

**50 CENTS**

# Labor Militant

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FOR LABOR AND YOUTH — WORKING CLASS UNITY AND SOCIALISM

## END DICTATORSHIP OF BIG BUSINESS



Exactly one hundred years ago, the U.S. working class took up one of the most ferocious battles of its entire history — the battle for the eight-hour day. May 1, now celebrated by workers round the world, was marked in 1886 by general strikes in almost every major city of the U.S. as tens of thousands of workers struck for a shorter work week with no less pay.

Today, similar battles are brewing once again as the wages and conditions of workers are coming under vigorous assault.

First-year raises in union contracts have plummeted from about 10% in the early 70's to 2.4% in 1984. Real wages have dropped by 14% from 1972 to 1984. The number of "two-tier" contracts almost doubled in 1984, hitting hardest at the younger workers just entering the workforce.

From cradle to grave, poverty is now a way of life for many. Some 20 million Americans go hungry at least part of the time, one in four children under 6 live in poverty, and half of all black children live in poverty. Over 12% of the aged, whose only crime was to have worked hard all their lives, are now in poverty too.

Perhaps the contradictions are best summarized by the plight of 90,000 farmers in the U.S. who are threatened with ruin and can't sell their produce due to the glut of grain on the world market

while millions go hungry in every corner of the globe!

### WORKING CLASS

But today the working class is stronger than ever before and will not give up the gains it has made in the past 50 years without major struggles. The last year has seen general strikes in Bolivia, Denmark, Greece and Spain, the 12 month cold miners' strike in Britain, and the magnificent movement of the masses of black workers and youth of South Africa.

The U.S. working class is now also starting to take action. The strikes of the cannery workers in Watsonville, CA, and the Hormel workers of Austin, MN, show that opposition to concessions is increasing. In its preparation for the huge tasks ahead, rank and file union members are beginning to develop a new, fighting leadership.

The U.S. working class will return once again to the traditions of the 1930's. The trade unions will be transformed into

fighting democratic organizations, and in the process the demand will be raised to break with the politicians of big business. The most powerful working class in the capitalist world will demand that it have its own political party — a labor party, based on the unions.

This will coincide with the rising tide of the working class movement internationally — both East and West. However, the U.S. Labor Party will have

to deal with the growing crisis of the world capitalist system.

Through this struggle, through victories and defeats, times of turbulence and lulls, tremendous lessons will be learned. It will become more and more clearly seen that 500 giant corporations constitute a dictatorship over U.S. society.

The call will increasingly grow within the labor movement for the nationalisation of these major corporations under the

democratic control and management of the workers — for the masses of workers to take control of their own society, for socialism and workers' democracy is our time.

This was the struggle which was started 100 years ago on May Day 1886. This is still the struggle today. The time has come to complete this task.

By John Reimann  
Carpenters Local 36  
(personal capacity)

## VICTORY FOR YOUTH

"Youth have the from the State worst jobs, the worst Legislature. That's unemployment rate why we need a campaign to defend our and the worst opportunities — and rights." Mary Con-nors, a Youth Defense Campaign also have the worst alcohol, drug and Union Group activist, suicide problems. On explained to Labor Militant. At 21 Mary's constant police been in and out of low harassment, anti-paid office and fac-tory jobs. Her life and the City Council and future is no different curfew proposals to the majority of American youth.

Teenage unemployment officially rose to 19% last month, nearly 3 times higher than the adult rate. More than 55% of those youths who find work are made to suffer minimum wage. Apprenticeships or any job training has become history. The corporations who dictate the wages and conditions of non-union youth expect us to be grateful for the privilege of a job, "there's many more where you came from."

"Things are getting worse. One friend told me how he'd worked in construction each summer since 1980. He used to get 6 contd. page 11

# LABOR MILITANT EDITORIAL

Labor Militant is being produced to provide a conscious socialist alternative in the working class and the youth in the United States. American big business is in crisis and is attempting to offload this crisis onto the backs of American workers, and workers and peasants internationally. All it offers is increased poverty, repression, wars and in the longer term of two to three decades the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The 100 million strong American working class is the largest working class in the capitalist world. 19 million are organized, making the American trade union movement the largest in the world. The working class is the most powerful force in the U.S. It, and it alone, has the power to end the dictatorship of the corporations over American society and to end capitalism.

What prevents the mighty U.S. working class from carrying out this task is the lack of conscious socialist leadership. The AFL-CIO believes that capitalism is the only possible system. As a result the ideas of big business remain unanswered and the power of the working class is not mobilized.

Labor Militant will answer the lies of big business and argue for socialism in the U.S.A. and internationally. We will provide the facts and figures to back up our case and to arm the labor movement for the battles that lie ahead.

We will campaign for organizing the unorganized, and for the unions to build a labor party as an alternative to the parties of big business, the Democrats and the Republicans. We will campaign for a socialist program for the labor party.

Labor Militant will expose the

vicious racist oppression of the especially oppressed racial minorities in the U.S. We will campaign for the labor movement to confront this oppression and the special oppression of women, and to unite the working class and youth of all races, male and female, within a united labor movement. This is the only way to overcome big business's tactics of "Divide and Rule" and to end the special exploitation of the especially oppressed minorities as well as the exploitation of the working class as a whole.

Simultaneously with answering big business and those who echo its ideas inside the labor movement, Labor Militant will seek to gather together the most advanced and fighting sections of the U.S. working class and youth around its banner. The task of these advanced sections will be to patiently explain the ideas of Marxism in the broader labor

movement.

The developing crisis will unleash events which will open the eyes of the mass of the workers to the crisis of capitalism and Stalinism. If the advanced sections properly fulfill their role of patient explanation and tell the truth to the working class, it will be possible to win the majority in U.S. society to the struggle for socialism.

A socialist united states of America would herald the end of capitalism and landlordism on a world scale. It would also end the dictatorship of the Stalinist bureaucracies in Eastern Europe, Russia, China, etc. A new world order, a Socialist World Federation based on workers' democracies, would then be possible. This would utilize the potential of the productive forces and the human species to end poverty, war, oppression, racism and division.

Labor Militant is produced by

trade union activists and youth throughout the U.S.A.

We need your help to continue its production and to develop and improve it. Write and give us your opinions and help us to learn from our experiences and the history of our movement, and make Labor Militant a better paper.

Take out a regular subscription. Labor Militant will come out every two months for the next 12 months and then with your help every month. Order extra copies to sell at your workplace, school or college, or to your friends.

Labor Militant has no rich backers. This issue has only been possible due to the sacrifice of a small number of workers and youth over the past months. Send us a donation to help us continue the work of providing an alternative to big business by building a conscious socialist leadership for U.S. labor.

## LABOR MUST OPPOSE REAGAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

By Robert O'Neill

**The Reagan Administration attacks wages, conditions and social programs at home on behalf of the major corporations — big business — which demand higher profits at the expense of the working and middle classes. Its foreign policy is also dictated by these same corporations and their need to preserve their profits, markets, sources of raw materials and power abroad.**

### COLONIAL REVOLUTION

The revolt of the starving peoples of the former colonial countries continued. In Nicaragua the U.S. backed dictator Somoza, was overthrown and replaced by the Sandinistas who initially declared their solidarity with the Cuban revolution, their opposition to U.S. big business and in favor of revolution in all of Central America.

The colonial revolution was now a sharp reality in U.S. big business' own backyard. Reagan mined Nicaragua's harbors, enforced economic sanctions and armed the thugs of the deposed dictator Somoza, the contras, who he then called "freedom fighters" and set up in bases in Honduras to attack Nicaragua.

Inevitably these revolts challenge the wealth and power of big business. U.S. governments have historically intervened to defeat these revolutions. The war in South East Asia in the 1960's and the beginning of the 1970's was an example of this. This war resulted in the first military defeat of the United States.

This defeat came about because the Vietnamese workers and peasants saw that victory for the Vietcong, irrespective of the lack of workers democracy that would accompany such a victory, would take the weight of capitalism and landlordism off their back. A secret congressional report in 1967 explained the "high morale" of the opposition forces. It stated, "The Vietcong have eliminated the landlords and reallocate lands...to the landless..."

The defeat in South East Asia in 1975 led to a mood of isolationism in the U.S. The majority of Americans wanted no repeat of the suffering and trauma of the Vietnam war. This weakened the ability of U.S. big business to defend its interests abroad as it depends on working class Americans to do its fighting for it.

The Soviet bureaucracy seeks to come to an agreement with U.S. imperialism (big business) to divide up the world between them into spheres of influence. They do not seek to stir up new revolutions as these increase world instability and increase the risk of their own working



Reagan's Contras: As they fall U.S. troops will be pushed forward.

class overthrowing them and establishing workers' democracies. Reagan in his major foreign policy speech on March 14 quoted Gorbachov as saying "...the Soviet Union required international calm to deal with its internal problems."

The colonial revolutions arise out of the crisis of capitalism and landlordism. They do not result from the promptings of the Soviet bureaucracy in spite of what Reagan says, and in spite of the attempts by the Soviet bureaucracy to get the rising forces of the colonial revolution into its camp and to use this in its negotiations with U.S. imperialism.

### TERROR GROUPS

As well as using the "threat of Soviet expansionism" the Reagan administration has taken every opportunity to exploit to the full the lunatic actions of the individual terror groups who bomb civilian aircraft, spray airport lounges with machine guns and kill American tourists. These activities strengthen Reagan and American big business by helping to confuse the U.S. working and middle class and create a new mood, "We cannot let them push us around like that and do nothing." This is a comment increasingly heard.

The strategy of U.S. big business to more aggressively defend its interests abroad was moved up into higher gear in the last days of March. The U.S. navy assembled its largest force

since World War II and sailed into the Gulf of Sidra which is claimed as Libyan waters by Libyan leader Ghadafi. Given the past activities of Ghadafi and his use of anti-U.S. rhetoric to keep his hold on power it was certain he would take some actions. The U.S. government deliberately provoked this by their aggression, and than sank Lybian ships and bombed Lybian bases.

Backed by the media, Reagan successfully associated Ghadafi with the individual terror groups with whom he undoubtedly has links and won the support of the majority of Americans once again for U.S. military actions abroad. The other effect of his actions was to strengthen Ghadafi.

Big business considered this a price worth paying as the real object of the operation was not in the Mediterranean but in Central America. Simultaneously with his aggressive Lybian actions, Reagan pulled Nicaragua onto center stage. He portrayed a "hot pursuit" action of the Sandinistas against the CIA organized contras as "a major threat to Honduran sovereignty."

Reagan then pressed \$20 million of U.S. aid on the Honduran government and insisted they send troops to the border area with Nicaragua where the contras were based. And in a major escalation of American involvement he provided U.S. helicopters and pilots to fly in these troops.

At the same time he threw his opponents in Congress who opposed his \$100 million aid to the

contras onto the defensive. The Senate then proceeded to back his package, and no doubt the Democrats who control the House after their ritualistic posturing will now also approve money for the contras.

### SANDINISTAS

U.S. imperialism is absolutely committed to overthrowing the Sandinistas in spite of the Sandinistas' move to the right, its increased repression of unions and the right to strike, and its continued support for 60% of the economy remaining in private hands. Their determination is because the Sandinistas came to power through a revolution which overthrew a U.S. backed dictator, dared to oppose U.S. imperialism's policies and stooges in the area and have survived in the backyard of the U.S. itself. It is therefore a beacon to all forces in Latin America fighting corrupt right wing U.S. backed regimes.

A new Cuba in the area and especially on the mainland of the continent is not going to be tolerated. When the Bishop regime came to power in Grenada, Regan used a split that developed in that regime to invade. He is also committed to overthrowing the Sandinistas.

It is now clear that the contras are unable to achieve this, so he has dragged Honduran troops onto the firing line. They will be incapable of overthrowing the Sandinistas in any war which could be provoked between them. At the same time as the U.S.

# A SOCIALIST PROGRAM FOR LABOR

By

Tom Williams  
AFSCME DC 37  
(personal capacity)

The demands by employers for concessions are facing increasing opposition. In the first five months of 1985 there were 18 strikes of more than 1,000 workers. In the last five months of the year this doubled to 36.

Cannery workers in Watsonville, California, print workers in Chicago and meatpackers in Austin, Minnesota, have been on the picket lines for over six months. They have been joined by workers at General Electric and train and bus workers in Massachusetts, transit workers in Philadelphia and flight attendants at TWA.

The heroic resistance of the P-9 local in Austin has tapped a wide layer of support among union members. This reflects the rising anger and bitterness of workers who are looking for a lead to avenge the cuts and attacks they have been suffering. The strike at TWA flight attendants shows that new layers of workers not previously considered militant are now entering the struggle.

As workers see that concessions only lead to demands for more concessions, more and more of them are saying "enough is enough". The lesson is being learned — concessions do not work. These five years of intense attacks on labor, starting with the Chrysler deal in 1979 and continuing with the smashing of PATCO, have spread through industry after industry.

#### Concessions cause Unemployment

In spite of the arguments of employers and their press and politicians the con-

cessions wrested from labor since the Chrysler deal in 1979 have not saved jobs or solved the problems of the economy. The opposite is the case. Concessions weaken the ability of workers to buy back the goods they produce.

Cuts in the wages of TWA workers reduce their ability to buy an automobile. Cuts in the wages of GM workers reduce their ability to travel by plane. One worker's wage cut is another worker's job loss.

The bosses say that workers are pricing themselves out of jobs because their wages are too high. There was a bigger difference between the wages of U.S. workers and the wages of workers overseas in the 1950's and 1960's than there is today. If high wages of U.S. workers are the cause of the crisis, then why didn't the crisis happen in the 1950's and 1960's rather than now? In 1980 U.S. workers were 7th in the wages scale in the world. Then came the wave of concessions. By 1984 U.S. workers were in 1st place! Reagan's policies had increased the value of the dollar by over 40% over this period, and so raised the price of U.S. labor relative to labor in other countries. Business Week, one of the serious journals of big business, explained it clearly in June 1982. "Labor costs are not the sole or even the most important

cause of the decline in steel, autos and rubber industry".

#### Investment

The main reason for the crisis in the U.S. economy is the low level of investment by big business in new industrial plant and industrial capacity in the U.S. compared to its rivals. In the 25 years of the post-war boom of capitalism between 1950 and 1975 Japan invested 30% of its gross national products (GNP) back into production. In the U.S. the figure was only 14%. U.S. employers were squandering their profits in arms production, speculation and the service sector. This left increasingly old and obsolete plant and equipment in the U.S. which was less able to compete with the modernized plant of its foreign rivals.

#### Set-backs

The failure of the labor leaders to answer the arguments of the bosses on concessions has led them in many cases to support the policies of concessions. As a result labor has suffered set-backs over the past five to six years and been thrown onto the defensive.

The effects of this can be seen in the TWA strike where flight attendants were willing to take a 15% cut in wages in an attempt to protect their jobs. The employers demanded a 17% cut in pay, and overall cuts in the region of 44%. In

this strike if these workers can gain a settlement with only a 15% cut they will consider it a victory! Even five years ago this 15% would have seemed a major defeat and an insult by these workers.

Out of these attacks, workers are beginning to learn harsh and painful lessons about life in America in the 1980's. Karen Lantz, vice president of the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants, described the changes in attitude of TWA workers during strike: "The membership have probably learned more in the last two weeks than in the last 20 years". Bitter and often isolated battles are breaking out leading to a hardening of a layer of workers. Also, new more militant leaders are being thrown up in a number of locals, like at P-9 in Austin.

#### Counter-offensive

The mood of bitterness and anger that is building among workers will at some stage lead to a major counter-offensive. All the traditions of militancy and struggle of American labor in the 1930's will re-emerge in the new movement. The great victories of the CIO in the 1930's themselves came out of the set-backs of the early 1930's. The benefits labor has today were only won by the dynamic and explosive CIO movement of the 1930's. Mass picketing, open confrontation with scabs mass industrial unions, and the sit-down strikes were needed to turn the tide in the 1930's. It is these tactics and traditions, a glimpse of which can be seen in the determined struggle by Hormel workers in Austin, that are necessary to win gains in this period of crisis of capitalism.

#### The Organized

A movement of even larger proportions to that of the 1930's will develop in the future. This will engulf the millions of unorganized workers in the service industries, fast-food restaurants, sweat shops, small manufacturing plants and offices. Unions will sweep these workforces in a similar way to how the CIO took industry by storm in the period of 1936 and 1937. From 18% of the workforce organized today, it is likely to see 40%, 50% or even 60% organized in unions as has been achieved by workers in some countries of Europe.

#### Protectionism

Rather than prepare the movement for this fightback the labor leaders look for other alternatives. One of these is the demand for protectionism, or tariff barriers. They argue that by stopping foreign goods entering the U.S. markets, jobs of U.S. workers can be protected. However, what these

arguments fail to take into account is that any protectionist measures taken by the U.S. would meet with retaliation from its rivals abroad. With one in six jobs in the U.S. now dependent on exports, this would mean lay-offs for these workers. These workers would then be unable to buy the goods produced by workers for the home market and their jobs would also be lost.

Not only would protectionism fail to solve the crisis, but it would make it worse. This "solution" was tried before. The Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930 increased tariff barriers. Agricultural exports fell from \$200 million in 1922 to only \$5 million in 1932. Auto exports fell from \$541 million in 1929 to 76 million in 1932. Similar declines occurred in other industries. By 1933 a wage cut averaging 45% had been implemented through all of industry and there were 12-17 million unemployed. This would be equivalent to 30 million workers unemployed today.

#### Labor's Program

The Labor leaders must put forward a program that can defend wages and protect jobs and mobilize the power of labor. Companies who demand concessions must be met with the demand: "Open the books". This means all the financial records of the company, including those of interlocking companies and banks.

Those companies who can pay decent wages and benefits must be forced to pay up. Those companies which are in difficulty must be taken out of the hands of their owners and nationalized under democratic workers control and management. Their owners have proved they are unfit to run them.

This must be linked to the struggle for a public works program to build houses, hospitals, schools, recreational facilities and the crumbling infrastructure. The working week for all must be reduced to 32 hours with no loss of pay and a national minimum wage of at least \$10 per hour established. All working people must have the right to 32 hours work or 32 hours pay.

#### 500 Corporations

This is the program which can meet the needs of American workers and throw the concession period into reverse. The wealth in U.S. society makes its implementation entirely possible. What is necessary is that control and ownership of this wealth is taken out of the hands of the top 500 privately owned corporations which constitute a dictatorship over U.S. society. These must be nationalized under workers control and management and a socialist plan of production implemented.

#### Labor Party

Labor needs its own political party to implement such a program. It cannot rely on the Democrats and Republicans to look after its interests. Both parties are parties of big business, and will side with big business on all the essential issues. A labor party based on the trade unions can provide a solution to the horrors of a crisis ridden capitalism and the devastation of people's lives, hopes and expectations.

The energy of the American people could then be channelled to building a society where the needs of the majority of the population would be cared for. It is only then that the horrors of unemployment, low wages, fear of illness and accident, bad housing and poverty could be ended, and the idea of the "American Dream" could become a reality.

a war developing in Central America with the accompanying slaughter of workers and peasants of Latin America along with the working class and youth of the United States itself.

Instead, U.S. labor must link the struggles of the working class, youth, and especially oppressed minorities in the U.S. with the workers and peasants of Central America and Latin America as a whole. They must wage a common struggle against the big corporations which constitute a dictatorship over the U.S. and the entire continent of Latin America.



8,500 IUE members struck G.E. for 3 weeks and defeated attempts to bust the union.

## Foreign Policy (cont.)

have pilots and helicopters flying Honduran troops to the trouble spots, they have 2,500 troops in Honduras, and they have built large airstrips capable of taking large military supply aircraft. Now, in a further stepping up of direct involvement the Reagan Administration announced in the first days of April that it was going to send "advisors" to aid the contras.

### MILITARY INVOLVEMENT

The most likely prospect now is for increased involvement of

U.S. troops leading towards large scale military involvement and war in Central America. This is not yet certain as revolutionary events in Chile, Mexico and throughout Latin America could unfold with such power that U.S. imperialism could be forced to hold its hand.

This seems to be the only development which can cut across increasing U.S. military involvement. The fact that a majority of Americans still oppose Reagan's Central American policies can be overcome. The New York Times recently

described the mood of the country "as being in a transition to an earlier mood — pre-Vietnam."

The Gulf of Tonkin is now regularly mentioned in the U.S. Congress and press. The U.S. government falsely claimed that U.S. forces had been attacked by North Vietnamese in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1964, and used this as an excuse to commit large numbers of troops to the war in Vietnam. They can easily repeat such a fraud to change the mood at home.

They have set the stage for it by putting U.S. pilots on the Nicaraguan border. A U.S. government official recently stated, "I cannot promise you an American won't be shot." And the Wall Street Journal stated,

"One of the dangers here is that in such an incursion (the Sandinistas pursuing the contras) some American troops might get killed and this could be the event that triggers a direct U.S. military involvement."

If U.S. troops do become involved in a war in Central America they will become bogged down in a drawn out conflict in the area as a whole. They will be used to fight and kill workers and peasants in the area and to defend the capitalist and landlords.

### U.S. LABOR

U.S. labor must mobilize its forces against all acts of U.S. big business' aggression and to stop

# LABOR MUST FIGHT RACISM



Workers unity on the picket line in Boston.

There are 26 million Black Americans. They suffer 13% unemployment while the national average is 7%. 41% of black youth are unemployed. Blacks make up 12% of households yet own only 4% of the nation's wealth.

36% of blacks and 47% of black children live in poverty. This is in the world where the number of millionaires has now reached 1 million and where over \$313 billion a year is spent on arms, which is more than the total Gross National Product of Canada.

#### Black Revolution

Life for the majority of black Americans is a nightmare. But it is a nightmare which has not gone unchallenged. The most heroic of the black revolts of this century took place in the 1950's and 1960's. Malcolm X called it the "Black Revolution." It shook white-capitalist dominated America to its foundations and inspired youth and workers all over the world.

Hundreds of thousands of blacks marched and demonstrated, occupied restaurants and public buildings, demanding civil rights, an end to discrimination and decent jobs and wages. Explosions took place in the ghettos, black workers revolted and organized in the armed services in Vietnam and in the factories of Detroit.

#### International Movement

This revolt was part of a world wide movement. Workers, peasants and youth moved into struggle in Africa and the entire underdeveloped world against capitalism and landlordism. They fought the Stalinist dictatorship in Hungary in 1956. They fought capitalism in the advanced capitalist countries as in the 10 million strong general strike in France in 1968. And the youth organized against the Vietnam War. The "Black Revolution" looked toward and in turn inspired these events.

#### C.I.O.

This revolt came out of the struggles to build the CIO and the gains the new unions meant for black and white workers. Black workers won increased living standards in the new unions and gained experience in organizing. This raised the expectations and the ability to struggle of the black people as a whole.

The elemental movement of the "Black Revolution," drawing with it sections of the white youth, won some victories in the area of civil rights, voting rights and racial segregation. These were institutionalized in the Voting Rights and Civil Rights acts of the early 1960's

which removed most of the worst discrimination on these fronts in the South. This black revolt merged with the revolt of the army in Vietnam, the antiwar movement at home and the movement of organized labor in the strike wave of 1970-1976. American big business moved to try to cut across the revolt. It used repression combined with promises of concession.

Black leaders were murdered, promises were made for more spending in the cities and the quota system known as Affirmative Action was introduced. Quotas of minorities in employment were to be monitored and enforced by lawyers and the courts. These measures to derail the mass movement of the "Black Revolution" combined with other factors and the movement tailed off. The struggle against racial discrimination was removed from the streets to the courts and lawyers of big business. The results were predictable. The gains made by blacks relative to whites peaked in 1970 when the quota system came into force.

#### Camouflage

The quota system helped a tiny minority of mainly middle class blacks. Their gains were used to camouflage the fall in living standards of the majority.

Between 1972 and 1982 the number of black managers and officials rose by 83% to 445,000. The percentage of blacks earning \$35,000 per year rose from 5.3% in 1970 to 8.6% in 1982.

For the majority of blacks, the working class and the unemployed, conditions got worse. The percentage of black households with annual income below \$10,000 per year in 1970 was 37.8%. By 1982 this had increased to 42.6%. Median black income as a percentage of median white income rose from 55.3% in 1970 to 61.3% in 1970 under the pressure of the mass movement, but fell back to 55% in 1985.

#### Oppose Reagan

While the quota system did not work as shown by the statistics above, and while it tended to drive a wedge between workers along the lines of race and sex, Reagan's attempts to dismantle the quota system must be opposed. If he succeeds in this it will give a green light to racists to go on the offensive against the blacks and all especially oppressed minorities.

The labor movement must take up the fight against racism. In doing so it must realize that the quota system offers no way forward. Labor must openly confront and mobilize its forces to fight racism. It must put the struggle against racism clearly on the agenda of the labor movement.

By

Marcy Barnett  
District 65, UAW  
(personal capacity)

## Reagan and the Family

Reagan has reduced federal aid for lower income housing from \$28 billion to \$9 billion. The results have been felt by Deborah Williams, a black Harlem woman and mother of four living in a "hotel" for homeless people one block south of 42nd St. which runs through Times Square. "As

the walls rotted, rats slithered in through holes. I stayed up every night watching them, but they got away anyway. Latisha, (one of her daughters) was bit bad on her arms. We was all bit except the baby. The rats was smart, they did not go near the traps. They used to eat up all my food, all the kids clothing."

#### Labor's Program

Black Americans cannot end their special oppression on their own. They must link their struggle to the struggle of the working class as a whole. And labor cannot win its struggle against the employers unless it fights racism.

Labor must therefore fight on a program which can solve the problems of all the especially oppressed minorities: Native and Asian Americans, latinos, as well as blacks. Jobs for all on trade union rates of pay is central.

The struggle must be taken up for a 32 hour week with no loss of pay, and for 32 hours work or 32 hours pay. A reduction to 35 hours in manufacturing alone would provide 3.7 million jobs.

On top of this a crash house building program and a public works program must be fought for to build schools, hospitals and recreational facilities and rebuild the infrastructure. All work provided in these programs must be at union rates of pay and with union

#### benefits.

The housing and public works programs would have as a priority the areas of greatest need. This would not only mean the oppressed ghettos of racial minorities but all areas of slum housing and discrimination. This program would unite all working class and poor people in struggle.

#### End Discrimination

Labor must step up the struggle for control over hiring and firing and against discrimination on the job. It must also set up hiring halls and fight for training facilities under union control and with full pay in areas of high unemployment.

The union boards which control hiring and firing must have elected representatives from the local areas on them as full members. These boards must also spear-head a campaign to sign up the unemployed at the hiring halls and at the training centers.

Labor must also see to it that its own house is in order. Educational bodies and committees to fight

racism and discrimination must be set up at all levels to combat the racist ideas of the bosses which may have gained adherents among workers. Racists must be banned from holding any position in the union movement and all members of fascist organizations, such as the Ku Klux Klan, must be expelled from organized labor.

#### Capitalism and Racism

In 1965, Malcolm X stated, "You cannot have capitalism without racism." In 1966, Martin Luther King stated, "Something is wrong with capitalism... maybe America must move toward democratic socialism." In 1968 Bobby Seale said, "We do not fight capitalism with black capitalism. We fight capitalism with basic socialism."

As the economic crisis worsens, the nightmarish conditions for blacks and all especially oppressed minorities will also worsen. Racism, poverty, and unemployment can only be ended by a united labor movement fighting on a socialist program.

# Harlem Fight-Back

There are 171,000 families on the Public Housing list in New York City. 230,000 families live doubled up. 60,000 people are homeless and 250,000 elderly and poor New Yorkers are considered to be on the brink of homelessness.

As is the case throughout the United States the black population suffers most.

Mayor Koch of the big business Democratic Party and his corrupt speculator associates have their plans for Harlem. This "prime piece of real estate" sits in uptown Manhattan and is easily accessible to the major airports of New York and New Jersey. The pressure is on to push out the black working class and unemployed.

State assistance is available for blacks to move out of the area but not within the area. Vacant houses are sold to people who can afford \$500 just to make a bid, \$35,000 deposit and who have an income of over \$100,000. On top of this the speculators are mov-

ing in, buying up vacant buildings and occupied buildings, forcing the tenants out and turning the buildings into \$100,000 plus apartment units.

#### POWERFUL POLITICAL FORCE

The attack on Harlem's blacks is spearheaded by the cities ruling elite. "Spatial Deconcentration" is the term used. What this means is that Harlem's blacks are a powerful political force with traditions of revolutionary struggle. They have thrown up such giants as Malcolm X. New York's big business wants to drive this force out of Manhattan and disperse it.

The Harlem Reclamation Project is leading the fightback. They organize support for families who refuse to move or who "homestead," take over a vacant building and repair it for their own use. They recently linked their struggles in Harlem to the "shanty town" protests against apartheid at nearby Columbia University.

A Labor Militant reporter recently attended a meeting in Harlem of the "Coalition for a moratorium on evictions." The Harlem Reclamation Project is part of this. There have been 90,000 evictions in the last 3 years in New York City. Two women have been killed by the police during these.

#### FIGHT-BACK IN HARLEM

As the meeting ended there was a discussion on Harlem today compared to when Malcolm X was alive. One Harlem tenant said, "My view is the place has got worse. One half of my block is now vacant."

There is a new fight-back coming in Harlem and throughout all of black America. Nsia Akufa Bea of the Harlem Reclamation Project explained, "More people are talking about South Africa than ever before. They beat down the black movement but there is a new resurgence coming slowly."

# CANADIAN LABOR MUST FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

By A Canadian Correspondent

**10.6% of the Canadian workforce is at present unemployed. 19% of 19-24 year-olds are jobless. 1 in 6 Canadians live in poverty and 1 in 25 are officially classified as living in inadequate housing conditions. The economic upswing of the past 3 years has passed these working class families by.**

Economic developments in Canada cannot be viewed separately from the US economy. Canadian capitalism has historically been too weak to stand up to the colossus next door. 76% of Canada's foreign trade is with the US and 7 out of the 12 top Canadian companies are US owned. This domination by US capitalism is increasing as Canadian big business shows itself unwilling to invest its profits into Canadian manufacturing industry.

In 1985, more capital flowed out of the country than came in. Investment in 1985 was below the level of the 1981-1982 recession. Between 1974 and 1981 the book value of Canadian investment in the US quadrupled to C\$27.4 billion and much of this went into real estate. This failure to invest is what lies at the heart of the economic crisis in Canada.

#### Upswing

The upswing of the past 3 years resulted mainly from increased demand in the US as the indebtedness of US consumers, corporations, federal and state governments increased. Canadian consumers also increased their indebtedness and the deficit of the Canadian federal and provincial governments rose to 9% of the GNP. This is now between 2 and 3 times the equivalent figure for the US. The federal deficit alone accounts for C\$34 billion. The interest on this is equal to 25% of all federal spending, more than is spent on pensions, health, education and social assistance programs combined.

The US economy has slowed drastically from over 6% growth in 1984 to just over 2% in 1985. It can no longer continue to pile up the deficits that fueled the upswing. The Canadian economy is also reaching the limits of its borrowing capacity. The fall in the price of oil and raw materials further weakens demand.

#### Attacks

The attacks on workers' living standards have continued unabated over the past decade. Between 1978 and 1984 wage increases were below inflation. These attacks as well as the rising unemployment add to the weakness in the economy. Canada will accompany the US economy into crisis in the coming 12 to 18 months.

As imports flood into the US economy, the call for protectionism gains strength. The Conservative Government in Ottawa resting primarily on finance capital and the section of the capitalists in Western Canada who are based on oil, minerals and lumber have pushed for a free trade agreement with the US.

This has led to a split with the manufacturing capitalists mainly based in Ontario, where 50% of all Canadian manufactured products are produced and Quebec, where 25% are produced. The Liberal Party recently won control of the Provincial Governments in Quebec and Ontario. The Conservative Government has shown increasing indecisiveness on the issue of free trade.

#### Labor's Power

This "Progressive" Conservative Government was elected in 1984 with 50% of the vote and 211 seats to 40 seats for the Liberals and 30 for the NDP. It is now a govern-

ment of crisis staggering from one crisis and resignation to another. The main reason for this is the power of the Canadian working class.

3.9 million workers, 42% of the employed workforce, is unionized. The Canadian workers have been consistently in the top 3 to 4 of the main capitalist countries in days lost in strikes.

The partial general strike in British Columbia in December, 1983, when 80,000 public sector workers were on strike and about to be followed out by the transport workers, shows Canadian labor's fighting capacity. This powerful movement, which was the first of its kind in the post-war period in either the US or Canada, is a sign of things to come.

This combativity is rising. In 1985, wages were forced above prices for the first time in 7 years. On top of this, the strikes for union rights and recognition that have been conducted in Eatons in Toronto and in the Commerce Bank show that sections of workers not traditionally militant are now also taking action.

#### Labor's Program

Unfortunately, the labor leaders have not put forward a program on which labor can fight and solve its problems. Their main fight is against free trade. While it is correct to oppose any deal between US and Canadian capital, it is no alternative to argue for the status quo or more protectionism.

Canadian labor should unite with American workers in a fight back against the common bosses and fight for an end to the dictatorship of American and Canadian corporations over all of North America and for it to be replaced by a Socialist United States of North America.

#### N.D.P.

The strength of the working class is also shown by the base of the New Democratic Party — the Canadian labor party — the traditional political arm of the Canadian working class which is based on the unions. It won 20% of the vote in the last Federal elections. At present, it has a majority in the polls in all the Western Provinces except Alberta. And in an important new breakthrough, its support in the polls in Quebec has reached 19% as the Parti Quebecois has split.

The leaders of the N.D.P. and organized labor must fight for an alternative to Canadian capitalism and its parties, the (so-called) Progressive Conservatives, the Liberals, the Social Creditors and the Parti Quebecois. It must break all alliances with conservative parties such as it has in Ontario at present where it is propping up a minority liberal government.

Fighting on a socialist program and for a majority N.D.P. government, the support of the majority of Canadian voters can be won and unity forged between French speaking and English speaking Canadian workers. This would not only offer a way out for Canadian workers but would provide a beacon for US workers struggling to make a decent life for themselves and their families.

OPPOSE MULRONEY AND REAGAN.

UNITY BETWEEN CANADIAN AND US LABOR.

FOR A SOCIALIST UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA.



Canadian auto-workers show their militancy and appeal for support from U.S. workers.

## VICTORY IN NEWFOUNDLAND AS WORKERS DEFY LAW

In November 1983 the workers of British Columbia in Western Canada drove back the attacks of the Province's right wing Social Credit Government with a partial general strike. In the weeks of March and early April of this year the Newfoundland workers in Eastern Canada inflicted a defeat on the right wing Progressive Conservative Government in their Province. They also carried out a partial general strike.

Road workers, transport workers, clerks and court employees all stopped work. They were demanding parity with other workers in similar types of employment and an end to the law which designated 49% of the workers in any public sector bargaining unit as 'essential'. This means in any strike 49% of the workers must remain at work.

#### MASS ARRESTS

The strike of the Newfoundland workers was illegal. The Government ordered mass arrests. Over 120 workers were arrested, but mass pickets and demonstrations took place and they were forced to end the arrest.

The Newfoundland Federation of Labor backed the 5,000 workers on strike with demonstrations and finance.

They threatened a general strike of all 80,000 workers in the province. The New Democratic Party also backed the strike. Their Provincial leader was one of those arrested for picketing.

The Strike was settled with the Government promising parity of wages in the coming contract.

negotiations. This strike and the B.C. strike of 1983 shows the magnificent fighting traditions of Canadian Labor and its determination to fight the attempts of Canadian big business to off-load its crisis on the backs of workers.

#### LESSONS

There are important lessons from both these strikes. In particular U.S. Labor which is surrounded by restrictive anti-union laws should take note. These strikes showed that where mass support is mobilized and a determined lead given right wing governments can be defeated and anti-labor laws and arrests can be successfully defied.

In the coming period the great industrial provinces of Ontario and Quebec and the provinces of central Canada will join the militant fighters of the Coastal belts. When they do they will rock Canadian capitalism to its foundations and inspire workers throughout all of North America.

The movement of the working class and peasants which removed Duvalier in Haiti and Marcos in the Philippines reflects the ferment which exists in the underdeveloped countries of the world. General strikes, partial general strikes, food riots and massive demonstrations are commonplace as revolutionary developments assume regional and even continental proportions.

The crisis in the Philippines is accompanied by the crisis in South Korea, Malasia, Taiwan, Indonesia and Thailand. The crisis in Haiti is part of the movement of workers and peasants in all of the Latin American Continent. This developing revolution has resulted in the ending of 9 dictatorships in the continent over the past 7 years. Regimes which appeared unshakable have had to give way to the power of the mass movements. In Bolivia alone there were 12 general strikes in 1985.

The most powerful country in Africa is facing the greatest revolt in its history. The black youth and workers are moving against apartheid and capitalism in South Africa. In Sudan a general strike overthrew the Numeiri regime and riots have rocked Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco.

The advanced capitalist countries are also entering a period of crisis and upheaval. The decades of economic growth, rising living standards and relative peace between the working class and big business, which were the experience during the post war boom, are now over.

Partial general strikes or one day general strikes have taken place in Greece, Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and in British Columbia and Newfoundland in Canada over the past 3 years. These have been accompanied by the miners' strike in Britain and the IG Metal strike for the 35 hour week in W. Germany.

At the same time left Governments have been elected with outright majorities in France, Greece and Spain. This was the first time in the history of these countries that there were majorities for the left. The left parties in Belgium, the Netherlands and W. Germany are at present at new highs in the opinion polls and the Swedish Social Democrats recently won re-election.

In the deformed workers' states of Eastern Europe, Russia and China a new crisis is also developing. The revolution in Poland in 1980 and 1981 showed the opposition of the working class in these areas to the mismanagement, corruption, privileges and repression of the dictatorial caste which rules these countries.

#### Economic Crisis

For the first time in history the 3 sectors of the world — the advanced capitalist countries, the ex-colonial or underdeveloped countries of the capitalist world and the Stalinist countries — are simultaneously in crisis. At the heart of this crisis is the crisis of the productive forces and the slowing up in the rate of growth in these forces and in the production of goods and services.

Between 1960 and 1973, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the advanced capitalist countries rose by 5% per year. During the years 1973 to 1975 this fell to 1.7% per year. For a brief period of four years from 1975 to 1979 the figure rose to 4.3% but from 1979 to 1981 it was once again down to 1.8% per year.

By Victor Bloch

In the countries of COMECON, which is made up predominantly of Eastern Europe and Russia, average growth was 10% in the 1950's. This fell to 7% in the 1960's, 5% in the 1970's and in 1979 was 2.1% according to official figures.

While the populations have increased, the rate of growth in production has slowed up. As a result, the necessities of life can no longer be provided to the extent that was the case in the years of the post-war boom.

The economic crisis in the capitalist world is rooted in the private ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange and in the existence of nation states. Big business cannot overcome these contradictions so there is the development of over-production and over-capacity. At present the economics of the West operate at only 80% of capacity in booms, and 70% in slumps. This results in plant closures and increased unemployment and poverty. At the same time protectionism develops and further exacerbates the crisis by cutting across world trade.

The economic crisis in the Stalinist world is rooted in the bureaucratic mismanagement and corruption of the ruling bureaucratic castes. The advantages of the planned economy over the anarchy of capitalism are continually lessened by the inability of the bureaucracy to plan efficiently. Only the democratic participation and control of the working class can fully realize the potential of a planned economy. The bureaucracy can no more overcome the contradictions of their system than can the capitalist class in their's.

#### Reaganomics

The developing world crisis has not been overcome by Reagan's upswing. The opposite is the case. The upswing of the past 3 years has resulted in the highest level of debt in US history. The total debt of US consumers, corporations, farmers and state and federal governments rose 14% in 1984 to \$7.1 trillion (\$7,100,000,000,000).

The current upswing has lasted longer than the average of post-war upswings. This is partly due to the increased size of the U.S. deficit. Another factor has been the fall in the price of raw materials, which has transferred \$70 billion from the underdeveloped countries to the advanced capitalist countries.

However, it has also increased the debt of the underdeveloped countries which will push forward the revolution in these areas in the coming years. Reagan's response to this has been to increase US intervention, shown by recent events in Central America, Libya and Angola.

#### Recession

Reagan's upswing will collapse in a new and deeper recession than the recession of 1981-82. Inflation will soar again. Indebted countries and consumers, corporations and farmers will default on their debts and threaten banks. A new 1929 collapse will begin to appear on the horizon.

This threatens a return to the 1930's for the advanced capitalist countries. Already 40 million are unemployed in the 24 advanced capitalist countries grouped in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

For the underdeveloped world it means an absolute nightmare. Living standards fell for the majority of people in these countries during the years of the post war boom. Now, with the boom over, outright starvation is the prospect. 50 million people starve to death each year and 700 million are either unemployed or under-employed in this part of the world.

For the working class and peasants in Eastern Europe and Russia the developing crisis means an attempt by the bureaucracy to reduce their living standards and to speed up the rate of work. This will be accompanied by increased repression.

The coming period in world history will be one of increased instability, with the working class and peasants in the West rising to end capitalism and landlordism and the working class and peasants in the East rising to end Stalinism. Developments in one area or in one country can only be understood if viewed as part of this world crisis and world revolution that is unfolding.

#### Philippines

It is in this context that the fall of the twenty-year dictatorship of Marcos in the Philippines is to be understood. In the Philippines, 70% of the population is suffering from malnutrition while 43% of the workforce is unemployed or semi-employed. Less than one per cent of the population controls 70% of the economy. While Marcos and the capitalist class were getting richer and richer, tens of thousands of young children were dying of hunger and malnutrition-related disease.

In the last two years, the economy of the Philippines experienced a massive decline — 4.6% in real production in 1985. As a result, the regime of Marcos started to crumble under the increasing pressure of the masses. The number of strikes increased by 45% in 1985 with the workers responding to the brutal repression of the regime with greater militancy and mobilization and moving



Miners families fight Thatcher.

to the leadership of the workers and the unemployed have felt their strength in the struggle. The recent events are the beginning of a new revolutionary wave in the Philippines and the entire region. The processes taking place in the Philippines constitute a confirmation of the basic ideas of Marxism that the working class is the decisive force in the revolution even in the colonial world, refuting the arguments that guerrilla movements or benevolent liberals are the key to removing dictators.

In the face of these developments, the masters of Marcos — the more astute sections of Philippine capitalism and U.S. imperialism — decided to dump him despite his insistence on clinging to power. They were terrified at the potential consequences of a more radical leadership emerging. It was the coming onto the streets by hundreds of thousands of workers who defied Marcos's bands which decisively convinced U.S. imperialism that Marcos had to go. However, without a clear socialist alternative being given by the leaders of the Filipino working class, were unable to take power into their own hands and big business and the landlords remained in control.

#### Working Class

The presidency was assumed by Corazon Aquino, one of the "Opposition" representatives of the ruling class with the support of U.S. imperialism. The new government is largely made up from representatives of the old regime. It can not and will not solve the problems confronting the Filipino people. Aquino's government represents the interests of the landowners and the big capitalists and therefore is unable to solve the problem of distribution of the land to the peasants.

On the other hand the masses

of the workers and the unemployed have felt their strength in the struggle. The recent events are the beginning of a new revolutionary wave in the Philippines and the entire region. The processes taking place in the Philippines constitute a confirmation of the basic ideas of Marxism that the working class is the decisive force in the revolution even in the colonial world, refuting the arguments that guerrilla movements or benevolent liberals are the key to removing dictators.

In Haiti, the hated Duvalier regime collapsed after a series of mass demonstrations of the youth, workers and the unemployed and a general strike. Once again, due to the lack of a clear socialist leadership in the labor movement, the opportunity was lost and a new unstable regime made up of Duvalier's aids filled the vacuum. The collapse of the dictators in both Haiti and the Philippines marks the beginning of a new revolutionary wave that will end either with the overthrow of capitalism and landlordism or the return — over a period of 5-10 years — of a new even more vicious repressive regime. The collapse of these regimes also hastens the end of Pinochet in Chile with all the explosive impetus that will give to the Latin American revolution.

#### Stalinism

The working class will also play the leading role in the struggle against Stalinism. This was shown in the mass movement of millions of workers who built "Solidarity" in Poland. Beginning in 1980, millions of workers started demonstrations against shortages and price increases, demanding higher wages, the right to a trade union organization, and called for an

# ASS FIGHTS ND STALINISM



Chilean worker fights Pinochets police.

end to the dictatorial rule and privileges of the bureaucracy.

Solidarity was set up by the representatives of the workers in 400 factories in Gdansk and the membership of the organization swelled to 10 million. The sweep and power of the Polish revolution and the Polish working class is shown in the building of Solidarity. In three months the Polish workers built a union with 10 million members. This is the fastest growth of a union in world history.

Solidarity was not in any way a movement against socialism as Reagan and other capitalist politicians tried to present it for propagandistic reasons. The demands of the workers supporting the Solidarity movement was democratic change in the direction of bringing the planned economy and state ownership under workers' control and management. At no time did the Polish working class ever demand a return to capitalism.

The movement in Poland was a political revolution to establish workers' democracy and open the way for a transition to socialism. However, tragically, without a revolutionary Marxist leadership at its head, the Polish working class was led from the start by a leadership that squandered all the opportunities presented to them, thus condemning the workers to defeat. The leadership of Solidarity did not comprehend that it is impossible to achieve gradual reform of the Stalinist system, or for a genuine democratic union movement to co-exist with the Stalinist bureaucracy.

#### Martial Law

The Stalinist castes can only maintain their rule by ruthless police-state methods and the destruction of the opposition of any kind. The bureaucracy defends in every way its privilege, power, income and prestige against every challenge of the working class.

Then, after a period of compromise, the regime struck and imposed martial law and jailed hundreds of activists in Poland. Solidarity was forced underground and the movement was defeated. However, that does not mean that political revolution is over in the Eastern European states and the Soviet Union. The working class created during the last 40 years of industrial development is extremely powerful as was shown in the case of Hungary and Poland. With even a few dozen activists armed with a clear perspective and program for the political revolution at the beginning of the events in 1980, a genuine workers' democracy could have been established in Poland. The bureaucratic regime was suspended in mid-air when the massive general strikes occurred. The "communist" party was totally isolated in the face of

mass opposition and it could only rely on the security forces to deal with the situation.

There was no force in Poland preventing the working class from taking state power. It was held back from this task only by the mistaken policies of the leadership. The policies of the Solidarity leaders were heavily influenced by "dissident" intellectuals and the Catholic Church to whom they turned for advice. Incapable of understanding laws of revolution and the processes they were involved in, Waleski and the other leaders of Solidarity limited the movement to demands for partial reforms and attempted to compromise with the bureaucracy.

What the Polish working class needed was a decisive and audacious revolutionary policy and internationalist appeal to the working class in Russia, East Germany, Hungary etc., to rise with them and overthrow their own bureaucracies.

#### Advanced Capitalist Countries

In the advanced capitalist countries also the working class lead the struggle against big business. Struggles like those of the thousands of shipbuilding workers and the youth in the barricades of Bilbao and Gijon; those of the hundreds of thousands of German metal workers for the 35-hour day, the general strikes in Greece and Denmark and the magnificent struggle of the British miners and strikes in British Columbia and Newfoundland in Canada are examples of this.

Fundamentally, the world balance of forces is more in favor of the working class than any other time in history. From the point of view of the capitalists, the traditional force used for reaction — the middle class — have been reduced to a tiny minority. This is especially the

case in the advanced capitalist countries and is reflected in Europe in the mass left organizations — Socialist and Communist Parties — that came to power in several countries with absolute majorities. It is also shown in the events in France in 1968 and Portugal between 1974 and 1975.

In France 1968, 10 million workers joined a general strike paralyzing the capitalist state, police and the military. The factories were occupied and the question of a peaceful transformation of society under workers control was posed. A similar process took place in Portugal 1974, when after the removal of a 40 year dictatorship, the working class and the peasantry took over 70% of the economy and occupied the land. Had a genuine marxist leadership existed at the head of the labor movement in either of these situations capitalism could have easily been overthrown and replaced by a genuine workers state.

The power of the working class is shown in countries like Spain, Greece and France where socialist governments were elected with over 50% of the vote in every case. These Governments could have nationalized the commanding heights of the economy and planned production in order to end the economic and social crisis. However, what they attempted was to "reform" the capitalist system ending up — in every case — with the implementation of severe counter-reforms and austerity to "bolster industry".

France, where the left lost its majority in the recent parliamentary elections to the right wing shows the forces at work. The socialists and the communists came to power in 1981 with a program for change and reforms. The parties of the left received 55% of the vote. During the first 12 months the socialist government introduced a series of reforms. They raised the minimum wage, cut retirement age to 60, reduced the work week and nationalized some sections of the economy.

#### Counter-Reforms

However, the vast majority of the economy remained in the hands of the private sector. Under the pressure of big business both in France and abroad, who withdrew investment and speculated against the franc, the Mitterrand government was pushed from their reforms to counter-reforms forcing the crisis onto the backs of the workers and the youth. In the second year of his government, Mitterrand proceeded with counter-forms, a wage freeze, monetary devaluations and other measures similar to those of Reagan and Thatcher. Unemployment rose from 7 to 11%.

After a period of massive strikes and demoralization, the right wing returned with a shaky majority in parliament in the March 1986 election. However, even after all those developments, the Socialist Party remained the largest political party in the assembly with 30% of the vote. Many workers continued to back the Mitterrand government alarmed by the threat posed by the right. The new events will open a series of discussions among the activists

in the Socialist and the Communist parties in France. What the example of France clearly demonstrates is a new period of social and political upheavals for the entire European continent and the advanced capitalist world as a whole.

#### North America

The unfolding crisis will see similar developments in North America and Japan. The workers parties, the NDP in Canada and the Socialist and Communist Parties in Japan, will also be pushed toward overall majorities in the coming 5-10 years. Australia and New Zealand have at present Labor Governments.

In the USA there will at some stage be a new movement to build and transform the unions and out of this will come the development of a Labor Party. The new Labor Party will gain massive support and win a majority as the crisis in the U.S. and internationally pushes the working class into action.

The building of mass workers parties and the election of workers parties to government represents major steps forward. However, it is also necessary for such governments to carry through programs which can solve the problems.

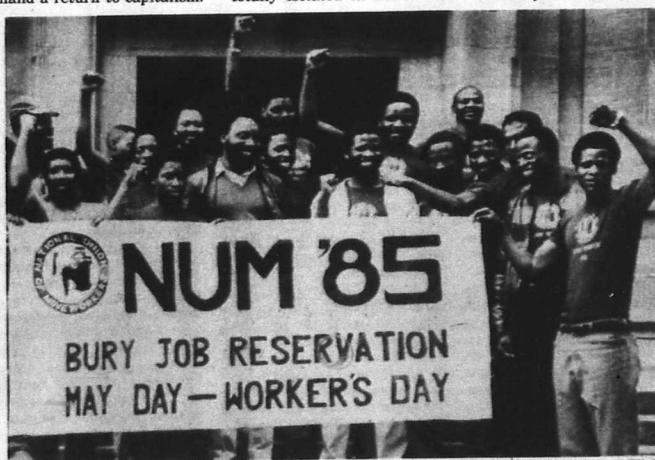
In the new period of economic crisis it is impossible to win a struggle for permanent reforms or even a defensive struggle for the rights of the working class without carrying through the socialist transformation of society.

In the Stalinist countries it is impossible to win democratic rights and solve the economic problems except by overthrowing the Stalinist bureaucracies and replacing them with workers democracies.

#### Protracted

The lesson of events worldwide is that the working class is now much stronger than before. East and West, in the metropolitan countries and in the underdeveloped countries it is moving into struggle and giving leadership to all the oppressed sections of society. However, its leadership is incapable of bringing it to victory either over capitalism and landlordism in the West or Stalinism in the East. As a result the struggle takes big leaps forward and then suffers defeats only to once again move onto the offensive. The struggle is protracted and drawn out.

What is necessary is the establishment of genuine Marxist leaderships at the head of the working class internationally. This would make possible the establishment of genuine workers' democracies. One such victory in a major industrial country either in the East or in the West would transform the political situation worldwide. The way would then be opened to the ending of Stalinism, Capitalism and Landlordism, and to the establishment of a world socialist federation. This would end exploitation and oppression, and would lay the basis for a world free of want and need allowing the fullest possible human development.



South African miners organize against bosses and apartheid.

# SOUTH AFRICA - COSATU CONFRONTS REGIME

The launching of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is a giant step forward for the working class of all Africa. In the very center of racist and capitalist reaction black South African workers have built the strongest and most democratic trade union movement on the whole continent.

In this article reprinted from the British Militant — December 1985 — Paul Storey explains this milestone event.

**LAST WEEKEND**, a conference and a 10,000-strong rally launched the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). This brings under one banner 34 non-racial democratic unions with over half a million members.

Every socialist in Britain should campaign to support COSATU and build direct union links.

After 12 months of heroic country-wide insurrection in the townships led by black youth, the black industrial workers are determined to unite in action at the head of the movement against the bosses and the murderous apartheid regime.

## Fighting spirit

The workers' fighting spirit was expressed in the speech of Elijah Barayi, vice-president of the SA NUM and now president of COSATU. Described in the press as "a stalwart of the African National Congress before it was outlawed", comrade Barayi "spelt out the socialist aspirations of COSATU" and declared the workers' intention of nationalising the mines and big businesses on taking power (*Guardian*, 2 December 1985).

He delivered a militant ultimatum to Botha, drawing thunderous applause. "COSATU gives Botha six months to get rid of passes. If that does not take place we will burn the passes..."

"I want to give PW Botha a last warning to get rid of the pass laws and to withdraw the troops from the townships before the country burns".

If carried into effect in a full-scale national campaign, this ultimatum can provide the focus for the entire mass movement in the period ahead, and help lift union membership towards the million mark: COSATU, together with the youth, in a united front with the UDF, must back up the ultimatum with organisation and power.

While the activists in SA still show themselves tireless in battle, below the surface the mass movement has begun slightly to recede (despite continued eruptions), because of the difficulty of carrying the insurrectionary movement in its present form beyond the flaming township streets. Prolonged stalemate has meant the state gradually (if only temporarily) regaining the upper hand.

The resulting frustration of the fighting youth had begun to open a dangerous rift with unions slow to move into political battle. A



Black South African workers rock South African capitalism.

COSATU-led campaign to smash the pass laws can now provide a way forward—within the scope of the force presently in the hands of the black working class.

In May, alone at that time, *Ingaba* urged: "...were there now to be a really determined, well-organised and resolutely led mass campaign of pass-burning, the complete defiance of influx control laws, and attacks on pass courts and records offices, this system could be thoroughly wrecked. However, to the extent that the matter is left to the ruling class to decide, it is most unlikely that they could move to the abolition of these measures". (*Supplement*, issue 16/17, p. 23)

Now the COSATU president has set six months for Botha to scrap the pass laws—or the passes burn.

The regime faces a dilemma. The big bosses and even the President's stooge Council have recently declared in favour of ending passes. But, as we argued, Botha fears to give a signal of weakness to the blacks.

Now he must decide: surrender in humiliation to the ultimatum of COSATU, or throw all his force at the

unions in a situation which will split the ruling class, the whites, and potentially even the troops.

## Name the date

COSATU leaders must name the date for the passes to burn! May Day would have been a good choice, but it is only five months away. 31 May is the 25th anniversary of the white racist Republic. Better still, 16 June is the tenth anniversary of the Soweto uprising. What better acknowledgement of the youth's role than to set this date for a one-day national general strike and mass pass-burning in the townships? Whatever date, set it now!

How many passes are there in SA? Ten million? Then ten million passes must burn! The 500,000 COSATU members, the tens of thousands of youth activists, the women at home—all should become campaigners now to prepare the day when the passes will burn.

Preparations should be made to defend the townships on that day with all available means against police and troop attacks. Coloured and Indian workers and youth should be

prepared to join one-day strike action and to erect barricades in their townships to draw army units away from the African townships.

White students should be mobilised to converge on the African townships in order to complicate the position of the police and troops in opening fire.

Mass report-backs in all cities on the COSATU conference should be used to launch this campaign now.

The Commonwealth heads gave Botha "six months" to change apartheid, or face sanctions. That is a "dog with rubber teeth" as workers say.

COSATU's ultimatum is different. It has real teeth, and they must be used or the enormous hopes placed in it will be disappointed. Workers around the world should aid this historic development in the South African struggle in every practical way.

**By Paul Storey**  
(Member of the Editorial Board of *Inqaba ya Basebenzi*, journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC)

# BRITISH LABOR: "ITS BETTER TO BREAK THE LAW THAN TO BREAK THE POOR"

The Thatcher government in Britain has been waging war against the British working class and its organizations.

Conditions have become unbearable in Britain. Official unemployment has reached 13%, and savage cuts have been implemented in social programs and the national health service. It is in the inner cities where conditions have deteriorated the fastest, and Liverpool is one of the hardest hit. Its official unemployment rate is 25%.

## Socialist Program

In 1983 the Labor Party won control of Liverpool City government on a socialist program of

no cuts, no tax hike and an increase in jobs and services. In their first 11 months in office the Labor Council stopped a proposed cut of \$10 million in services and the lay-off of 1200 council workers. They created 1000 additional jobs and started building 1100 new council houses.

## Militant Tendency

The Socialist City Council went on to demand the Thatcher government pay back money recently cut by legislation organized a mass campaign throughout the workplaces and communities. This campaign was conducted on the program and policies of the Militant Tendency, the Marxist wing of

the Labor Party, which has been elected to the leadership of the Liverpool District Labor Party, and has one third of the elected Councillors, including the deputy leader, Derek Hatton.

The Socialist Council of Liverpool places the blame for the conditions of poverty and unemployment on the policies of the Thatcher government and the crisis of British capitalism. They have mobilized the City's workforce in demonstrations and 24 hour city wide strikes to put pressure on the government. They argue that only a national mobilization of workers to bring down the Thatcher government and bring to power a Labor government committed to socialist policies can any solution be found for the

working class in Liverpool and through the whole of Britain.

During the heroic struggle in 1985 the Labor Councillors, who have a majority on the Liverpool City Council, have been accused of breaking the law. The High Court has banned the 49 Liverpool Councillors from office for 5 years and inflicted heavy fines on them. The Liverpool Councillors are defiant, saying, "it is better to break the law than to break the poor."

Unfortunately the Labor Party and trade union leaders have not given full support to the struggle in Liverpool. Instead they have attacked the Liverpool Councillors and Liverpool Labor Party, calling for an investigation. At the same time they have

called for expulsions of leading supporters of the Militant from the Labor Party, including leading officers in the District Labor Party and Derek Hatton, the deputy leader of Liverpool City Council.

The struggle of Liverpool workers and the City Council is a beacon to workers everywhere. In the coming years more and more Councils will be forced to take the road of Liverpool as the crisis deepens. It is only bold socialist policies and decisive fighting leadership that can organize an effective struggle against big business and its system and open up a socialist future for all.

# LATINOS EN U.S.A.

En el valle del Rio Grande, por ejemplo, el tifus (*la lerpra*), parásitos intestinales y tuberculosis son comunes. En California, se descubrieron campesinos viviendo en cuevas.

En algunas, los trabajadores tuvieron buen éxito en la lucha para construir uniones — por ejemplo Los Campesinos Unidos (UFW) en California y el Comité para Organizar el Labor Agrícola (FLOC) en Michigan y Ohio. Este ha sido un paso adelante importante para los campesinos. Por las uniones, se han elevado los sueldos y mejorado las condiciones laborales por ejemplo protección en el uso de los insecticidas y prohibición del uso del "cortitox" en California.

Sin embargo, los empleadores en el campo y en las ciudades mas abusaron de los trabajadores Latinoamericanos, especialmente los que están aquí ilegalmente (que son un 50% a 70% de los campesinos). Sin derechos legales, sin la protección del seguro para desempleo o de la seguridad social, estos trabajadores se explotan al máximo. Desperados a causa de las condiciones en sus patrias y casi sin oportunidades aquí en los Estados Unidos, aun se usan a veces como esquiroles, para romper huelgas.

Los empleados estan en conflictos sobre esta inundación de inmigrantes ilegales (cuatro entran ilegalmente cada minuto del dia). En un lado, se los ven como una fuente de labor "barata y docil"; "Nuestra economía depende de ellos" dijo:



EL UAW y el sindicato de farm-workers tienen que unirse para luchar los salarios débiles pagando a los trabajadores latinos.

Wilson Hart, miembro del Consejo de la ciudad de Santa Ana. Por otro lado, son una sección de la clase trabajadora de los eu que esta muy aislada de la influencia de las capitalistas. Por ejemplo, la gran mayoría de ellos se opondrian una invasión sobre America Central por los Estados Unidos.

Por esa razón, siguen tratando pasar leyes de regula esta inmigración y estas surgen largos años de tramitación sin producirse. A los capitalistas, les gustaría el regreso del programa de "braceros" — para usar los trabajadores inmigrantes bajo el control completo del gobierno y luego devolverlos a sus patrias

cuando no los necesitan — pero las uniones son demasiado fuertes para eso.

La Migra no va a prevenir que miles de trabajadores hambrientos y desesperados entraran en los Estados Unidos, aceptando cualquier trabajo que se ofreciera bajando los sueldos en los Estados Unidos. Sin derechos, y con el miedo constante de deportación, no pueden participar en la organización de las uniones ni en la lucha para un buen sueldo y buenas condiciones.

Las uniones deben luchar por derechos completos para todos

los trabajadores en Los EU, juntando una campaña masiva para organizar todos los trabajadores.

Al mismo tiempo, deben separarse de la política de las capitalistas y deben verdaderamente ayudar a los trabajadores de Latinoamericano organizar uniones democráticas y duras; y al mismo tiempo deben oponerse a gobiernos como los de Guatemala y El Salvador. Finalmente, deben oponerse a la política asesinares de los EU en Nicaragua.

Estos pasos permitirían que se rompa completamente con las políticas de las capitalistas y, así, tendrían que construir un partido laboral popular en este país.

# HUELGA GENERAL INSURRECCIONAL

Levamos casi dieciocho meses de protestas y no se ha convocado la Huelga General. En la juventud en particular, existe un apoyo enorme para la lucha armada contra la dictadura. Sin embargo, a partir del II de mayo, se ha dado una pausa, lo que aperanta ser un reflujo. En absoluto eso quiere decir que la lucha contra Pinochet se haya estancado o agotado. Al contrario: se ha dado esta pausa porque muchos obreros y jóvenes están buscando un modo de lucha mas eficaz que las repetidas protestas, que no superan la represión dejandonos mas de 100 muertos en el ultimo año.

En la lucha se ha dado una pausa pero en el próximo periodo volverá a avanzar con mayor voluntad y mayor fuerza.

El planteamiento del paro nacional debe partir de esta perspectiva.

El acuerdo de los dirigentes sindicales en abril fue llamar al paro en un plazo de 90 días. Por que se ha permitido el retraso? Se podría haber juntado una base masiva para la huelga, si se hubiera empezado una campaña a partir de la manifestacion del 1º de mayo. Podría perfectamente haberse planteado como objetivo el derrocamiento de Pinochet.

El problema es que la dirección del movimiento obrero esta planteando otra forma de la protesta y que incluye en su dirección a la D.C. y demás sectores que se denominan opositores.

Ademas, la posición de la cupula de la D.C. he sido la de retrazar y frenar el proceso hacia la huelga general. Lo que les interesa, es un paro nacional y cívico, con la participación de los empresarios y todos los burgueses que recien hoy se oponen al régimen. Si lo dejamos en sus manos, el paro sera otra protesta sin ningun objetivo claro. De hecho, solo ahora llegan a plantear el paro, debido a la enorme presion que se ha ido acumulando en contra del régimen. Han retrasado, inclusive, el llamado a un paro nacional tapo "protesta," porque temen que en la acción la

lucha podría avanzar mucho mas alla de lo que ellos buscan.

Si en el movimiento obrero se condiciona el llamado al paro a la cupula D.C. y demás políticos burgueses, no hara sino debilitar la lucha contra el régimen.

La Cupula D.C., que ahora hace alarde de su lealtad a la democracia, animaron y apoyaron el golpe del 73. El golpe obedecia a la necesidad de la burguesia: tenian que aplastar el movimiento de la clase obrera. Hoy se han convertido en opositores, debido a la presión explosiva que se esta acumulando en todos los sec-

tores de la sociedad y debido al dano catastrofico que el Regimen Pinochetista ha causado a la economía chilena. La crisis del capitalismo se hubiera dado de todas formas como en todo el continente, pero la estupidez incontrolada del dictador la ha exacerbado un tanto mas.

El movimiento obrero tiene que plantear su lucha sin dejarse condicionar por estos democatas recien convertidos. El apoyo de la juventud, los pobladores y la base de la

clase media ira al movimiento obrero, si este defiende un programa claro de derechos democatas, a la vez que si lleva a cabo la revolucion socialista, elevando asi el nivel de vida y desarrollando la sociedad.

Los vemos como el unico programa real del movimiento obrero chileno, para derrocar la dictadura y lograr la emancipación del proletariado y todos los sectores de la sociedad chilena explotados por los capitalistas chilenos y por el imperialismo.

By  
A Chilean  
Correspondent

Los piqueteos del año anterior no se han terminado, debemos todos activar en nuestra Union y luchar para mantener nuestro nivel de vida, en forma permanente. Debemos organizarnos y luchar:

1. Ninguna combinación de trabajo cuando hay trabajadores despedidos.

2. Cumplimiento forzoso del contrato.

3. Una sistema fuerte de comites trabajo en todos los hoteles.

4. Organización para revertir las concesiones en el proximo contrato.

5. Una campana educacional por la Union en todas las lenguas de los trabajadores, en los hoteles.

6. Una campana masiva para organizar los Hoteles que no tienen Uniones.

Por M. Cutler  
Local 6 Hotel Restaurant Union

# HUELGA HOTELERA

El primero de Junio pasado, unos 25000 trabajadores de los hoteles, salieron a las calles en lucha por mejorar sus condiciones de trabajo. Duro la huelga 28 días. Los miembros de la Union de Trabajadores de Hoteles y Restaurantes #6, luchaba para mantener sus niveles de vida y tambien para mantener el derecho de pertenecer a una union.

Los patrones querian romper la Union, en 40 años de historia de la Union nunca habian tenido una huelga, como la pasada, los patrones obligaron la huelga para saber hasta donde llegaría

la Union.

Dijeron que si no bajaban el nivel de vida de los trabajadores los precios de los cuartos, tenderian que ser mas altos que el precio corriente. Estas mentiras, para esconder los buenos negocios de Nueva York, sus precios se han elevado mas rapido que cualquier otra ciudad, el porcentaje de cuartos ocupados en Nueva York es mas alto que en cualesquier otra ciudad.

La patronal de Hoteles, dio un paso erroneo, cuando declaro la guerra a sus empleados, no se dieron cuenta de la decision de los trabajadores, de la unidad de los trabajadores de las distintas

nacionalidades y lenguas, ni de la fuerza de la Union. Los patrones se sorprendieron, cuando despues de casi un mes de huelga, muy pocos trabajadores cruzaron las lineas de piquetes y no aparecio la derrota de la Union.

Los patrones tuvieron que aceptar nuestras demandas: se ganaron aumentos en sueldos y pensiones; un dia adicional pagado por enfermedad y para vacaciones; anteojos gratis; y una beca de \$3000 por año para nuestros hijos.

Aunque la huelga resulto en una gran victoria para los trabajadores de los hoteles y todas las uniones, muchos patrones pretenden violar el contrato.

# Women: Cheap Labor for Bosses

**Women in America make up over 50% of the population and 42% of the workforce. They hold two thirds of all minimum wage jobs. The average wage for women is 59 cents to the man's dollar. At the same time they bear the brunt of childbirth and child rearing. Under capitalism women are the most oppressed of the oppressed.**

The introduction of Affirmative Action legislation and the Equal Employment Opportunity Acts in the 1960's were to have reversed the years of discrimination and exploitation. In reality these reforms improved the position of a small minority of women, mainly from the middle class. But, for the vast majority of working class women nothing changed.

An example of this is the Affirmative Action program instituted at AT&T in the early 1970's. Through a court decree women and minority males who were adequately qualified for promotions were given super seniority rights over qualified white males. At the end of the five year period 6.7% of women were promoted to middle and upper management jobs as compared to the 2.1% in 1972. In skilled jobs women increased from 6% to 14%. However, during this same period the number of women employed at AT&T declined by 10,000, twice that of men.

Now with the break up of AT&T thousands of more women have lost jobs. The gains made through court ordered quotas are limited and short lived and must be weighed up against the overall position of working class women today.

## US Economy In Crisis

In 1950 the U.S. produced 52% of all the goods and services in the world. By 1984 this had fallen to 22%. Despite still being the most powerful country in the capitalist world, U.S. capitalism no longer holds the absolutely dominant position in the world it held after World War II.

In the 1960's U.S. production accounted for 90% of its home market in the key industries of auto, steel and machine tools. By 1984 this had fallen to only 77% for autos, 75% for steel and 58% for machine tools. This weakening of the industrial base of the U.S. economy is at the heart of the ever deepening crisis of U.S. capitalism.

The recent recovery has not turned around this situation. The recovery was based on increased military spending and an expansion in the service industry. Military spending, which consumes 6% of Gross National Product (GNP), is purely the production of scrap metal and is a total drain on resources, while services are incapable of sustaining a sound economy.

Of the 11 million jobs created since the 1981-82 recession, nearly 80% were in services, and the Labor Department expects this to increase to 90% by 1995. Not only are service jobs dependent on a solid manufacturing sector, but these jobs are at lower pay which reduces the home market for goods. This increase in the service sector can not overcome the crisis of manufacturing industry.

This decline in manufacturing can be seen in a major shift in the economy in the last twenty

years. Since 1965 the share of GNP represented by manufacturing has fallen from 29% to 21%. At the same time the service sector has risen from 60.4% to 68%. This continuing decline in manufacturing industry signals an irreversible decline in the U.S. economy.

### Lack Of Investment

Big business and its press have tried to place the blame for this decline on the "high" wages of American workers and imports from abroad. This is a smokescreen to hide the real cause which is the low level of investment by U.S. big business back into its industry.

Rather than invest in manufacturing industry, which alone creates wealth, U.S. big business wasted its profits in such areas as military spending, speculation, mergers and in the service industry. 15 times more people are now employed in the fast food industry and is a total drain on resources, while services are incapable of sustaining a sound economy.

This crisis has created a record trade deficit, budget deficit and national debt. It has led to the highest level of bankruptcies, the deepest farm crisis and the highest level of unemployment since the depression of the 1930's.

### World Crisis

This crisis is part of a world crisis that grips all the countries of the capitalist world. In every country the response of the employers has been the same: to shift the burden of the crisis onto the backs of workers through rising unemployment, attacks on wages and cuts in services.

Increased to 12 million, which is over 40%, with a 25% jump in the last four years. The position of black women is a double horror. In 1983, nearly 42% of black families were headed by single mothers, up from 40.3% in 1980 and 22.4% in 1960. Their median family income was \$7,999 in 1983, compared with \$13,761 for households headed by white women.

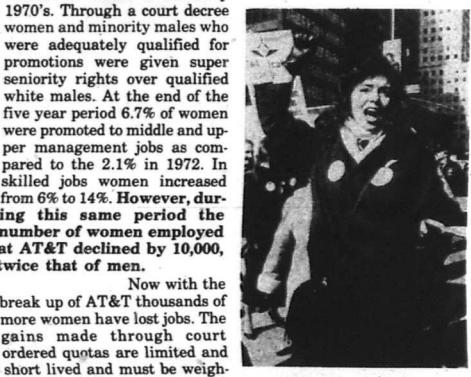
Women are also denied adequate health services, maternity leave from their jobs, health facilities and are targets of sexual harassment and violence. 60% of working women have no maternity leave. In a survey of 6 million employers it was found that only 1800 offer some type of child care.

Legislation can not put an end to the horrific conditions working class women face.

The only lasting gains made by women have been those won through the Labor Movement.

Presently 34% of trade union members - 6 million in all - are women. Unionized women, compared to nonunion, have increased pay, job security, seniority rights and benefits. The clerical workers at Columbia University recently won a union contract with an 8.5% wage increase, improved benefits, a union voice in hiring and promotion and compensation for workers who had previously suffered racial or sexual discrimination.

The battles ahead for unionization and decent working conditions will draw more women into organized labor. In a National Bureau of Economic Research



TWA flight attendant on the march in New York.

report on 200 recent unions elections it was found that unions won half of the campaigns in which women made up 75% or more of the workforce, but only 40% of those where less than half the workers were women. It will be over these battles around workers' rights to organize, respect on the job, decent wages, etc. that the consciousness of women will change.

**Capitalism and the use of women as cheap labor with "second class" status are inseparable.**

Organized labor must take on this battle through commitment to fight against all unequal and discriminatory treatment of

women at work, in society and within the labor movement. This can begin with a program to end low paid jobs, unemployment, job displacement through automation and the drudgery of housework, a campaign for equal pay and for all work of equal value, as well as creation of good, accessible child, family and health care facilities.

Working class women have always been the most combative and courageous fighters. With a bold program defending the interests of women and uniting the working class, women will be won to the Labor movement and play a vital role in the struggle for socialism.

## TWA Workers Defy Bosses

**TWA flight attendants have been out on the picket line since early March. They have shown the most courageous spirit and determination. The issues of the case are explained below in an interview with Karen Lantz, vice president of the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants.**

As the strike continues it becomes more and more clear that if victory is to be achieved united action must be organized with other unions in TWA and in the industry. The law restricting picketing to four pickets at any point at any time must be broken.

By Margaret Collins  
Hotel and Restaurant  
Union Local 6  
(personal capacity)

### MOBILIZE

IFFA should mobilize its members in a one week campaign to get to the members of all other unions and the unorganized in TWA, and explain that if IFFA is defeated then all other workers will face further attacks. IFFA should name the day, at the end of this week campaign, when they would refuse to comply with the law and put on mass pickets and call on all other TWA workers to respect them. This is the way to close down TWA, to get enough support to defeat the anti-union laws and to defeat Icahn and his cuts.

In her exclusive interview with Labor Militant the vice president of IFFA, Karen Lantz, said: "The reason why he (Icahn) told Vicki Frankovich our president, that he needed more concessions from us is that we don't have the same financial responsibilities to our families as the other employee groups who are primarily men... He said we could afford to give more for after all the other people were 'breadwinners.' He also said we were a 'weak group' and that we would not stand up and fight, and that he could take what he wanted because we would never stand up to him..."

"Icahn has stated before the strike that he needed \$300 million in employee concessions. So far without our concessions he has \$275 million in place. So with our \$50 million in concessions he will have over \$325 million. Now if he can't turn the company around with more concessions than what he would need, then I guess he is not the businessman he thinks he is."

### TWO TIER WAGE SCALE

Among the major concessions Icahn wanted were:

1) The right to reduce the flight attendants' salaries from \$1,360 per month (old contract) to \$1,007 per month.

2) A two tier wage scale in which employees hired after the new contract would make a lower rate of pay for seven years before their pay would match that of senior employees.

3) The right to switch the routes of flight attendants at his convenience.

4) The rest periods between flights will be shortened as well as an increase in flying time. He has ordered eight additional flight hours which adds up to a total of 320 hours away from home per month, as opposed to 240 hours per month in the old contract.

Vice President Karen Lantz summed up the concessions when she said that Icahn wanted them... "to do more work with less rest, fewer flight attendants, for less pay."

### UNION CHANGED

She also said during the interview that the impact of the strike has served to pull the union closer together. 95% of the union has not crossed the picket lines and are putting up a tough fight.

"Our membership is extremely strong. They have recognized the need to band together as a family. They have recognized that we are brothers and sisters. They recognize the importance of having a relationship with other unions. Since the strike, they realize the responsibility of being a union member, and I truly believe that after the strike is over, they will remain aware of the labor movement and continue to participate in it."

## YOUTH (contd.)

bucks an hour, then five, then four and last year he couldn't find any laboring work over \$4 an hour." This is the policy of Big Business.

### PROFITS

The corporations inflate their super profits off the backs of our living standards and the youth are hit worst by this. Sears Roebuck had record profits in 1984 exceeding \$1.3 billion at the expense of the low paid youth in the retail trade.

The more attacks the youth face the more determined they become to fight back. Recently in Australia the McDonalds Corporation went on the move demanding 40% wage cuts which would have resulted in thousands of youth reduced from semi-slave to absolutely slave conditions. A campaign was organized by the Australian Labor Party Youth and the Trade Union movement which forced back the proposed attacks. Last year Britain and Italy all saw mass national strikes by school students against organized attacks by big business on young workers.

### INTERNATIONAL

The movement of youth in Seattle around the newly formed "Youth Defense Campaign" reflects the international tendency of youth to organize in defense of their rights. Stemming from the anger and frustration of youth, who were in the firing line of a police riot last November, the Y.D.C. launched its initial campaign to "Defend the Three" who were indiscriminately arrested during the "riot." The campaign grew at a rate nobody expected. The half a dozen original Y.D.C. activists has grown to over 120 paid-up members. Over 70 t-shirts with the Y.D.C. logo have been sold. An estimated 2,000 leaflets circulated and 500 buttons distributed. The program the Y.D.C. was built on is:

- End to police harassment of Youth
- Repeal all Anti-Youth Legislation
- For inexpensive decent entertainment for youth
- For decent jobs with trade union rights and conditions for all youth

### CURFEW

The particular attacks the youth in Seattle have faced have been massive. Big Business provides no affordable leisure facilities for Seattle's youth. Added to this their henchmen in the City Council (Republican and Democrats) have outlawed under 18 year old from attending gigs, and the State Legislature proposed a curfew for under 17 year olds. Such a curfew already exists in neighboring Oregon. From the start the Y.D.C. explained that these attacks were not isolated, but a part of a more general attack by the corporations who control society, on society's most rebellious section: the youth. If the youth are to be reduced to semi-slave like conditions big business, and through it the state, must attempt to pacify or at least subdue the best qualities of youth: their energy and enthusiasm. While on the other hand an organized campaign against these attacks should raise these qualities.

### LABOR

Trotsky explained the necessity of any youth movement to unite with labor because the youths' vitality is hindered by their lack of experience and



Seattle Y.D.C. in action.

because it is organized labor which has the industrial power a youth movement doesn't have. It is only the power of organized labor that can defend the rights of youth and beyond that it is only the organized working class which can defeat the corporations and take society forward to socialism.

Already the Y.D.C. has received endorsements from four union locals and the Secretary of the (Seattle) Labor Council has applauded our campaign in its efforts to link youth and labor. The Y.D.C. spoke before the Labor Council receiving a huge round of applause from delegates. Many more union locals approached us offering endorsements and donations.

### VICTORIOUS

Our campaign has received coverage on local television, newspapers and some radio stations. Because of the Y.D.C., all three defendants from the November police riot have had their charges dropped or reduced to a minor misdemeanor. In March the State Legislature dropped its proposed curfew law on a technicality. Their motives are clear: drop the issue now and the movement may subside.

But the Y.D.C. understands that it was a tactical move and they'll be back again with full force.

This Y.D.C. victory will not serve to subdue the movement but to organize it. When we organize, particularly with labor, the bosses and the state can be forced back. From this victory we must build the Y.D.C. forces strengthening the ranks through raising the political level of the membership and then go on the offensive. We must support all picket lines, fight two tier contracts, mobilize against the city council's anti-youth legislation, help in union drives, particularly helping to unionize and raise

the living standards of youth and fight racism.

If the Y.D.C. builds on its success, if other Y.D.C.s spring up in other cities (as they have already in Vancouver and Portland), if we continue to orientate our work to the mighty trade union movement, youth

can then play their most vital role in the working class movement. We can provide the energy, the enthusiasm and the spirit to go on the attack to defend our rights and fight for a socialist U.S.A. and socialist world.

By A Y.D.C. Member

# \$5,000 FOR THE WORKERS' PAPER

America's big business buys its newspaper, T.V. and radio industry to cover up the shortcomings of its system. Their media attacks workers who are forced to strike, young people who fight unemployment and especially oppressed minorities who fight racism and discrimination.

Labor Militant exists to fight the lies of the bosses' press. The struggle against poverty, unemployment and racism will be supported in our pages. We are on the other side of the barricades from the bosses' press.

We have however, one thing in common. To produce Labor Militant we also need to purchase paper and printing facilities. Those who produce our paper have to eat, put clothes on their back and a roof over their head. Finances is necessary for all of this.

Labor Militant is starting as a bi-monthly paper. This has been possible because a small number of workers and youth have made major sacrifices. It is our intention to come out monthly in one year, proceed from that to a weekly and then a daily paper.

We ask all our readers to support us financially. We have set

a target of \$5,000 to be raised by July 1st when our second issue will be published. Send us your donations to help us reach this target.

The bosses show their understanding of the importance of having the printed word on their side. Show that you are less conscious of your class interests than they are. Finance Labor Militant and have a fighting paper on your side.

We are asking for donations of all sizes. When you buy Labor Militant do not just give 50 cents. Give a dollar, give 5 dollars or even more. When you read our coverage of strikes and youth movements, when you read our analysis of the Labor Movement and the world economy, when you see us fight racism make your solidarity concrete - send us a donation.

But do not stop there, put aside 50 cents, a dollar, 5 dollars or more to send us on a regular basis. Put a collecting jar in your home and put in all your nickles and dimes. Collect from your brothers and sisters at work

when you show them Labor Militant. Better still get extra copies and sell them at your union meetings, to your workmates, friends and relatives and collect donations on top of the price.

Organize a social in your home. Get your friends together and tell them about Labor Militant, and as well as having a good time, raise money for us.

The Press who fight the bosses gets no financial backing except the dollars and cents of workers and youth. The task is to collect this financial support which exists and send it to Labor Militant.

Every nickel, every dime, every dollar takes us nearer the target of \$5,000 by July 1st. On top of that many of our readers will be able to afford larger donations. Sacrifice one of those nights out, that new article of clothing or cassette recorder, make a withdrawal from your savings, however you do it, send us a donation.

The struggle against Reagan, TWA, GM, Hormel, youth and racial harassment will not be won without sacrifice. This is how the US labor movement was built. Make a sacrifice now and help us build Labor Militant into a voice which can begin to challenge the lies of the bosses press.

## CWA-UNITED ACTION NEEDED

Three years ago the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. (AT&T) drove its 500,000 workers out onto the streets in a 3 week long strike by demanding concessions. The united strength of the workforce prevented the company from taking the concessions they demanded and won a substantial job protection clause in the new contract.

This victory was in the minds of the government when, through a court order, they divided AT&T into several cut-throat competing corporations. They want to split the unions' strength in order to facilitate driving down living standards.

### Profits

AT&T and the regional phone companies have averaged 1% increase in profits in each of the past 2 years since the split took place. The national leadership of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), which represents the workforce, says that as profits are up a strike won't be necessary. Feeling their strength from the 1983 strike and seeing these rising profits, the union membership wants improvements in their living standards.

### Mistake

As a response to the situation arising out of the split-up, the CWA leadership decided to move up the expiration date of the contract with AT&T to May 31st 1986, with negotiations expected to begin in early April. It was to expire on August 9th at the same time as the 7 regional companies' contracts with CWA expire. This was a mistake. The CWA leadership says the date was moved so the union could concen-

trate its efforts on the regional companies after it finishes with AT&T. Unless a very good settlement can be reached with AT&T, the union should continue to talk until August 9th after which a national strike can be conducted if necessary, bringing out the regional company workers with those at AT&T. While this would mean working without a contract at AT&T for 9 weeks, it would bring back the unified expiration late date.

### United Action

This would give the union the strength to win its demands. These must include a 32 hour week with no loss of pay, union control of the work load, no layoffs, no subcontracting, no concessions, a full uncapped cost of living clause, and a wage increase from the date of increased productivity.

At the same time, the union must take account of the economic crisis, the over-production in general, and in particular in the high-tech sector. The workforce as a whole, through its unions CWA and IBEW, must stand firm in united action for control of the industry.

by shop steward  
local 9410 CWA

To order YDC T-shirts & buttons or to contact YDC for information  
**Youth Defense Campaign**  
P.O. Box 9191  
Seattle  
WA 98109

# SUPPORT P-9 STRIKE

By Bruce Hamilton  
ATU Local 1202  
(personal capacity)

**Meatpackers at the George Hormel Company plant in Austin, Minnesota have been on strike since August 17, 1985. Their struggle against the most profitable U.S. pork processor, and against the policies of their union's national leadership, continues in spite of a number of serious set-backs.**

Hormel has won concessions with scab labor, but union members blocked access to the plant. The National Guard was called to keep the plant open. Courts issued injunctions against picketing at plant entrances. Dozens of meatpackers were arrested.

The union tried to win back the workers' full pay through arbitration and negotiation, but the government ruled against the union. The company refused to restore full wages and insisted on maintaining unsafe working conditions, weakening grievance procedures, and reducing seniority rights. Leaders of the UFCW urged the local to accept the company's demands anyway, telling workers they were fighting a lost cause. But the 1500 workers voted overwhelmingly to strike Hormel and to launch an appeal to the rank and file of the labor movement to help them put an end to concessions.

## Support

Local P-9 members have distributed literature to half a million homes across the Midwest. Mass mailings to 50,000 union locals all over the country have won substantial support. Teams of P-9 members have spread news of their struggle to workers in several states by talking with thousands of union members at plant gates and union meetings. At other locals representing Hormel workers, support committees have been established which have raised funds and contributed food and clothing to strikers and their families.

In December negotiations went to federal mediation. As workers prepared to vote on the proposal, Hormel reported record profits for 1985 of \$38 million (a 30% increase over 1984), and gave its chairman a salary increase from \$33,000 to \$57,000.

The company responded by attempting to reopen the plant



Hormel workers face the National Guard.

## Mass Rallies

With the power of the state mobilized against them, Local P-9 called on workers at other Hormel plants to strike. Hundreds of Hormel workers honored P-9's roving picketlines in Iowa, Nebraska, and Texas in spite of intense company, union, and legal pressure. Hormel fired more than 500 of those workers. Local 431 in Ottumwa, Iowa, has joined with P-9 in organizing mass rallies and a boycott of all Hormel products.

Workers at other meatpacking companies have also begun to fight back. New officers were elected in Local 304 at the Morrell Company's Sioux Falls, S.D., plant after the old leaders agreed to a \$2.40-an-hour cut in wages. The new officers led Morrell's 2500 workers in an eleven-week strike at the end of 1985 in an attempt to regain lost wages. When they succeeded in winning back only \$1.00-an-hour, the workers voted the new leaders out of office and replaced them with an even more militant slate of officers. Meatpackers in

Georgia, Tennessee, and Michigan have also waged strikes in the past few months to resist pay cuts.

## Militancy

The new militancy of P-9 and these other locals is putting increasing pressure on the national officers of UFCW. But UFCW President William Wynn and AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, instead of placing the full power of labor behind the Hormel strikers, have increased their public denunciations of Local P-9. Instead of calling all

plant shop stewards should be organized to call for an all-out halt of all Hormel production. If Hormel holds out, calling for strikes and organizing drives at all packing plants in the Midwest must become the priority, followed by a call for a half-day strike of all union workers in Minnesota and Iowa.

## Nationalization

The current fightback against concessions in the meatpacking industry makes it clear that meatpackers are unwilling to accept further lowering of their living standards. Developing a fighting national leadership with a strategy of industrial action would start to turn around their

declining position. But the basic problem of overcapacity in the meatpacking industry will eventually have to be confronted. Workers cannot continue to win higher wages if high profit and enormous salaries and bonuses for executives are maintained. An industry shakeout is predicted, with mergers, bankruptcies, plant closures, and layoffs, resulting in renewed pressure on wages and conditions. A new recession would add to these pressures. In seeking a solution to the resulting impasse activists in the labor movement will begin to call for nationalization of companies like Hormel that say they can't pay decent wages.

# UNION WAGES 30% ABOVE NON-UNION

The wages and benefits of union workers in the U.S. are on average 30% higher than non-union wages and benefits. Safety at work and job security is also better for unionized workers.

These are the reasons big business and its press try to turn workers and youth away from unions. They continually portray union leaders as dictators and the unions themselves as centers of Mafia activity.

## Smears

Despite these smears support for labor unions far outweighs the number of workers organized in unions. In a July 1985 poll in Business Week magazine it was shown that 73% of Americans agreed that unions improve wages and conditions. Even in the South 68% agreed with this. This shows a huge level of support for labor and an understanding of the key role unions have played in raising living standards for workers.

In 1985, however, only 18% of the workforce is organized in unions. Big business and its press have been attempting to prove that unions are a thing of the past and no longer relevant. To prove this they point to a fall in the percentage of workers organized from 35% in the 1940's to 18% in 1985.

But these figures hide the most important process in the last 40 years. The workforce has increased from 64 million in 1946 to 110 million in 1985. Most of these jobs appeared in new industries, especially the service industries, which were not unionized. Thus the growth in the size of the working class must be taken into account when considering the reduction in the percentage of workers organized.

## 19 Million

There are 19 million workers organized in unions today. This is 4 million more than were organized in 1955 at the time of the merger of the AFL and CIO. This makes the labor movement potentially the most powerful force in American society today and the largest organized trade union movement in the world.

The responsibility for the low level of organization lies not with

# Labor Militant

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