

For the first sixteen years of its history, the local was little more than a company union. Then, in the early '50's, a new and militant leadership won control of the local and was able to lead struggles that won a number of important concessions.

Things changed for the worse in 1957 and the seeds of the present strike were sown in a settlement that concluded a disastrous strike of that year. The local hung

tough for 117 days but was forced to scrap a contract clause that gave its members the right to respect picket lines. The dues check-off was thrown out and severe restrictions were placed on the right of full-time union representatives to enter the plant. (The 1957 contract also mandated that any worker accepting a full-time position in the local would have to give up his seniority at Coors.)

Since 1957, the rights of Coors employees have been steadily undercut: The present contract specified twenty-six rights of management and, for good measure, adds: "It is agreed that the enumeration of management prerogatives shall not be deemed to exclude other management prerogatives not specifically enumerated."

Twenty-two reasons for immediate discharge have been written into the contract and there are nineteen lesser offenses listed that allow for progressive discipline leading to discharge.

At Coors, new employees are required to take a "lie detector" test. In 1963 a new and vicious wrinkle was added--that year the company won the right to a lie detector test in any arbitration proceeding where there is a "conflict of interest." The "results" of the test are binding on the arbitrator.

According to Local 366 President James Silverthorn, there are three major areas of disagreement between the union and the company:

The first is seniority and work-rule changes that would give the company the sole right to schedule work, determine lay-offs and recall from lay-off.

Dick Hunter of the local's Publicity Committee explained the union's position: "To abandon the seniority rights which workers have won through union struggles in the 20th century would return workers to the 19th century labor relations of the Robber Barons."

The second area of disagreement is the company's demand that it have the unre-

ON STRIKE AGAINST  
ADOLPH COORS CO.  
Because of Unfair Labor Practices

COORS OFFERS ----  
NO SENIORITY  
NO FREEDOM OF SPEECH  
NO BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

COORS OFFERS ----  
FORCED POLYGRAPHS  
OPEN SHOP  
FORCED PHYSICALS

Help Us In Our Struggle Against The  
Adolph Coors Co.

-- PLEASE DON'T BUY COORS BEER --

--- Thank You



stricted right to required lie detector tests and physical examinations of any employee at any time.

In explaining the union's position on polygraph tests, Hunter wrote: "Many of the questions in these tests are degrading and demeaning. Several seem expressly designed to create a climate of intimidation and paranoia. Others are clearly invasions of privacy and are not tolerated in any other area of American life."

The third area of disagreement is the union shop--the clearest example of the union-busting, "take-away" attitude of Coors' management during the present contract talks.

One of Colorado's laws is called the Labor Peace Act. Under its terms, no union can negotiate a union-shop provision in any contract unless 75 percent of all employees in the bargaining unit vote in favor of such provision.

Coors forced an election at the Golden, Colorado brewery during the 1976 Christmas holiday season and 98 percent of the eligible workforce turned out, voting, by a margin of more than 94 percent, to continue the union-shop provision in their contract.

On December 29, the company agreed to abide by the results of the election and dropped their demand for an open shop. However, at a meeting after the strike began, Coors negotiators renewed their open-shop demand.

The union shop has been a part of the Local 366 contract for 42 years and this sudden turn-about prompted Don Bodemann, a local vice president, to say, "The company wants to keep the union label, but makes us so weak that we cannot defend our rights. Rather than bargaining in good faith, the company consistently challenges what we have won in the past. The democratic expression of the workers was that they wanted and needed the security which the union shop provides--and we are going to have that security."

Dwight Stickler, another Local 366 vice president, told a rally of nearly 1,200 members: "We are not striking over econom-

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R&F TEACHER SAYS:

# No money for schools? Take another look!

by DENNIS BARNABY  
AFT Local 3  
Philadelphia, PA

The phrase "There's no money" has become familiar to teachers across the nation in the last decade. *What has happened to the money?* For teachers who taught in the previous decade there was money everywhere for education. There were programs designed to combat the "superior" educational system of the Soviet Union. There were adult education programs blossoming throughout the nation's schools. There was money for field trips, trips abroad, in fact, education was our new, booming business. We teachers believed we had an unlimited future...we could teach all our lives and would teach almost everyone, from the cradle to the grave.

Then came the Nixon election in 1968, and by 1970 the no-hiring practices had arrived. The market was tight. Finally, the layoffs and the program cutbacks appeared. In less than 10 years *there was no money.*

Of course, there is money. We have not become a poor nation overnight and it is doubtful that we will ever become a poor nation, given the enormous resources of our country and our people. But the money has been shifted to other priorities. Under Nixon, big business and the military profited; the people of the United States did not. Our priorities are wrong, not to speak of the way in which the economic system operates.

Lately, the excesses of military spending have been the focus of many articles and congressional reports. We have read about the military pension fund, the arms sales abroad, and the B-1 bomber. The facts and figures on this bomber are astonishing. The statistics on the B-1 program will help us to answer our question: "Where is the money?"

Each B-1 bomber will cost approximately \$93 million. The Air Force has planned a fleet of 244 planes. The total spending for the program, including cost overrun, research and development is \$22.9 billion.

Gerald Ford and the Pentagon decided to slip contracts out before Carter got into office. The budget is arranged so that the spending on the B-1 program will be monthly--\$87 million a month until June! A monthly budget has been set up so that Carter will have further time to study the question. Had the Ford Administration allowed Carter to make the decision, we might have put to excellent use the \$87 million times the number of months it would take to make a decision!

Let's take a look at what the B-1 budget could provide for us. If we use savings from the B-1 program, we have a budget of \$22.9 billion which might look like this:

To bring all Americans above the poverty line:	\$11.4 billion
To eliminate hunger in the U.S.	\$ 4.5 billion
Child Care Program (vetoed by Ford):	\$ 2.1 billion
66,000 low cost homes:	\$ 1.0 billion
Education (example: Baltimore's annual education budget is \$400,000):	\$ 3.9 billion
	\$22.9 billion

Military spending does not create jobs. Figures released by the American Friends Service Committee show that for every

billion dollars of military spending, only 10,000 jobs are generated. Invested in school construction, the same billion offers 50,000 jobs, in public housing 76,000, and in public service, 132,000 jobs. In fact, although the United States has spent \$1.3 trillion on military power since 1946, most Americans feel less secure!

Shall we continue to allow the military to be a sacred cow? Shall their budget not be open to scrutiny by the citizens of this country? It is time for us to become simple budget analysts, and to say that we want our money spent in the schools and on the domestic programs which will give a long overdue raise in the quality of life to the people of the United States.

There is, of course, another answer to the question of "Where's the money for our schools?" Beyond the military budget is the question of corporate profits. As cutbacks in education and all social services continue, we cannot fall victim to the pathetic cry that there is no money, because almost without exception in each of these cities profits of major corporations

cities and depend on public schools to supply their labor force, have been able to diminish their contribution to education. According to a pamphlet put out by the AFL-CIO (*Funding the Schools, 1972*), real estate taxes are no longer a just or fair means for paying for public education. Increased federal funds are a necessity, and "there is an important source of federal funds--the elimination of the whole structure of tax loopholes which permits wealthy individuals and large corporations to get away with 'bargain basement' tax rates." The pamphlet points out that "in 1960 the corporate share of the federal income tax was 35%, and by 1972 corporation taxes accounted for only 26-27%." This is a loss of \$10-15 billion. Another source (Advisory Commission on Inter-Governmental Relations) points out that in 1940, 53% of the tax money supporting education came from the business sector!

There can be no doubt that this reduction in the percentage of the education budget paid by big business has seriously hurt the development of a more effective educational system. Schools across the country are in need of funds, while homeowners live in fear of yet another real estate tax hike to keep them open. Decision-makers in our government have listened only to the voices of big businesses who threaten to leave a region altogether if they are asked to pay more. President Carter has yet to show us he is going to put a stop to this rampant relocation in non-unionized parts of the country (or out of the country!) and demand corporations stay to pay their fair share. We can afford no more immoral "escapes."



have increased as phenomenally as the services have been cut back. We can read in our papers every quarter that profits are still at an all-time high. Corporations have benefited greatly from the tax loopholes, removal of already weak price controls, various false "crises" (energy, gas, sugar, etc.) and the outright legal reduction of the amount of taxes they must pay.

This trend, of course, is not recent. Corporate profits have shown few ups and downs in the past 30 years; only ups! For example, between 1946 and 1970, the Consumer Price Index nearly doubled. The cost of labor per unit of production (what corporations have to pay to have something produced) went up barely one-fourth of that. As a result, the workers' share of what was produced actually went down. That is, due to improved mechanization, speed-up, or whatever, less labor time was needed to produce more goods, which continued to cost more and more anyway! This means, simply put, a lot more profit. (*Business Statistics, 1969*, and *Handbook of Labor Statistics, 1969*.)

On the other hand, these very corporations which center their operations in large

The problem of a reduced share from the business sector is combined with another. As school boards have been caught in the economic squeeze, they have been forced to borrow extensively from local banks to cover the costs of a particular school year. The banks, anxious to show their benevolence for the "common good," have willingly lent the money at exorbitant interest rates, insuring a hefty profit for themselves. It is no longer unusual for 20% of a school budget to be eaten up in interest payments. School boards are literally mortgaging their facilities to keep them open! The question soon becomes obvious: Who really runs the schools? Public schools are, in name, an agency of no profit. They are, however, making the banks and corporations that the banks invest in, a great deal of profit.

The crisis is very real. There is money for schools. If we do not demand big business pay its fair share, that the federal government reduce its military spending to fund our domestic needs first, that loans for public institutions be interest free, the crisis will continue to get worse. There are few other alternatives.

## NEA STRIKE VICTORY

# Racine teachers battle jail to keep jobs and contract

by JAN F. ANDERSON, Editor  
Wisconsin Education Association Council

It is said that every household in America contains at least one item manufactured in Racine, Wisconsin. It's a believable boast considering that Racine's 300 manufacturing plants make everything from Johnson's Wax to J. I. Case tractors to Insinkerator waste disposals. Being such an industrial center Racine (pop. 95,000) has 27,000 private sector workers and is a community where issues are often polarized with the corporate managers on one side and labor on the other.

It is against this backdrop that one of Wisconsin's bitterest teacher strikes raged for seven weeks in January, February and March of this year.

Society can usually count on teachers being relatively non-violent, even when they are defending their picket lines against scabs. But in Racine, where the 1,300-member Racine Education Association (REA) and the 250-member Local 152 Building Service Employees Union joined forces to defy the Board of Education, over 470 strikers were arrested for disorderly conduct in their attempts to keep the schools closed.

Nor did the school board miss out on the action. One of the Racine school board members, a Presbyterian minister, still faces charges connected with an incident when he drove his car on the sidewalk in front of the District School Administration Building, hitting two picketing teachers and sending them to the hospital.

### BAD BARGAINING HISTORY

With three strikes in five years, the past relationship between the REA and the board has been anything but cordial. The major events leading up to this year's strike began last August when teachers returned to school without a contract. Rather than extend the terms of the contract, the board unilaterally established a set of regressive work rules which offered teachers less than the expired contract. For instance, the rules forced the teachers to pay part of the cost of health insurance premiums, created a dual track salary system, did away with binding arbitration on the grievance procedure and stopped deducting

REA and its state and national affiliate, the Wisconsin Education Association Council, National Education Association, dues from the paychecks of the teachers.

Finally on January 18 after it was obvious that the board had no intention of settling, the REA voted 951 to 130 to strike on January 25.

The impact of the strike was immediate as the board was forced to close the schools after the first day of the strike. Three days later representatives of seven Racine students moved to enjoin the school board and REA against the strike. However, rather than issue the injunction, Racine Circuit Court Judge Thomas Corbett ordered both sides to bargain daily. Still the two sides got no closer to a settlement. Then finally in the fourth week of the strike, the injunction, which the teachers had already voted to violate, was issued. Then a few days later they learned the price for their "transgression." The REA would be fined \$1,000 a day, REA Executive Director Jim Ennis \$50 a day, and REA President Bob Ables \$10 a day.

### PATTERN OF MISTREATMENT

While Racine represents one of the worst labor situations for teachers in Wisconsin, teachers in other parts of the state have been similarly mistreated. For instance, Wisconsin's 450 school boards are not willing to concede much of anything to their teacher-employees at the bargaining table. In the rural areas, the board members get most of their advice on handling teacher unions from the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB). The WASB is one of the state's most reactionary organizations and generally can be counted on to oppose progressive educational legislation for Wisconsin schools.

The WASB champions "management rights" and is expert at stalling negotiations. One small local teachers' association in northern Wisconsin where the board refused to negotiate for six months was recently told by a WASB negotiator, "You can wet your pants if you like, but we are not negotiating."

In the state's urban areas labor relations between teachers and boards in Wisconsin

parallel those of the rural districts. The main difference is that the larger districts retain expensive law firms who have developed reputations as union busters.

Racine is such a district. It hired the most notorious union-busting law firm in Wisconsin (Melli, Shiels, Walker & Pease headquartered in Madison. Not that it needed to, though. Aside from holding the usual "we're in control" management attitudes, the Racine board is comprised of some of the most rigid right-wing ideologists to hold public office in Wisconsin.

During the strike there were charges and counter-charges that the board was seeking to break the Racine Education Association. While such accusations are often made during strikes, the retention of the union-busting Melli law firm makes the charge more than speculation.

Joe Melli, the senior partner of the firm has presided over the crushing of numerous strikes in Wisconsin over the past 25 years.



Milwaukee Sentinel Photo



Racine Journal Times

Several pickets sprawled in front of cars trying to enter the parking lot at Horlick High School. Those arrested were charged with disorderly conduct for blocking driveways and sidewalks.

and has managed to drive established unions from Wisconsin companies on a number of occasions. Some of his more recent escapades include getting a Teamsters' local decertified at a plumbing supply company breaking an eight-month strike of mechanics at a Madison Chevrolet dealer (union also decertified), seeing 80% of the workers fired who were on strike at Research Products, a Madison-based firm, and the breaking of a seven-month United Auto Workers strike at the Oshkosh Truck Company.

Melli also advised, along with the WASB, the Hortonville (Wis.) school board when it fired its entire staff of 84 teachers after they went on strike in 1974. Conservative estimates place the strike's legal costs to the tiny district (which, by the way, is where Joe McCarthy attended elementary school) at over \$150,000.

In Racine, the Melli firm is expected to collect at least \$50,000 in fees resulting from the labor strife. But then again, the board is a big-time spender in its war with the Racine Education Association.

# Their schools or ours?

Free public education in the U.S. was won by the labor movement of the 1830's, which waged a long and determined political struggle in its behalf. The tradition of strong support for the schools has been devoutly maintained by the labor movement down through the years. Workers want more than just vocational education, although they want plenty of that. They also want to be able to take the fullest part in our civic and cultural affairs.

Public education is under severe attack today by big business forces. This attack, which has been underway for several years, has its aim to destroy the schools. The repeated cutbacks in education have fallen most heavily on working class children, especially Black and other minorities.

Cutbacks in funds have also been accompanied by propaganda barrages against working class children and their ability to learn. Cutbacks are "justified" by phoney scientists who claim that working class children "suffer from inherent learning disabilities."

Much of the progress in education in the 1960's came at the same time teachers began to join and organize trade unions, either of the AFT or NEA variety. Their fights for collective bargaining, and better living conditions for themselves were also accompanied by fights to improve education for all the children.

Today, big business is trying to divide the labor movement and turn it against the teachers. Teachers are now attacked for their "high" salaries, and so forth. But most of all, big business is trying to put the blame for the poor quality of our educational system on the rank and file teachers. It is one of the slickest, most vicious attacks that big business has ever launched against the working people.

Unfortunately, the racist and class-collaborationist policies of American Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker have played into the hands of those who want to turn the clock back. The anti-parent, anti-community attitude of the Shanker leadership has turned off many trade unionists and has shaken their faith in public education. The National Education Association, which has become a trade union in recent years, declines ties to organized labor--thus cutting itself off from a vital base of support for its goals.

Racist attacks against busing and school desegregation are part-and-parcel of big business's drive to destroy the schools. Admirably, the AFL-CIO has held firm in its defense of integrated education. But without an organized struggle at the grassroots, fine resolutions have little impact.

No one has a greater stake in saving public education than labor.

Mobilizing the labor movement to fight this fight, is a key challenge to labor's rank and file. The rank and filers within the AFT and NEA are fighting to turn those unions in the right direction. They deserve the support of the whole rank and file movement, which must make the fight for public education its own.

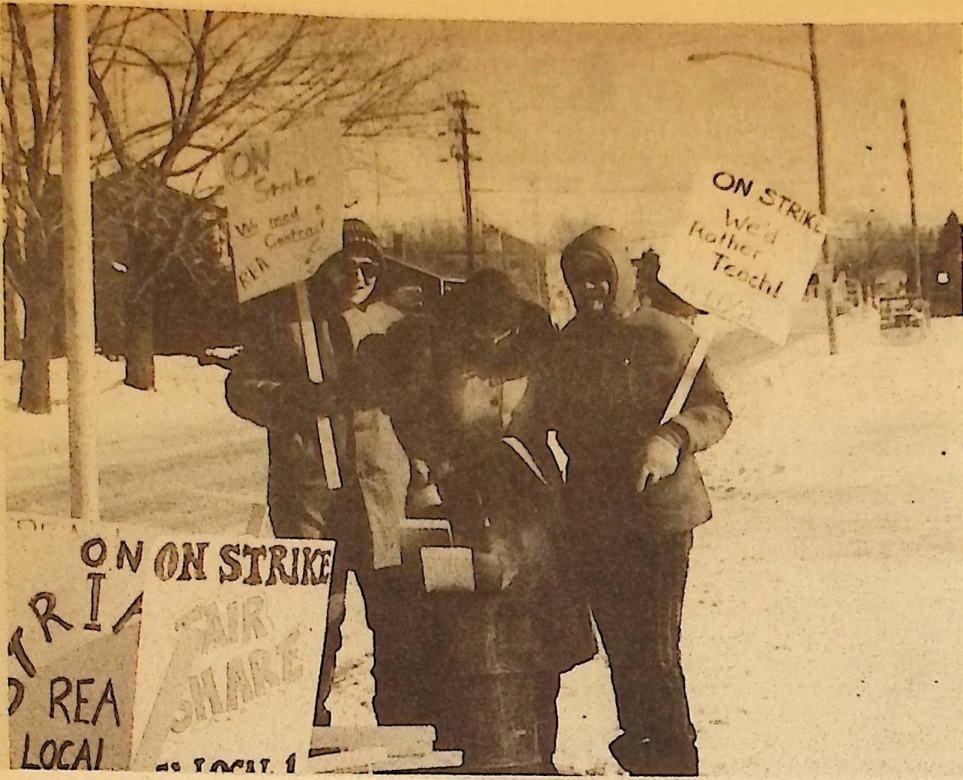


Photo by Steve Case

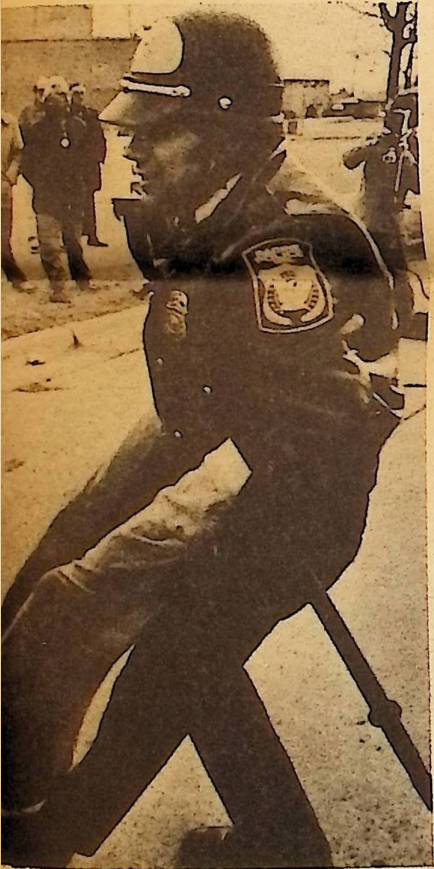
example of just how willing the board is to finance the fight came near the end of the strike. Under Wisconsin law, school districts must have at least 180 days of school by July 1 or else lose all of the state's share of district operating costs. In Racine's case this amount is \$21.6 million or more than 40% of the district's total operating cost. Because of the length of the strike the days available for makeup were becoming fewer and fewer. In order for Racine to squeeze the 180 days in the

representatives will consider charges against 11 teachers. The maximum disciplinary action they could face would be a two-week suspension without pay. At the ratification meeting the teachers voted to have the Association pick up pay lost if such a suspension occurs.

The teachers will be paid at 70% of salary on makeup days based on the new salary schedule (base pay--\$9,425). Salary raises during the three-year contract will be based on 75% of the cost of living.

One of the most satisfying incidents occurred three weeks following the strike when two of the vociferous antagonists of the REA were defeated in their bid for re-election to the school board. The two, the afore-mentioned Presbyterian minister and a retired banker who chaired the board's negotiating team and whose teacher-daughter was a scab during the strike, were defeated by a university professor and a former United Auto Workers local president. They had been given all-out support by the Racine Education Association and other Racine labor unions.

The strike proved that the REA is one of the toughest unions in Wisconsin. Part of its strength seemed to lie in the open way in which important decisions, such as defiance of an injunction, were made. It's a tribute to the REA's leadership that throughout the ordeal the unity of the membership was never in jeopardy. The REA has three years before contract time rolls around again. That gives it, the labor community and pro-education citizens, time enough to elect a school board that is more interested in education than in expanding its management rights.



Racine police arrested 470 teachers who resisted efforts to break their strike.

school calendar by July 1 and retain their \$21.6 million, Racine's teachers needed to be in their classrooms by March 15.

Even though a compromise was reached in time and the state aids were saved, at least one of the school board members indicated he was willing to continue the battle against the REA which would have meant loss of the aids.

### SETTLEMENT WAS A COMPROMISE

The settlement included a compromise on the issues neither side had been ready to give in on. One such issue was fair share (agency shop) which was settled by not requiring the 200 Racine teachers who do not now belong to the union to join. All new teachers will be required to pay dues, however. One of the stickiest issues was the board's absolute insistence that the 475 teachers arrested on the picket lines be cited for contempt.

As a compromise, the REA agreed that a review board comprised of union and board

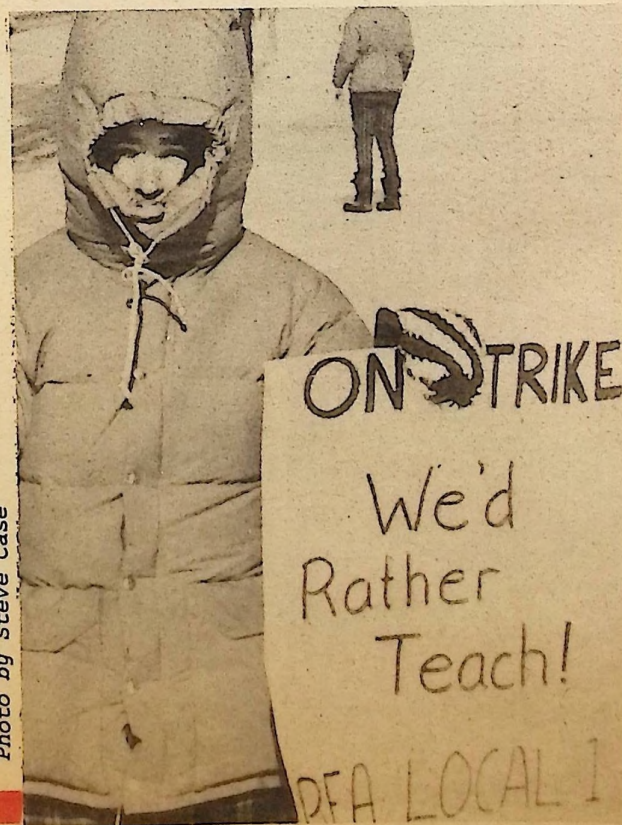


Photo by Steve Case

## RACISM HURTS KIDS

# AFT's Black Caucus: force for democracy

by LARRY GURLEY, Chairperson  
AFT Black Caucus

The history of the Black Caucus within the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, began at the 1967 AFT Convention, when a group of Black and white teachers who were concerned about the lack of democracy within AFT, and with the lack of leadership and concern about the problems of Black children and teachers, bolted from the dominant Progressive Caucus to form the New Caucus. Many of the Black delegates who joined the New Caucus united with Black delegates who chose to remain in the Progressive Caucus to form the Black Caucus.

The AFT Black Caucus was formed as a vehicle for bringing our union and the community together to solve common problems, to develop programs to aid Black children to fight for greater Black representation within the labor movement and the AFT leadership. The Caucus also sought to fight for democratic community control of the schools, and to fight racism inside and outside the union.



The Caucus has consistently raised these issues at each passing AFT convention. And in doing so, it has attracted the support of many democratically-minded white delegates. At the 1969 Convention in New Orleans, the Black Caucus organized support for workers who were protesting job discrimination at the Convention hotel. After the Black Caucus picketed the Convention, the AFT (on paper) agreed to use only hotels which practice non-discrimination in hiring.

## Coors beer (continued from page 2)

ic issues. We are on strike for basic human rights--for human dignity."

Coors has done more than refuse to bargain in good faith. Plant gates have remained open since the day the strike began and the company has embarked on an aggressive campaign to break the strike. Strikers are called daily in an effort to convince them to return to their jobs. The employment office in Golden is busy and company agents are scurrying around the Denver area attempting to recruit strike-breakers on campuses and from among the city's large number of unemployed.

Despite 24-hour picket lines at the eight entrances to the brewery, Coors has been able to maintain limited production. Two other unions (of the 8,500 employees at Golden only 1,500 are represented by Local 366) have signed contracts that require their members to cross picket lines. Coors has its own trucks and locomotives, thus facilitating the movement of raw materials and newly brewed beer.

Silverthorn explained the situation: "The union has responded in the only way it can: by calling on the public to boycott Coors beer. If Local 366 is destroyed or, what amounts to the same thing, if it is forced to accept an open shop, working people all over the country will suffer a major defeat. Many companies would love to

In 1970, at the Pittsburgh Convention, The Caucus organized support for Black Vice Presidents who were being purged from the AFT Executive Council in a move by Albert Shanker of New York. In that election, many of the Black candidates for office led the field, while Shanker, normally the top vote getter, came in eighth. (Delegates have since lost the secret ballot in convention elections--this means that they are now under extreme pressure to vote for those whom the Shanker Administration favors.)

In 1971, the Black Caucus led a fight at the Convention in behalf of AFT member Angela Davis, and her right to bail and a fair trial. The Black Caucus also joined in the successful fight to get the AFT on record against the racist war in Vietnam.

In 1973, at the Washington Convention, the Black Caucus led the Convention to the White House to demonstrate for jobs and increased social services, including education. Without the floor fight led by the Black Caucus, this demonstration would not have taken place. (Delegates have since lost the right to raise such resolutions from the floor.)

The purpose of the AFT Black Caucus remains unchanged. It is the fight for an aggressive, democratic union in the recognition that racism, inside and outside the union, is the worst and most pernicious, anti-democratic and opportunistic influence in our union movement.

## FASHIONS IN RACISM

But there are fashions in racism. The current fashion is to deny its existence. The story now is that "Slavery wasn't so bad after all"--that slaves were happy and better-treated than poor whites. There is also the new doctrine that once people have lived in poverty for several



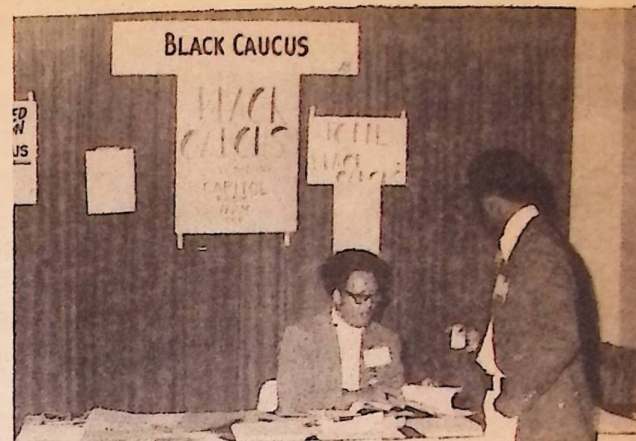
follow Coors' lead if they thought they could get away with it. And Coors would gladly spend part of its millions of dollars of profits to spread its union-busting techniques.

"The only weapon that can prevent a major defeat to the workers who are members of Local 366 is a massive public boycott of Coors beer.

"THIS UNION WILL NOT BE DESTROYED! PLEASE BOYCOTT COORS BEER!"

Send strike donations or requests for further information to:

James Silverthorn, President  
Brewery, Bottling, Can and Allied  
Workers Industrial Union, Local 366  
4510 Indiana Street  
Golden, Colorado 80401



generations, they sort of "inherit" poverty, criminality, mental diseases, etc., and that therefore, any special economic and social program to deal with these problems are wasteful.

The Republicans talk about the "false promises," "exaggerated expectations," and "cruel deceptions" of those that are most vulnerable--as if "jobs or income now" was a false expectation, a decent education is a cruel deception and an end to racism is an exaggerated expectation. The Democrats, when not echoing this refrain, tell us that "we have overcome, that racism doesn't exist anymore.

In our own labor movement, some people argue that, of course, racism is bad and must be exposed--except that there must not be any concrete programs that single out any group that needs special assistance. This is attacked as "reverse discrimination" and "quotas."

Behind the opposition to affirmative action is a deeply-rooted notion that the good jobs and the professions are exclusively reserved for whites.

Racism has the power to turn people into their own worst enemies. Many whites are willing to accept layoffs and salary cuts, rather than unite with fellow Black workers. They are willing to settle for poor education rather than work to desegregate schools. There is no way for the labor movement to fight for full employment without addressing itself to the catastrophic unemployment rate among Blacks. There is no way to fight for quality education for all, without fighting for quality, integrated education.

In short, there is no way of uniting the labor movement without fighting to end racism.

## Bob Hollowwa

Veteran LABOR TODAY supporter Bob Hollowwa died May 9, 1977 at his home in Sacramento, California.

Of advanced age, Brother Hollowwa suffered poor health this last year, undergoing major surgery. Long a leader of the Moulder's Union in Southern California, Hollowwa was a long-time veteran of the CIO, and rank and file activity preceding the CIO. For many years he was an organizer for the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union in the Southwest and Rocky Mountains.

LABOR TODAY readers remember his many stories and letters in support of the Farm Workers Union in LT, as well as his article on peoples independent political action in the October, 1974 issue.

Although he suffered during the McCarthy period of his union views, and was in poor health in his later years, Brother Hollowwa never ceased to fight for rank and file unionism. He will be sorely missed.



# the rank and file in action

by **FRED GABOURY**

Field Organizer  
TUAD

## UAC sparks teachers (continued from page 1)

have no reason to object to merger and every reason to want it. It is another of our goals.

The last issue on which the rank and file is concerned is its relationship with each other. In particular, teachers have come under attack and disapproval by other union members because they have not improved the quality of education. The majority of this attack is due to enormous misunderstandings on the part of other union members concerning teacher power. Teachers have very little power to change the schools when their leadership is not militant. Teachers like all working people are being oppressed, not only by the system, but also by their leaders. The rank and file movement is an effort to unite us across union lines so that we may work together to improve education for our children, not only because they are our children, but also because they are the primary resource of our country.

## CARTER-MEANY PLOT TOGETHER AGAIN

There's a new outfit on the scene that calls itself the Labor-Management Group. The Group made its public debut after President Carter issued his Statement on Inflation on April 13. It deserves a close examination.

The Labor-Management Group says that it is an "informal private group" that has been meeting for four years. AFL-CIO President George Meany and Reginald Jones, President of General Electric, serve as Co-Chairmen and John Dunlop, one-time head of the Construction Industry Stabilization Board and Secretary of Labor in the Nixon-Ford Cabinets, is Coordinator.

The Group issued a statement on April 19 saying they were "pleased to cooperate with the President" in dealing with a "broad range of economic policy questions" that include objectives for "jobs creation and inflation reduction." The statement ended by saying: "American labor and management are uniquely dedicated to private enterprise, a free labor movement and to collective bargaining. They share a responsibility ... It is these concerns which bind us together."

Anytime a bunch like that gets together to "cooperate" on anything, every union member and labor leader worth their salt should become concerned--and these concerns should bind them together in a movement to end that "cooperation." Anytime labor "leaders" join company brass and agree that there are no magic solutions in the battle against inflation, it's time to ask, "What the hell's going on here."

A look at the record leads to one inescapable conclusion: All previous examples of government-sponsored labor-management cooperation have resulted in workers coming out in the short end. Everytime it's been tried, "cooperation" has ended up being cooperation to limit or control wages.

In the early '60's the Kennedy Administration tried to do it by establishing "voluntary guidelines" that limited wage increases to 3.2 percent. The AFL-CIO leadership lived



FRED GABOURY

with these controls until 1965 when rank and file airline mechanics smashed them by voting down a contract settlement.

Nixon chose a different way in August of 1971. He used the power given him under the Economic Stabilization Act to establish and enforce mandatory controls that limited wage increases to 5.5 percent.

Part of the enforcement apparatus was the Pay Board. George Meany, I. W. Abel, Frank Fitzsimmons, Leonard Woodcock and Floyd Smith agreed to serve on the Board, offering the "reason" that it was "easier to fight on the inside." (Meany, Abel, Fitzsimmons and Woodcock are all members of the new Labor Management Group.)

The rest is history: The Economic Stabilization Act expired in 1974 but it gave Nixon the tools to hold 1973 and 1974 wage increases to about half the increase in previous years. They accomplished their purpose of "zapping" labor by driving down the living standards of all workers.

It will be no different this time, even if the cooperation takes place in "an informal, private group."

Meany, Kirkland and the rest should quit spending their time and our money on the affairs of the Labor-Management Group. They should, instead, get on with the business of leading the labor movement in economic and political struggle to provide jobs for the 10 million workers the AFL-CIO says need jobs.

Admittedly, that's not a "magic solution" but it is the best solution to the problems of unemployment and inflation.

## 80¢ OVER 3 YEARS?

# R & F hits new steel settlement

by LABOR TODAY Staff

The recent national contract in the Steel industry has provoked a wave of protests from the rank and file. Already, 14 major USWA locals representing 60,000 members have passed resolutions condemning the new contract as inadequate.

The pact, negotiated by out-going President I.W. Abel and President-elect Lloyd McBride, continues the no-strike Experimental Negotiating Agreement in 1980--which in essence is a six-year pact with a re-opener after three years, but no right to strike on the terms of the contract.



The National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee says: "This means a six-year clamp on wages at the three percent level and there is language in the contract that even allows this to be reduced. It means six years of no action on the coke ovens and other urgent matters on health and safety. It means six more years of discriminatory practices, a toothless grievance procedure and relentless speed-up job combination and job elimination."

District 31 Director-elect, Jim Balanoff, called the new pact "a big zero--a disgrace to the union." "It's only another indication of the tremendous inequities of the Experimental Negotiating Agreement," said Ed Sadlowski, District 31 Director and recent candidate for USWA President, "It offers no new benefits and, in fact, it takes away some benefits."

Rank and file steelworkers have no right to vote on the basic steel contract. Instead, the pact was ratified at a meeting of local union presidents, the Wage Policy Conference, in Washington. An initial vote of these officers defeated the agreement. But a second vote, which occurred after administration arm-twisting, approved the settlement. Rank and filers have charged that this second vote was unfair because it was done on a "one-man-one-vote" basis, instead of each president casting votes in proportion to the number of members in their local.

As a result, the National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee has urged local unions to pass resolutions against the pact and to demand its renegotiation. Dissatisfaction with the national agreement may well surface during the many local supplemental negotiations which are still in progress in basic steel. Strikes are possible in local negotiations.

### WHAT'S IN THE AGREEMENT

The terms of the new agreement provide:

Eighty cents an hour wage increase, spread over three years, amounting to about three percent each year.

There was no change in the Cost-of-Living-Adjustment which provides a one cent an hour increase for every 3/10 rise in the Consumer Price Index. This provides, roughly, that workers will recover only about 72 percent of the wages they will lose through inflation. This does not provide for increases in taxes, however.

Considering everything, the prospects are that steelworkers will end up three years from now with a lower spendable income than at present.

What was widely touted as "lifetime job security" did not materialize in the contract. Instead, Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB) was extended for employees with 20 years service--a category unlikely to be laid-off, save by a total plant shutdown. These improvements for older workers will be financed out of existing SUB funds, which will thereby be reduced for younger workers.

No improvements were made in health and safety--especially in the area of the right to strike or shut down unsafe areas.

The existing Consent Decree, which is aimed at reducing discrimination against women and minority workers, was incorporated into the contract--but was not strengthened.

One new feature in a contract devoid of new features was an "indoctrination program" jointly financed by the union and the company to teach new workers "the benefits of productivity in advancing the best interests of employees" and the evils of strikes.



The new steel pact was praised, however, by THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, which found that it will increase industry profits, and by the Carter Administration, which indicated the settlement fell within their guidelines for "non-inflationary" settlements.

Hardly had the ink dried on the contract when steel companies began to announce steel price increases. Wage increases are always the signal for new price increases. However, between 1967 and 1976, steel prices went up 120% while wages, during this same period, only went up 68%!



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