

the rank and file in action

Labor Today

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Volume 16, Nos. 7 and 8

July-August 1977

Court upholds racism



Wash. Post strikers sentenced

ILWU Handyman boycott



'Right-to-work' threat grows

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TUAD honors Admiral Dawson



CIVIL RIGHTS VICTORIES HIT

Court bars challenge to racist seniority

Labor Today

by FRED GABOURY
TUAD Field Organizer

In late May the Supreme Court landed a one-two punch to the chin of every U.S. worker.

The first punch was a decision upholding an Ohio law that denies unemployment compensation to non-striking employees who are laid off because of a strike by other employees of the same corporation. (Specifically, workers layed off at a U.S. Steel mill in Ohio were denied benefits because of a strike by coal miners in a mine owned by U.S. Steel in West Virginia.)



Fred Gaboury

The second blow came in the form of a 7-2 decision that placed severe limitations on the rights of workers who are victimized by seniority systems that perpetuate and re-enforce the effects of past discrimination in hiring, placement and promotion. (Specifically, the Court ruled that "an otherwise neutral, legitimate seniority system does not become unlawful under Title VII simply because it may perpetuate pre-1965 discrimination. Congress did not intend to make it illegal for employees with vested seniority rights to continue to exercise those rights, even at the expense of (workers discriminated against prior to 1965)").

Both decisions are serious set-backs for all working people as corporate America has turned to the conservative majority of the Burger Court in a campaign to roll back the hard-won victories of the trade union and civil rights movements. Both deserve further elaboration but the "seniority decision" deserves the special attention of the rank and file movement.

Legal struggles and court battles are always difficult, but from the beginning, attempts by Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Native Americans, Asians and women workers to use the courts to overhaul and modify discriminatory seniority systems have been the subject of controversy and misconstruction. Commentators of every stripe--from columnists in the WALL STREET JOURNAL to editorial writers for the AFL-CIO NEWS--got into the act with a tearful defense of "seniority" that branded those who would make seniority systems more effective instruments for protecting workers' rights as "outside agitators" or "internal wreckers". (A June 1 release from the AFL-CIO's Department of Public Relations speaks of "well intentioned individuals" who have been involved in a number of court challenges to discriminatory seniority systems that date back to the late 60's.)

For the past two or three years, white workers have been flooded with a torrent of warnings about the need to "protect seniority". They have been swamped with half-

truths and distortions aimed at blinding them to the difference between the principle of seniority and a system of seniority--all in the hope that they will be also blinded to the fact that *no worker escapes when the right of equal employment, placement and promotional opportunities are denied to some.*

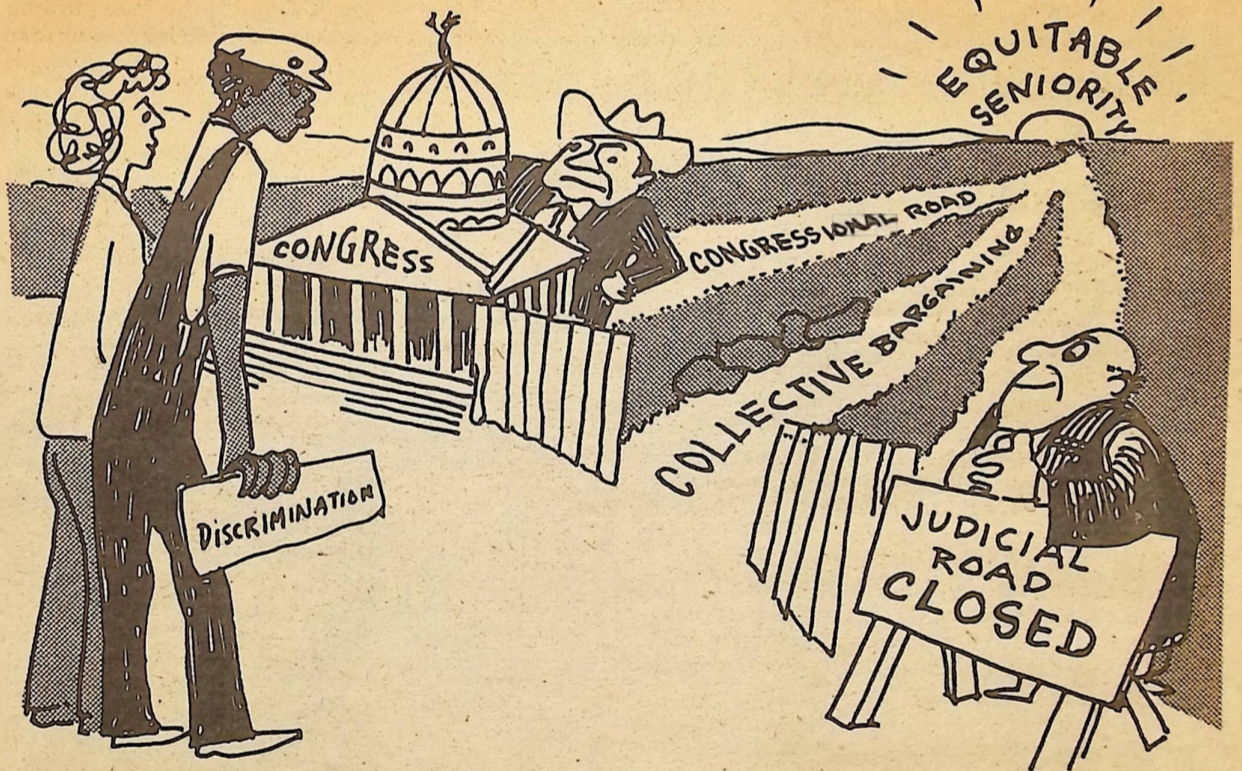
All workers and their friends should be clear on one thing from the very beginning: The principle of seniority--that all workers be treated on an equal basis subject to collectively agreed upon standards and that workers have a vested interest in their jobs in direct proportion to their years in a given shop or industry--is a basic building block of class-struggle trade unionism.

Some unions have negotiated plant-wide seniority systems that preserve this principle. They have backed it up with grievance procedures to enforce non-discriminatory transfers, promotion, lay-off and recall. In some cases these systems are supplemented with aggressive struggles for non-discriminatory--even affirmative action--hiring programs as well. It is the responsibility of every worker to defend these systems against the never-ending efforts of employers to chip and whittle them away. (One need look no further than to Golden, Colorado and the efforts of the Coors brewery management for evidence of a determined, nationwide attack on the principle of seniority.)

vine inspiration; any can be changed. It is not un-American nor anti-union to advocate modification of seniority systems so that special steps may be taken to protect the hard-won gains toward fair employment practices. Just as affirmative action was necessary to guarantee hiring and promotional opportunities during periods of relative prosperity and economic growth, it is now necessary to implement affirmative action programs within seniority systems that will protect these gains during periods of economic down-turn and stagnation.

There is nothing sacred about the hiring and apprenticeship programs of most of the unions in the construction industry. They were deliberately contrived to keep so-called "minority workers" out of these unions and, thereby, out of the construction industry.

While the building trades unions have been the most blatant defenders of racist policies and practices, many other unions have accommodated and aggravated these practices by negotiating departmental seniority systems that are often made even more discriminatory by narrow lines of progression. (The "ladder" of promotion that employees must climb in order to reach better paying and often easier jobs.) In practice, these systems are often little more than conspiracies that systematically deny opportunity and protection to Black, Latin and women workers.



But workers and their friends in the community--and this is especially true of white male trade unionists--must be clear on another question: *There are discriminatory seniority systems--even the seven Supreme Court Judges who made the majority decision admitted this. It is the responsibility of every worker--Black, Brown, Yellow, Red and White--to fight to change these systems by any means possible, through the collective bargaining process, through court action or by the legislative process.*

There are many factors that enter the picture when the principle of seniority is applied in practice. Every seniority system in every union contract is the result of collective bargaining and is, therefore, subject to negotiation and renegotiation. No seniority clause is the product of de-

Most seniority systems were "flawed" from their inception by the racist hiring policies of the large corporations. Most were negotiated--or agreed upon--at a time Blacks, Latins, and other workers of color were denied any (to say nothing of "equal") opportunity to participate in the economic life of the nation or in the internal affairs of our unions. For this reason most of the existing seniority systems can and should be strengthened.

For the time being, the Supreme Court has erected a solid barrier to those who would look to the courts to modify seniority systems that were in existence before July 2, 1965. The fight to get Congress to correct the situation through legislation will be long and difficult.

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'OUR MEN ARE INNOCENT'

Harsh sentences for Wash. Post strikers

by LABOR TODAY Staff

Fourteen striking Pressman at the WASHINGTON POST were hit with unexpectedly harsh sentences May 20 for misdemeanor charges resulting from the Pressmen's strike at the POST which began in October, 1975.

The strikers were handed sentences ranging from 60 days in jail to one year for six of the strikers. The others were fined between \$250 and \$750, put on one year's probation, and many were given suspended jail sentences.

"The sentences were extremely harsh," said David Rein, chief counsel for the Pressmen. "If it were not for the influence of the WASHINGTON POST management, these people would have been given probation for these charges."

Last April, felony charges against the strikers were dropped after Local 6 leaders agreed to plead guilty to the misdemeanor charges. The government also agreed not to press other criminal charges.

The dropping of the felony charges was "a great victory" according to Local 6 President Everett Forsman, because it "proved what we've said all along--there was no 'riot' at the POST, there was no millions of dollars of damage done to the POST, there was no conspiracy to destroy the POST."

The Pressmen had originally been indicted following a grand jury investigation which charged the Pressmen had illegally damaged the presses of the POST when they struck

October, 1975. Although only \$12,290 worth of damage occurred, the POST claimed damage was in excess of \$15 million.

"Our men are innocent," Forsman says. "We are guilty only of defending our jobs, of standing up to union-busting, of fighting to protect ourselves and our families. The real criminals can be found in the board room of the WASHINGTON POST."

The barrage of anti-union propaganda which the POST, which also operates a major

radio news station and a TV station in Washington, unleashed against the strikers, turned public opinion against the Pressmen. An opinion poll found that most area residents believed the unionists were guilty.

The managers of the POST are believed to have provoked the strike with the intent of destroying the union. The POST had contacted non-union print shops long before the strike. Scabs, trained at a special school in Oklahoma, were flown in by helicopter to break the strike.



MACHINISTS' RANK AND FILE

Caterpillar's racism bugs workers

by HELEN LIMA
SEIU
Oakland, CA

The Caterpillar Tractor Co. is a multinational corporation, the 32nd largest in the United States, which netted \$98 million in profit in the first quarter of 1977. One of the corporation's plants is located in South Africa.

Another is located at San Leandro, California, a few miles south of Oakland. That plant was in the news a few years ago because a Black worker there, Greg Jones, was driven to the edge of insanity by harassment at the plant and shot and killed a man.

For the last three years an anti-discrimination committee has been at work in the plant straightening out some of the problems which overwhelmed Greg Jones. This committee got together in August, 1975 and consisted of four women, one Cuban male worker, one worker from Iran and several Black male workers. They brought suit against the company, charging sex and racial discrimination. The company has since then doubled its workforce and has come up to the minimum federal requirements on percentages of Black and women workers. In the force of 2,000 workers, 15% are now Black.

The court case is scheduled for June, 1977, before Judge Spencer Williams. The workers are raising money for the legal fees through dances and other social functions. They are receiving good support from the workers in the plant.

The union at the San Leandro plant is Local 284 of the IAM. The workers point out that the IAM was the last union in the country to take the "no Blacks admitted" clause out of their constitution. Although the suit does not name the union, the union, like the company, has made some changes in the last three years.

In 1974 a Black worker was elected financial secretary of the union. The white president of the union refused to swear him in and resigned rather than do so. A Black worker who had been elected vice president then moved up to presidency. The local now also has a Black business agent.

The union is now in contract negotiations. The expiration date of the contract was May 1. One important improvement being demanded by the workers is strengthening the grievance procedure. At present, the company has three days to respond at the first step of the grievance procedure but no time limits on the second and third steps. More than 100 grievances are backed up awaiting settlements.

There is a saying among the workers at Caterpillar that the San Leandro plant is a training ground for South Africa. One recent grievance indicates there's truth in that statement. Lula Simmons, a Black woman who was a member of the negotiating committee and on the plant safety committee, requested light work due to an injury. She was assigned to heavy work instead, and the grievance procedure brought no alleviation. Finally, Congressman Ronal Dellums of this area had to intervene to get her assigned to light work.

The committee against discrimination is working toward getting the union officially into the fight.

GOVERNMENT USES ENTRAPMENT

UE organizer framed

by LABOR TODAY Staff

Two Massachusetts trade unionists have been sentenced to prison on a phoney frame-up charge of selling four firecracker "bombs" to an undercover agent of the U.S. Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau. The charges stem from alleged plans to blow up scab trucks during a 1975 strike.

Alex Markley, a field organizer for the United Electrical Workers (UE), has been sentenced to 18 months, while Tony Soares, a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), was sentenced to one year in prison.

Markley and Soares maintain that they are

innocent of the charges, and were victims of a government plot to entrap them into becoming informers for the ATF.

The charges stem from an 8-week strike by the UE against the Worthington Compressor



Alex Markley

Co. in Holyoke, MA in 1975. Scab trucks were rolling through union picket lines, and several strikers had been assaulted--one was hospitalized. Markley, a strike leader, had been threatened with death.

An ATF undercover agent, Thomas O'Reilly, appeared on the scene and began to agitate for violence against the scabs. Markley and Soares refused.

Markley and Soares have received a lot of labor support and the movement there is

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WORKER KILLED ON PICKET LINE

ILWU organizes Handyman boycott

TERRY GREEN, ILWU Member, Local 6 Oakland, California

Edison Bros. Stores, Inc. is not a small operation. Under various names--Leed's, Baker's, Chandler's, Jeans West, United Sporting Goods, and others--it has over a thousand retail outlets and warehouses. It has signed no union contracts. It has defeated attempts to organize or called negotiations until it could defeat the union. Only once has it been--and is still being--struck.

One of the names under which it does business is Handyman, a hardware and building supply chain.

On February 26, 1976, Warehouse Union Local 6 of the International Longshoreman's and Warehouseman's Union won an NLRB representation election at the Tracy warehouse.

On August 4, after five months of fruitless negotiations, Local 6 struck the warehouse. At 3:30 a.m. on the morning of August 6, four carloads of management personnel went through the picket line. They made ready to ship merchandise out of the plant. Leslie Laeger, a company supervisor, began to maneuver a truck to a loading dock across from the pickets. The pickets stayed at the curb outside the plant. Leslie Laeger bumped Norman Lewis, a picket, who stepped back several feet. Laeger then gunned the engine and put the truck into forward gear, running over Brother Lewis and crushing him to death.

ILWU responded by organizing weekend picketing of Handyman stores in Northern Cali-

fornia, since extended to Southern California and Oregon. The International has called on all locals for a \$1 per member assessment to set up a trust fund for Brother Lewis' widow and five children. All Internationals and Locals for which the ILWU could find an address have been circularized asking support.

One of the things ILWU appealed for was letters to the San Joaquin County District Attorney, asking that Laeger be prosecuted for murder. Laeger was arraigned, and has since been indicted by the Grand Jury on a charge of felony manslaughter. Union members who testified at the Grand Jury hearing say that not only did the District Attorney avoid questions dealing with premeditation, but that he cut off attempts to volunteer testimony on this question. Premeditation is the difference between murder and manslaughter.

It is not easy to maintain volunteer picket lines these days but the ILWU has managed for six weeks now. The stores have been badly hurt and the Tracy warehouse is closed tight.

Normally, a company could be expected to fold soon under the kind of pressure Handyman is getting. But this is also an attempt to breach the solid anti-labor front of a corporate giant. It isn't going to be easy and ILWU will appreciate all the support it can get. Resolutions from local unions should be addressed to: Edison Bros. Stores, Inc., P.O. Box 14020, St. Louis, Mo. 63278 with copies to ILWU Local 6, 255 Ninth Street, San Francisco, California 94103.

Other subsidiaries of Edison Brothers Stores, Inc., which owns Handyman, are:

Leed's Shoe Stores
Chandler's Shoe Stores
Baker's Shoe Stores
Burt's Shoe Stores

Size 5-7-9 Shops
The Wild Pair
Joan Bar: Boutiques
United Sporting Goods

A DIGNIFIED BLACK MAN'

TUAD honors Admiral Dawson

Los Angeles, members of the LA Trade Unionists for Action and Democracy (TUAD), friends and family celebrated the 50th birthday of Admiral Dawson, a leader of the militant rank and file organization.

Dawson, born in Texas of sharecropper parents, was among the first Black apprentices in the predominantly white plumber's union. Dawson is now a full-fledged journeyman plumber and well-known figure among building trades workers.

Speaking for the family, Edna King, Dawson's younger sister, said the bonds of friendship go beyond familial ties.

When we were younger, Admiral said to me, 'I'll never be a rich man, but I'll be a dignified Black man.' This was not an easy task in Texas, where democracy was crying out for justice. Where signs on restaurants, drinking fountains and theatres read, 'Whites only'."

Dawson praised the many friends assembled for their participation and dedication to peace, freedom and equality.

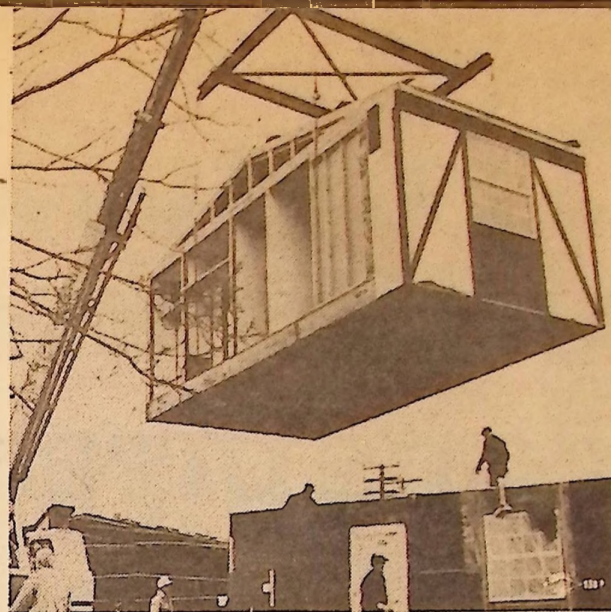
Today's struggle, he said, is marked by an ever increasing drive by U.S. monopolies for profits. "There are no borders nor

Admiral Dawson



state capitols when they reach greater profits. But at the same time monopolies attempt to create disunity among the working people by placing borders, pitting immigrant worker against citizen, men against women, Black and Brown against white."

Dawson called for greater unity among trade unionists against run-away shops, to stop all deportation of undocumented workers and to support the six-hour day with no cut in wages. Calling for international working class solidarity, Dawson urged rank and filers to have their unions affiliate with the World Federation of Trade Unions.



A prefabricated module is lifted into place to form a finished section of an Akron, OH instant housing development.

Construction jobs down by 500,000

There are 500,000 fewer workers employed in the construction industry today than there were only three years ago. A few of these jobs have been lost due to new processes and new materials. Some more have been lost as leaders of the different unions have relaxed working conditions in an effort to be "competitive" with a growing number of non-union employers.

But these are only secondary factors in the near-depression level of unemployment among members of the building tradesmen. The main culprit--here as in so many other areas affecting the working and living conditions of U.S. workers--are the corporate-government policies that put profits ahead of people.

These policies have done more than create growing, long-term unemployment in the construction industry. They have been the major single factor contributing to the skyrocketing price of new housing and to the further deterioration of the nation's supply of housing.

What is now a serious housing shortage will become a national housing crisis when, in only a few short years, there will be as few as four decent homes for every five families in the market.

While escalating housing prices hit the poor families the hardest, in recent years the rapid increase in prices has spread upward to affect middle income people as well.

Today, five million home owners have mortgage payments in excess of 25 percent of their incomes. In 1975 10 1/2 million tenants paid more than 25 percent of their income for rent. Almost 60 percent of U.S. families cannot afford to buy the average priced new home.

Despite the rise in the prices and rents, the physical condition of the U.S. housing is deplorable: 2.3 million U.S. households either have no bathroom or are forced to share one with others; 700,000 households have inadequate plumbing and another 4.5 million families live in houses with leaky roofs; 3.6 million families are living in overcrowded conditions.

By the early 1980's the average home will cost \$78,000 and only those people with incomes in excess of \$20,000 will be able to afford them. This will, in effect, deny the opportunity of home ownership to nearly all young families unless present policies and priorities are reversed. It will also mean that almost all Black, Puerto Rican, Latin and Native American families will be condemned to live in ever deteriorating and ever more expensive older housing.

Trilateral Commission: international anti-labor conspiracy

by JIM WILLIAMS, Editor
LABOR TODAY

It's no secret to working people that a "crisis in everyday living" has been battering our living standards for years. The economic crisis hit a high point in 1975, and although some improvement has taken place since then, most economists predict another crisis of similar proportions in the near future.

What is especially important to ponder is that the current economic crisis is a world-wide crisis that has affected every nation in the Western world. The big monopolies and corporations found their profits were hurting--and thus began a long search to shift the burdens of the crisis onto the backs of working people.

A common policy toward workers wherever they do business...

The growth of the multinational corporations has meant that the corporate boardrooms are now working to achieve a common policy toward working people in all the countries where they do business.

In May, 1975, in Kyoto, Japan, David Rockefeller called a meeting of economic and political bigwigs from the United States, Western Europe and Japan. Its announced purpose: to consider the "excess of democracy" afflicting the advanced capitalist countries.

In short, its purpose was to work out a common strategy to shift the burden of the crisis to the working people--and to develop new ways to combat the growing economic fightback against corporate-government control of the economy.

From the Kyoto meeting came a new organization, The Trilateral Commission. Its members include the men who now serve as U.S. Secretary of State, Treasury, Defense, National Security Advisor, and President and Vice President.

The Trilateral Commission also includes top brass from major U.S. banks, like Bank of America, Chase Manhattan and Wells Fargo. Big industrial corporation brass from Bendix, Coca-Cola, Texas Instruments, Exxon, Kaiser, Hewlett-Packard and Caterpillar Tractor are also on board.

But rounding out this corporate gang-up were three top unionists from the U.S. labor movement--USWA's I.W. Abel, UAW's Leonard Woodcock and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland.

What were representatives of workers doing there?

A real question arises--what were representatives of the working people doing in a place like that?

The Trilateral Commission has issued a number of documents, including a major report, "The Crisis of Democracy," which advocates "moderation in democracy" in the

interests of "governability" and "solvency." It also bemoans the fact that coercion, discipline, secrecy and deception in government are out of favor with the populace.

Did Abel, Woodcock and Kirkland disagree with the Commission's report? Well, their names are signed to it--and if they disagree, they've kept those disagreements to themselves.

'Responsible' union leaders are less of a challenge...

And for good reason. One of the Commission's reports speaks to the control of labor in this way: "Responsible union leaders with effective authority over their members are less of a challenge to the authority of the national leaders... if the membership is rebellious, if extreme demands and wildcat strikes are the order of the day, the formulation and implementation of a national wage policy becomes impossible."

Woodcock, Abel and Kirkland have been major advocates of "responsible" leadership that oppose rank and file democracy and have gone along with government schemes to limit wages--like Phase II. They have put their O.K. on Presidential reports to limit union democracy by knocking out some of the labor "bill of rights" clauses in the Landrum-Griffin Act.

The answer to the economic crisis, according to the Trilateral Commission, is "national economic planning." But the Commission's idea of planning is to further strengthen the corporate-government gang-up so that plans to fleece the working people can be refined and strengthened. And complaints about the "excess of democracy" are an ominous warning to anyone who would stand in the way.

Not much has been said in the press about the Trilateral Commission, even though the brass from Time magazine and the Columbia Broadcasting System were at Kyoto.

Nowhere in the history of the world has such an international corporate gang-up taken place. Yet, Abel, Woodcock and Kirkland haven't breathed a word to their members about it.

ENA is right out of the Trilaterals' book!

But the impact of the Trilateral Commission is already being felt in the U.S. labor movement. A careful reading of the UAW Officers' Convention report, and the resolutions introduced by the UAW leadership show the hand of the Commission's economic thinking. And, I.W. Abel's "Experimental Negotiating Agreement"--which gave up the right to strike, effectively ending any membership say in the contract--is a page right out of the Commission's book.

When union brass and company brass sit down at a love feast, it's always cause for real concern among the rank and file. But when it takes place on an international level, in almost Watergate secrecy, and the stated results are to shaft labor--then the

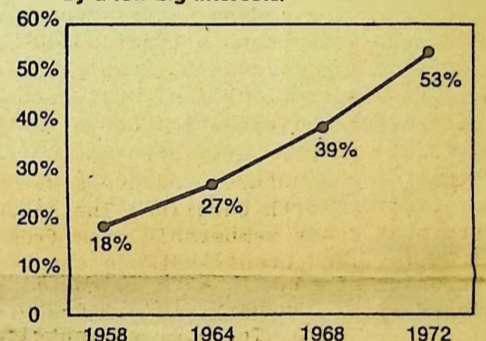
What the Trilateral Commission is Worried About...

... Falling Confidence in Major Institutions

Percentage of the Public Expressing "A Great Deal of Confidence" in the Leadership of:	1966	1973	Change (1966-1973)
Federal Executive	41	19	-22
Congress	42	29	-13
Supreme Court	51	33	-18
military	62	40	-22
major companies	55	29	-26
organized labor	22	20	-2
higher education	61	44	-17
press	29	30	+1
television news	25	41	+16

... Growing Public Awareness of Big Business Influence on Government

Percentage of the public who say that "the government is pretty much run by a few big interests."



Source: University of Michigan, Center for Political Studies, election surveys, as reported in the Trilateral Commission's report, *The Crisis of Democracy*.

rank and file has real problems.

Any labor leader worth his or her salt should denounce the Trilateral Commission in the strongest possible terms--and warn the membership of its consequences. Abel, Woodcock and Kirkland will have to do some fast and fancy explaining to justify their support and endorsement of the Trilateral Commission.

ILWU's Harry B

by JIM WILLIAMS, Editor

An era in the U.S. labor movement ended last month at the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union convention with the retirement of three of its top officers, Harry Bridges, President, Louis Goldblatt, Secretary-Treasurer, and William Chester, Vice President.

For many, Harry Bridges has come to symbolize aggressive, rank-and-file unionism. For decades, the corporate establishment tried to destroy him and the ILWU for their progressive stands. Yet, today, the ILWU remains a model of progressive, rank-and-file unionism.

Early in the game, the employers tried to have Bridges deported to his native Australia. These attacks intensified during the Cold War period, when anti-Communist hysteria was directed at those unions which continued to fight for the rights of the membership. The ILWU, along with 10 other progressive unions, were expelled from the

'FREEDOM OF CHOICE' HOAX

'Right-to-work' gang-up threatens union security

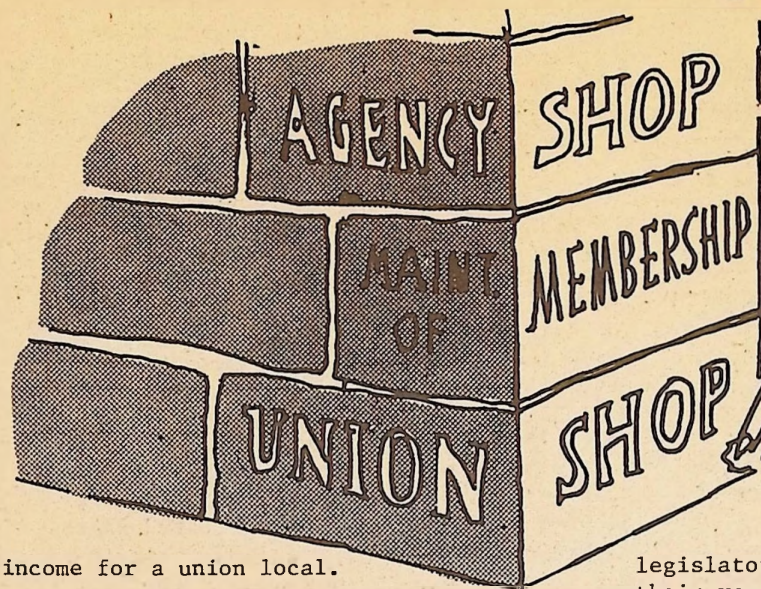
by ELLEN LAVROFF, Chairperson
United Action Caucus, AFT

Labor's right to organize, to bargain collectively and to maintain union security has come under increasingly severe attack in the last year. All signs point to a rising wave of hostility to organized labor. Nowhere is the evidence more clear and visible than in the stepped-up activity of the right-to-work movement.

The right-to-work movement manifests itself primarily in two organizations: the National Right-to-Work Committee with its subsidiary, the National Right-to-Work Legal Defense and Education Foundation, and the Americans Against Union Control of Government (AAUCG) with its adjunct, the Public Service Research Council (PSRC).

The National Right-to-Work Committee was founded in 1955. A long history of employer fights against union security culminated in the foundation of this anti-labor group. The immediate cause for its existence arose from a loophole in the Taft-Hartley Act (passed in 1947) which allowed the states to set rules governing union security. The loophole is known as Section 14b. The AAUCG was organized in 1973 and is headed by right-wingers like A. T. Bouscaren, Professor of Political Science at Syracuse University in New York; John Chamberlain, journalist and author; and Jesse Helms, U.S. Senator from North Carolina. The AAUCG reports that their membership grew from 70,000 (divided evenly between the two categories of contributors and working volunteers) in January, 1975, to 500,000 in January, 1976. The average contribution was \$11. Educated guesses estimate that the AAUCG is funded by hundreds of small businessmen, in addition to some very large ones. Both groups have a great deal of money which they spend in different states fighting legislation which grants the right to collective bargaining to public employees and the right to union security.

Union security, as it is presently known, may take one of several forms: union shop, maintenance of membership and agency shop. Each of these variations provides for continuity of membership and continuity of



income for a union local.

Without some form of security, union membership is constantly waxing and waning, while unions both at the local, state and national levels pass through cycles of economic hardship, wondering at times how they will survive. Oftentimes, their efforts must be directed exclusively to raising funds and maintaining their membership rather than expending time and effort at organizing new locals and new members. Right-to-work forces in this country understand this phenomenon and they strike directly at the heart of the union movement under the aegis of "freedom of choice." They claim that they defend the working man and woman's right to make their own choice in joining a labor union. The results of the early NLRB elections show their defense of this doubtful "freedom" to be false. Between the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 and 1951, union shop was approved in 97% of the 50,000 elections involving more than six million workers. Ninety-one percent of the workers involved favored union shop. The requirement for a vote on union shop was dropped in 1951 because the response was so consistently uniform.

Right-to-work forces are very busy, very rich, well organized and very active. They send representatives to the states where legislatures are active on questions of union security and public employee's rights to organize. They publish lists of

legislators, send them to addresses on their vast mailing lists and accompany them with exhortations and appeals to fear and hatred. Here is an example from a letter by Representative William Dickinson (Alabama):

But just as important to the power hungry union professionals is proposed legislation to force more than 10,600,000 state and local government employees to join unions...

If this passes, ruthless union officials will have virtually unlimited power. They'll order your public employees out on strike--and who'll be able to stop them?

A letter from Jesse Helms (November 29, 1976) goes like this: "This is a crisis! The compulsory unionization of every member of our Armed Forces is a real and immediate threat."

The effects of right-to-work legislation in the twenty states which presently have such laws is disastrous. Based on figures from 1975, the U.S. Department of Labor shows that averages of \$195.97 per week and \$4.99 per hour in the normal states are reduced to \$169.02 per week and \$4.27 per hour in right-to-work states. To date no studies have been made concerning working conditions in these states but observations by union members and officials confirm the suspicion that working conditions are the worst in the country. The recent union campaign in North Carolina has revealed that J. P. Stevens shows flagrant lack of concern for human beings as well as a complete disregard for the law.

The ultimate purpose of right-to-work groups is the destruction of all unionism. Even more serious is what a weak labor movement means to the United States. The direct source of right-to-work activities is the desire to repress and control all working people. Right-to-work forces are desperately afraid of the strength and the tide of a cohesive working people's movement.

The AFL-CIO found out to its chagrin and anger that the right-to-work forces are powerful in Congress. The defeat of the situs picketing bill showed that organized labor had underestimated their strength. With the upcoming labor legislation--HR 777 and HR 77 (one bill provides for public employee collective bargaining and the other makes much needed amendments to the Taft-Hartley Act) we will have an opportunity to watch the two forces square off against each other. What the outcome in the next months will be is anyone's guess. At least the first step has been taken--organized labor now has its eyes open.

Bridges, Goldblatt, Chester retire



Harry
Bridges

Congress of Industrial Organizations, which they had tried so hard to build.

Nevertheless, the ILWU and Bridges never wavered in their commitment to rank and file control of the union and continued to fight for progressive policies. Bridges has been outstanding in his commitment to world peace, detente and trade, and it is no accident that his union has approved his appointment to the World Peace Council.

This is not to imply that Bridges and the

rank and file forces in the ILWU have always seen eye-to-eye. There is considerable room for debate about the best course to follow for a small union in an increasingly automated industry. Not all were happy when the ILWU agreed, for a healthy consideration, to go along with automation on the waterfront.

It is to Bridges' credit that disagreements were tolerated, that discussion was never stifled or members penalized when they disagreed. When disagreements arose, they were resolved in a free and democratic manner seldom seen in most U.S. unions. And as a result of this rank and file democracy, the ILWU has also remained a united strong union.

LABOR TODAY wishes Brothers Bridges, Goldblatt and Chester all the best in their "retirement." We say "retirement" in quotes, because we are sure these fighters will continue their struggle for a better life for working people in new and challenging ways.

Hidden war budget drains people's funds

by a CHICAGO TEACHER

Every year the Office of the President prints a fancy version of the Federal Budget. There are pages and pages of figures, charts and graphs aimed at "proving" that increased costs of social welfare programs are at the heart of the rapid growth of government spending and the cause of high taxes, deficit spending and inflation.

In a recent column in the AMERICAN TEACHER, Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers, did his best to perpetuate these half-truths. He began by saying, "No matter how one measures it--whether in terms of dollars spent or the number of people involved--education is the largest 'industry' in our nation." He used a report of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to back up his claim that, "Since 1971, education has surpassed defense in total spending in the United States." He "compared" figures for 1975 to show that parents and teachers came out with \$120 billion that year while the generals and admirals had to settle for a lousy \$87 billion.



Mark Twain anticipated this kind of malarkey a hundred years ago when he said, "One of the most striking differences between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives."

UAW holds line in new AMC pact

by TED SILVERSTEIN
UAW Local 75
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Auto workers at American Motors plants held onto valuable contract provisions despite the cheaper-than-the-big-three settlement negotiated in February.

There are important items in the UAW-AMC agreement that do not exist in Big Three pacts. They are:

- 1/35 Steward to Worker Ratio
- Voluntary Overtime
- Right to Strike on all Grievances.

AMC sales are down while Big Three sales exceed last year's. Workers at AMC have been plagued by layoffs. At the Milwaukee plant, 18.5 years of seniority are needed to remain on the job.

The contract was negotiated for one year and there is hope that AMC workers will at least catch up to the Big Three settlement in September, when the present contract expires. AMC employees received 41 cents with no retroactivity. AMC officials did somewhat better, however. Roy Chapin, AMC Board of Directors Chairman, pulled in up to \$200,000, and William Luneberg, AMC President, \$165,000.

There was also a failure in the negotiations to coordinate bargaining of locals producing AMC passenger cars and those producing Jeeps. These two groups bargained separately; had the bargaining been united a better contract might have been negotiated, since Jeep sales remain high.

It would be foolish to argue over 1975 figures when even a little digging shows that next year total military spending will be a great deal higher than the \$120-plus billion appropriated under the heading of "Defense."

When it's all tracked down and added up, spending for wars past, wars present and wars future amounts to a hell of a lot more than the 26 percent claimed:

To begin with, there is \$18.3 billion set aside for the Veteran's Administration. After that comes the interest on the national debt. The Budget is prepared every year; 75 Budgets were adopted between 1900 and 1975. In those years there were 21 "war budgets" or yearly spending programs adopted during times when the United States was engaged in military activity. (World War I, World War II, the Korean "Conflict" and the War in Southeast Asia.)

Large budget deficits occurred in each of these years. All in all, these 21 "war budgets" account for a total of \$428 billion of the present debt and at least 75 percent of that is the direct result of military spending. Therefore, 75 percent of the \$39.7 billion interest payment on the national debt or \$29.8 billion can be added to the military budget.

The President's Budget allocates \$7.3 billion to a category called "International Affairs." The lion's share of that goes to further U.S. military objectives overseas. But if only 30 percent of this category goes for that purpose it means another \$2 billion thrown into the bottomless well of military spending.

Military pensions and retirement costs are included in the official military budget but retirement costs for civilian employees of the Department of Defense are not. Approximately 50 percent of all federal civilian employees work for the Pentagon



or the Veteran's Administration and that figure has not varied for the past 25 years. Therefore, half of the \$11.2 billion that are budgeted for civilian retirement costs are, in reality, military costs and add \$5.6 million more.

Court bars seniority challenge (continued from page 1)

The collective bargaining process, therefore, offers the best opportunity to overhaul discriminatory seniority systems. At least three possibilities comes to mind:

1. Re-negotiate seniority systems to provide for layoffs based on inverse seniority where older workers would be furloughed at 90 to 95% of wages, with all fringes and seniority intact and paid for by the company. Since most Black, Latin and women workers are among the low-seniority groups, this would tend to preserve their jobs, while at the same time, allowing older workers to get away from the grind of years of factory work. These ideas are not new and already exist in modified form in some UAW and USWA contracts.
2. Re-negotiate all seniority systems

At least a third of the \$3.5 billion spent on the space program can be added to the military budget.

Then there's "intelligence." There are about \$10 billion for intelligence included in the official budget but we also know that money for intelligence is also hidden in other appropriations. The estimate for 1978 is that there is a billion dollars worth of CIA money hidden in the appropriations for the Commerce and Agriculture Departments.

These hidden expenditures will raise military spending for 1978 to at least \$171 billion. That's more than 50 percent higher than the quoted figure (the same one that Shanker used for 1975) and raises military expenditures to 42 percent of the total U.S. budget--not the 26 percent claimed by those who would add even more billions to the "defense" budget.

Labor seeks new laws to protect pregnant workers

by LABOR TODAY Staff

Rank and filers and several progressive unions are fighting for new legislation that would provide protection for pregnant working women. S.995 and H.R. 5055 would prohibit companies from discriminatorily withholding disability pay in work absences resulting from pregnancy.

The bills would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by specifying that prohibitions against employment discrimination include discrimination because of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

The bills have been introduced in Congress to remedy the injustice caused by the recent Supreme Court ruling that allowed companies to deny disability pay to women disabled by pregnancy.

Hearings on the bills in Washington in April were attended by many union speakers, including a rank-and-file delegation from the United Steel Workers District 31 Women's Committee. Roberta Wood, trustee of USWA Local 65, testified for the group.

Also testifying were IUE President David Fitzmaurice (the Supreme Court Case was IUE v. General Electric), USWA Vice President Leon Lynch, UE Secretary-Treasurer Boris Block, Communications Workers' President Glenn Watts and representatives of the NAACP and American Civil Liberties Union.



into plant-wide systems. Some contracts negotiated by Local P-500 Meatcutters in Chicago now include a provision for job posting and bidding on a plant-wide basis with a further provision that after an employee's probationary period has passed, plant-wide seniority shall govern in lay-off and recall. Local P-500 contracts also require the company to provide training on the new job.

3. Proportional lay-offs of workers in a manner that will guarantee the racial and sexual ratios that existed before the lay-offs occurred.

Without these struggles, the court's action will, in the words of Justice Thurgood Marshall, "freeze an entire generation of Negro employees into discriminatory patterns that existed before the 1964 Civil Rights Act."

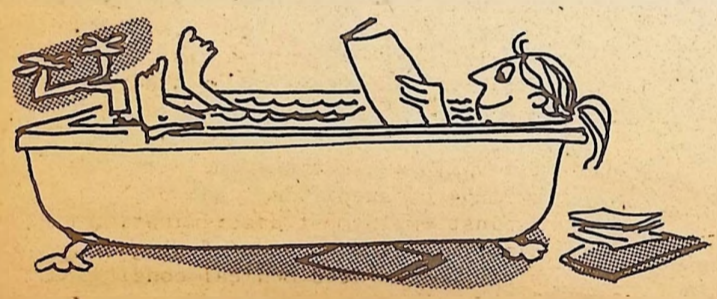
PLEASE LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

What would YOU like to see in LT?

In order to help LABOR TODAY better serve you, we are asking you to take time to complete this questionnaire and return it promptly. In this way, we hope we can improve LT to help you in your trade union work and better serve the labor movement.



- 1 AGE /under 25 /25-35 /35-50 /over 50
- 2 SEX /male /female
- 3 RACE /Black /Latino /white /other
- 4 UNION ACTIVITY /union officer /active in rank & file /union member
- 5 I get LABOR TODAY by /individual subscription /bundle /passed out at my plant or union hall
- 6 I read _____ books a year.
- 7 I get most of my news from /TV /radio /daily papers /other: _____
- 8 List magazines or papers most regularly read _____



9 I find that LABOR TODAY /is sometimes too hard to read /is easy to read /talks down to me

10 How should LABOR TODAY devote space?	More Space	Less Space
a. Stories of rank and file experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. General articles about what's happening in the labor movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Economic analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. International labor news	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Union contract analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. "How-to-do-it" articles, such as parliamentary procedure, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Stories about labor law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Material about health & safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Stories about women workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Material on racism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11 LABOR TODAY articles tend to be /too long /too short

12 I like the following kinds of articles best: _____

13 I like the following kinds of articles least: _____



14 How can LABOR TODAY best be improved to suit your needs?

15 Should LABOR TODAY /increase the number of pages or /come out more frequently? How could this be financed?

16 Here are some other things I'd like to see in LABOR TODAY:
/crossword puzzles /sports column /hobby column
/movie reviews /other _____



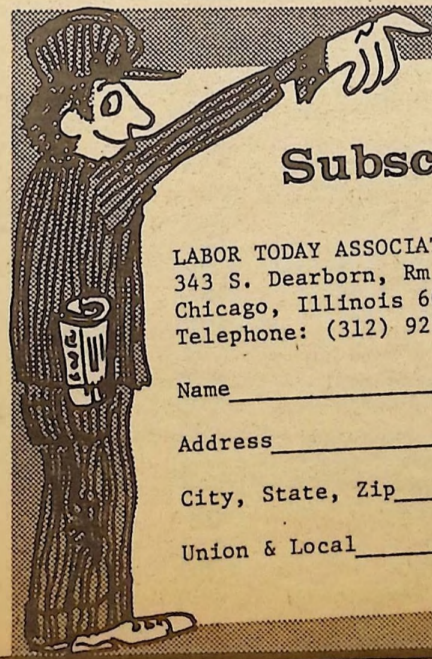
PLEASE MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT LT:

UE organizer (continued from page 2)

continuing to press for justice. Attorneys for the two trade unionists are preparing to appeal the trial verdict and the sentences. Support can be sent to Markley-Suares Defense Committee, 323 High Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.

However, O'Reilly contrived to get Markley and Suares to make two "bombs" for a "job" he was planning. What was delivered were two cardboard tubes, loosely filled with black powder and plugged with sealing wax. In short, they were harmless and during tests, even failed to destroy the cardboard tubes.

It was at that point the ATF revealed itself and sought to have Markley and Suares become informers. When they refused--they were arrested and charged with conspiracy.



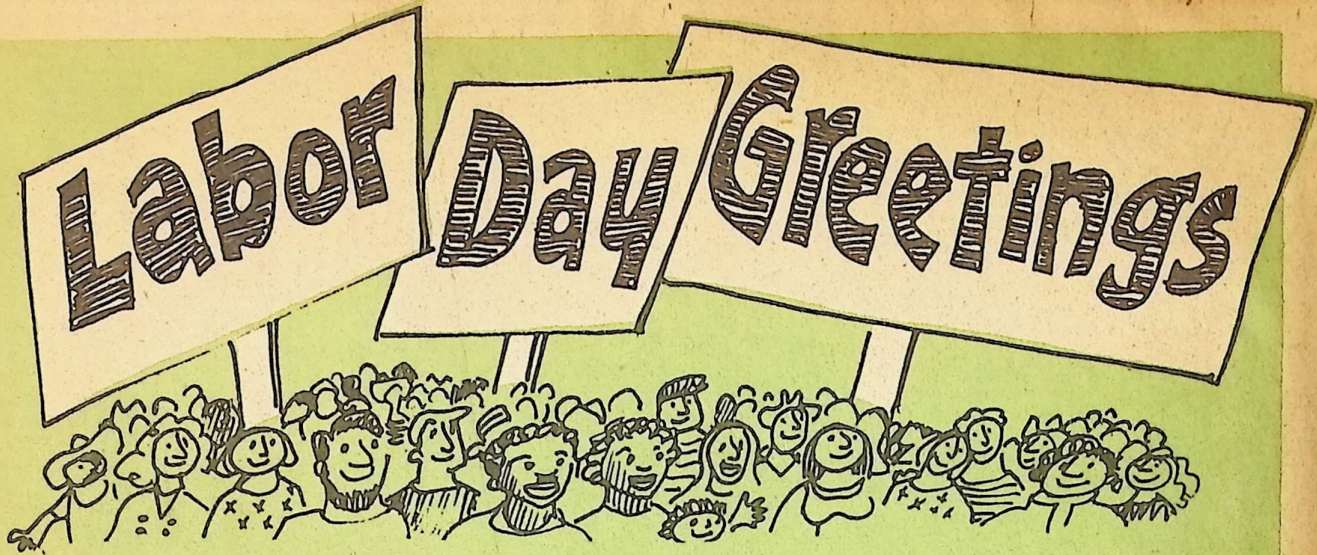
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LABOR DAY, 1977, takes place in the midst of continuing high unemployment and continuing high rates of inflation--all of which spell a continuing drop in living standards for working people in the United States.

Recent Bureau of Labor Statistics figures indicate that it now requires \$16,600 to maintain a city worker's family at a "moderate" standard of living. (The same standard of living required about \$9,500 when the budget was first introduced ten years ago.) The average industrial worker today earns about \$9,472--even less for minority and women workers.

Unemployment continues at staggeringly high rates--again falling most heavily on minorities, women and young people.

The renewed struggle for shorter hours offers the best solution to the unemployment problem. Proposals advanced by Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) would provide the 35 hour week for forty hours pay, thus reducing the present unemployment level by approximately four million.

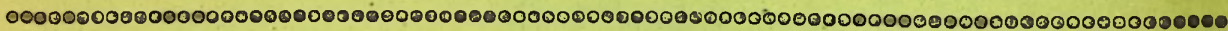
LABOR TODAY is in the thick of the fight for shorter hours. Our special issue in May has brought a large number of requests for reprints of Fred Gaboury's pamphlet, "How Shorter Hours Create Jobs."

LABOR TODAY wants to carry the fight for shorter hours into every union hall in the country, to light a fire under every legislator, for this idea whose time has come.

But we need your help.

You can help us provide "Shorter Hours" reprints for those who need them. You can help sustain us and give us the financial support to keep the fires burning.

Why not send labor day greetings to your friends through LABOR TODAY's September issue? Your financial support is vitally needed to help keep the fight going and to support labor's only national independent publication. Bring it up before your local union, your rank and file group--and, of course, with your own personal contribution.



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\$25/quarter page; \$10/name
listing.

Greeting should read: _____

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Union & Position _____
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