



Massive rallies build spirit in shipyard strike

Newport News: Gateway to South

Everything about the Newport News shipyard is big. Some gantry cranes are 23 stories tall. The last tanker the workers built there was the largest ever constructed in the Western Hemisphere. Even the scrap is moun-

tainous. Its hauled away in 20 ton containers.

But now the biggest thing there is a strike by 15,000 men and women.

The members of United Steelworkers of America Local 8888 have been

on the bricks fighting for their first contract since January 31. Tenneco, the owner of the 470 acre Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock complex, has refused to recognize the union for the past 13 months.

In the second week of March the Houston-based conglomerate upped its
(cont. on page 4)

WORKERS

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Daily clashes as farmworkers shut fields

The two-month old walkout of 4,200 farmworkers against eleven farms in California and Arizona has seen almost daily confrontations between strikers and growers since the murder of a union brother, Rufino Contreras, on February 11.

As picketing spread from the Imperial Valley on the Mexican border 500 miles north to the Salinas Valley the growers intensified efforts to break the strike, which had been one of the most militant and unified since the United Farmworkers Union (UFW) was founded in the '60s.

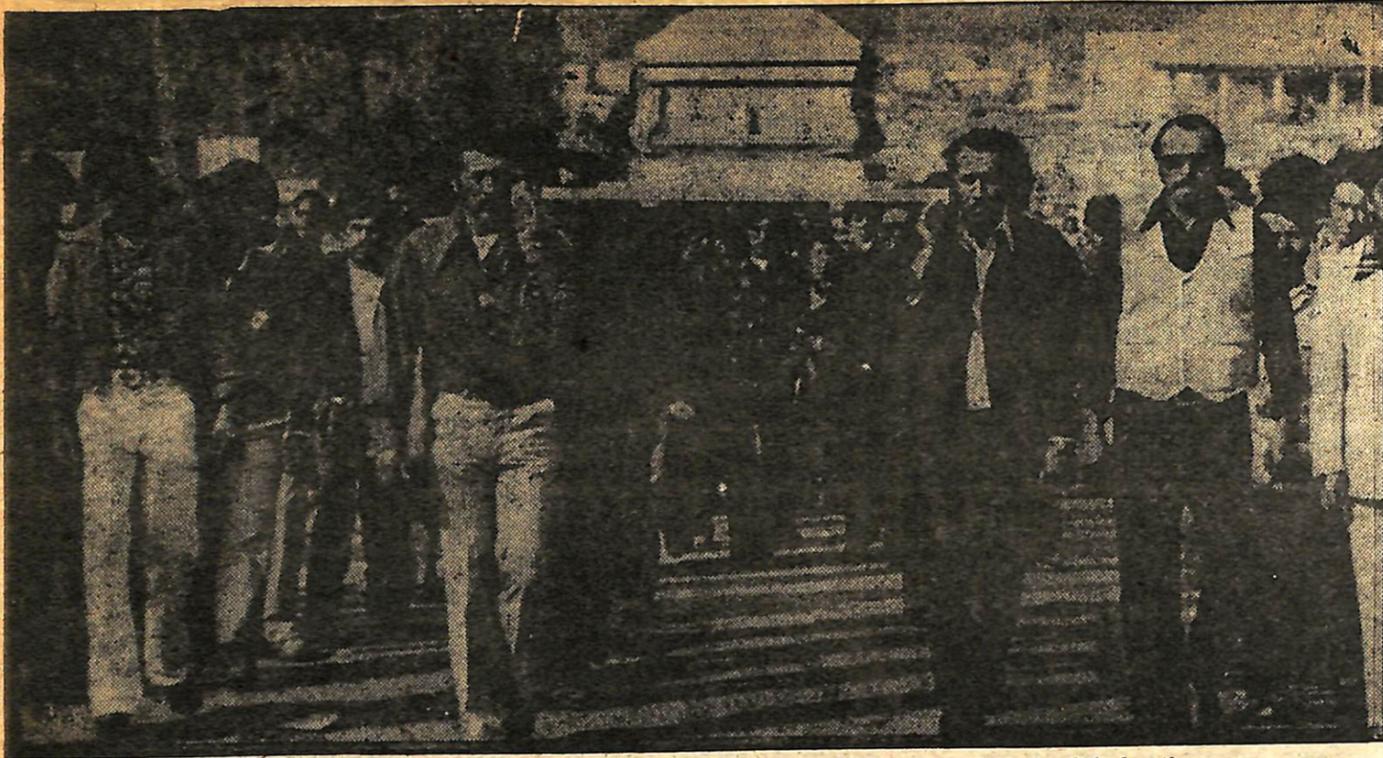
Contreras' story typifies the life and demands of farmworkers throughout the Southwest. He was one of thousands of Mexicans who legally cross the border to work each day. He joined the strike when it began January 10 because the \$3.70 he made per hour was inadequate to support his wife and two children.

Contreras was shot in the face by company men when he and several dozen others tried to convince strikebreakers at the farm of Mario Saikhon not to harvest a scab crop.

On many of the struck farms the Mexican and Chicano (Mexican-American) strikers defied injunctions against trespassing by walking into fields to address the scabs. The growers' men "answered with bullets," said union president Cesar Chavez in his eulogy for Contreras.

"The company sent hired guns to quiet Rufino Contreras. Wherever farmworkers organize, they stand up for their rights and justice. Rufino Contreras is with them."

Two foremen and a truck driver
(cont. on page 13)



Thousands of farmworkers marched in the funeral procession of their slain brother.

Philly Blacks rise up to defend neighborhoods

PHILADELPHIA - Every Thursday the Philadelphia City Council meets. Every Thursday in February, the meeting became a battlefield. Every Thursday angry Philadelphians, the great majority Black, turned out in the hundreds and even thousands.

They were there to fight an attempt to "recycle" their communities into stretches of ritzy \$40,000 and up townhouses for young professional types.

Dozens were arrested and many clubbed down right in City Hall in this

latest eruption of the Black mass movement in the City of Brotherly Love. On February 22, the Council, protected by hundreds of combat-ready cops, voted 15 to 2 to pass the scheme to drive Blacks out of North Central Philly.

The struggle is continuing. Thousands are expected to march on April 4 in the Whitman Park neighborhood to demand a long-delayed housing development be built there. Elections are coming up and with racist mayor Frank Rizzo knocked out of the run-

ning last fall, Black people are discussing the possibility of winning more of a voice in city politics.

The current round of clashes broke out on February 1. Longtime housing activist Milton Street, a popular Black state representative, put-out a call challenging Black people to fight the city's plan.

Eight hundred showed up at the meeting. They spoke out loud and clear. The \$240 million provided by the federal government to the Community Development Block Grant Program were earmarked by Rizzo's housing "wizard" John Gallery for this plan. A third of the money is to
(cont. on page 7)

see
p. 8

What's behind the China-Vietnam clash?

Angry farmers lay siege to nation's capital

'We're dirt farmers, but they can't treat us like dirt'

For the second straight year, thousands of American farmers poured into Washington, D.C. Through winter weather they came from places like Vale, South Dakota, Checotaha, Oklahoma and Sunflower County, Mississippi to protest conditions that are starving them into bankruptcy. When these caravans of tractors, pickups and mobile homes met in the nation's capital, there were well over 2,000 vehicles, twice as many as in 1978.

Last year the farmers were a novelty. The media admitted they had a beef. Politicians, facing elections in the fall, listened and pledged support. But not this time.

When farmers blocked traffic to draw attention to their grievances, they were denounced as disruptive. When police attacked and they countered by destroying cop cars with heavy farm equipment, officials called them vandals. Carter's Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland said demands for decent prices for their crops were "just old fashioned greed." Newspapers nervously claimed that the organization which led the protests last year and this, the American Agriculture Movement, is "unrepresentative" of American farmers, even as it grows in size and influence.

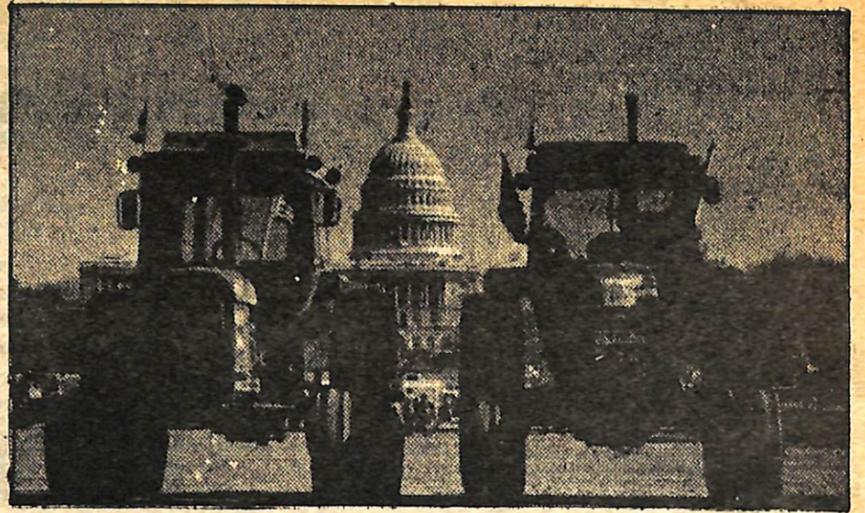
The wealthy rulers of this country lashed out at the demonstrations out of fear. They have good reason to be frightened by the deep-seated anger and growing militance in this small but politically influential and highly productive section of the population.

The A.A.M. tractorcades passed through hundreds of small towns as they converged on D.C. Everywhere they were greeted by farmers and other citizens who held support rallies, collected money, and got up fish fries and potluck suppers for the travellers.

Farmers are supposed to be the bedrock of America - when they rise up against the system, it's in trouble.

Despite all the media slanders, the farmers continue to draw support from the American people in their millions. They got messages and delegations from trade union officials and activists, Black groups like the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and others.

And the farmers themselves erased much of the local effect of the news blitz against them when a freak storm blanketed D.C. with two feet of snow on February 19. Hundreds of farmers used their vehicles to ferry



patients and doctors, free stuck ambulances and fire engines and clear roads.

WHY FARMERS PROTEST

"When it costs you \$4 a bushel to grow wheat and you get only \$2.90 a bushel for it, you know you can't make a living," says Gene Schroder of Campo, Colorado. This is the farmers' problem in a nutshell.

The demonstrators in Washington were family farmers, mostly larger than declining small producers like truck farmers and smaller than the giant corporate spreads that are playing an increasing role in American agriculture. These men and women produce the great bulk of America's food, which is also the country's most valuable single export.

Such farmers are increasingly caught in a giant vice. On one side are the big monopolies who produce farm supplies and equipment. "That John Deere over there went from \$15,000 in 1973 to \$32,000 in 1979," said protester Carroll Lauer of Olsburg, Kansas, pointing to a tractor. He added "I'm a dirt farmer, but I don't want to be treated like dirt." Farmers are forced to upgrade their equipment to compete with each other and larger corporate

farms.

Increased production has been no answer to their problems. The other side of the vice is the chain of middlemen - grain elevators, feedlots, packing and canning companies, warehouses, food chains, etc. - who stand between the farmer and the consumer. One government study shows that in the last five years, "87% of the increased costs of food was after it left the farm."

WHAT THE FARMERS WANT

The American Agriculture Movement is demanding parity. This means the government setting and guaranteeing prices for crops, livestock, and other farm products at a rate that would permit farmers to have the same kind of purchasing power they did in 1910-14, a relatively good period for American farmers.

Even the government sometimes has to recognize that this is a just demand. It was part of the Democratic Party's 1976 presidential campaign platform, and it was written into the Humphrey-Hawkins "Full Employment" Bill passed by Congress last year.

(cont. on page 10)

Worldwide marches for abortion rights

Demonstrate March 31!

Around the world, from the U.S. to Britain, from Italy to Brazil and Chile, people will take to the streets March 31 to demand abortion rights and an end to forced sterilization. It will be the first time in history that women have united internationally to raise these demands.

Demonstration organizers in the U.S. expects that thousands will march in New York City and Boston, Cleveland and Buffalo, Portland and Los Angeles and other cities. They have stepped up and coordinated the fight to defend reproductive rights which are

coming under new levels of attack from right-wing anti-abortion forces as well as government cut-backs.

The so-called "Right-to-Lifers" have gone all out to turn the clock back before abortion was legalized in 1973, back to the days of back alley, coat hanger abortions. Without regard to life or limb they've firebombed abortion clinics, assaulted clinic workers and harassed patients. Their unrelenting political pressure has resulted in many local, state and federal restrictions on abortion rights. One of the Right-to-Life movement's biggest bulwarks and financial contributors, the Catholic hierarchy, will be targeted when the New York City demonstrators on their march from the United Nations Plaza down Fifth Avenue stop at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

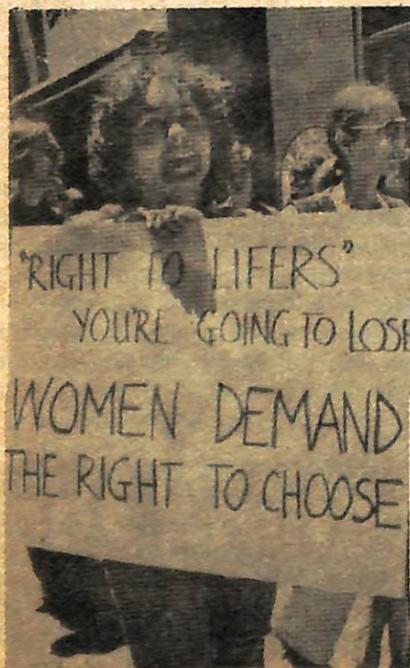
At each U.S. demonstration marchers will demand, "Defeat the Hyde Amendment! Restore Medicaid Abortion!" and "Enforce the HEW Regulations; Prevent Sterilization Abuse!" Congress passed the Hyde Amendment in 1977. This amendment cut virtually all Medicaid funding for abortions, turning abortion into a privilege for those who can afford to pick up the \$200-plus tab. The 300,000 Medicaid patients who seek abortions each year must resort to cheaper but potentially fatal ones. Three women have died since the Hyde Amendment was passed. In the 32 states that have enacted the amendment,

Medicaid-funded abortions have been forced down 98.2%.

But when it comes to sterilization funding, the government shows its true colors. While abortion funding is cut to nothing, HEW continues to pay 90% of the costs of sterilization. Many women are sterilized without their knowledge or consent when they're on the delivery or operating table. In New York City, twice as many Blacks and six times as many Hispanics as white women have been sterilized. It's the government's answer to poverty: instead of providing decent housing, schools and enough jobs, they blame people for having more children than their rotting system can handle.

Freedom in deciding whether and under what conditions to have children, organizers of the March 31 actions point out, is linked to

women's fights for equal wages, adequate welfare benefits, decent housing and daycare. This connection is borne out in the day to day battles women take up, and reflected in the range of struggles that will be addressed at the March 31st rally in New York. Pauline Haynes of the American Indian Movement will speak to the oppression of Native American women, one-fourth of whom have been sterilized. Rose Suarez of District 65, Distributive Workers of America, will address issues of working women, many of whom are seeing abortion taken out of their employee health insurance plans. Joyce Kengai will speak from ZANU, an African liberation movement, and Sandy Turner of the Committee of Interns and Residents, an activist doctors' union, will address the demonstrators.



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Workers' actions hit back at firings

Illinois motor makers Burn injunctions, Bring back inspectors

3000 wildcat strikers shut down the Johnson Outboard Motors plant in Waukegan, Ill. after twelve die cast inspectors were unfairly suspended.

The walkout was sparked by a team of efficiency experts who had crawled through the plant slashing rates and harassing workers.

The stopwatch wizards tried to make the twelve inspectors fill out questionnaires with items like, "How many times do you go to the bathroom? How long?" They refused.

Two supervisors suspended them, skipping over the entire three step layoff procedure in the contract. The whole plant walked out.

For five days the workers stood solid, picketing in defiance of a federal court injunction and company movie cameras. When the injunctions came down, they burned them in the picket fires.

After a week without production, the company reinstated the 12 inspectors, temporarily stopped the time studies and agreed to negotiate 13 pressing grievances. They also dropped federal charges against 42 workers subpoenaed for violating the injunction.

Workers agreed to go back to work when they were assured at a strikers' meeting of 2000 that their demands would be met. But they vowed to fight if anyone was disciplined for the strike.

One said, "There's a lot of doors in that place and I can't tell you which one to walk out of."

Conrail backs off As RR wildcat rolls

Wildcat pickets shut down Conrail's Conway, Pa. operations, the nation's busiest rail yard, on March 1. The workers demanded the company rehire Robert "Pete" LeCerf, a 15 year employee who was fired by Conrail a day earlier and that suspensions be lifted for three others.

LeCerf was fired for his participation in a sympathy wildcat a month before when four Conrail workers were fired in Youngstown, Ohio and they struck.

The 300 members of United Transportation Union Local 1418 were supported by the other 1200 workers at Conway who refused to cross their picket lines. Despite federal injunctions, Local 1418 members stood their ground, many wearing ski masks to prevent company and court reprisals.

Conrail found itself further up against the wall with each passing day. On March 4, wildcats had started at Conrail operations from Pittsburgh and Altoona, Pa. to Youngstown and Columbus, Ohio 200 miles away. A strike vote was about to be held in Detroit, Mich.

By March 5 in a meeting with the union and a US District Judge, Conrail agreed to rehire LeCerf.

(cont. on page 12)

As the seventies draw to a close, the companies are pushing harder to speed up, harass, and hold down the pay of this country's working people. Teams of efficiency experts wander through the plants with clip boards and stopwatches. Government experts watch with slide rules in hand to make sure not a penny escapes their notice. Rates and routines won through the years are revamped. Injunctions are churned out in court as fast as the cops can converge on a picket line. All are symptoms of today's economic and political crisis.

As the attacks come down, so does the resistance build. Firings are one of the bosses' ways of intimidating the growing workers' movement. Singling out a militant worker and framing a phony charge is intended to sidetrack and demoralize resistance. It's a serious attack on the worker and his family as well as on the whole union. For this reason firings are "walkin' on the fightin' side" of the rank and file.

In many of the fights against firings recounted on this page, the key to victory has been the work of rank and file organization within the unions. Every success is cause for celebration and greater unity. Every defeat is a source of bitter lessons on how to struggle, and how the profit system chews up human beings. Every firing is a debt that will be settled some day.

Amnesty actions demand P.O. rehire 200

1st casualties of Carter wage lid

Despite outright sabotage by their national president, American Postal Workers Union members struck an impressive blow for 200 fired co-workers on February 27.

2,000 marched for amnesty at five locations in New York and New Jersey. One hundred other places from San Francisco to Boston, from Michigan to Houston, saw smaller picket lines.

The largest action in this escalating fight back against P.O. attacks took place at the giant Manhattan General Post Office. Almost 1,500 men and women marched through an icy drizzle, bolstered by the support of the New York Central Labor Council and members of more than ten other unions who joined in solidarity.

AMNESTY AND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

The National Amnesty Day chants were, "P.O. workers taking a stand/Amnesty is our demand," and "Bolger better take a hike/We demand the right to strike."

Postmaster General William F. Bolger led the assault on the workers last summer. When the P.O. tried to ram through a lousy contract in July, hundreds of New Jersey and San Francisco workers wildcatted.

To stave off a national walkout, postal bosses hit back with mass attacks - 200 fired, 120 suspended and 2,500 letters of warning.

Workers felt it was not just an attack on those individuals, but on all postal workers' right to organize. A rank and file newsletter said Bolger "is sending a message...You can join a union but if you take united action to win your demands, you'll be fired."

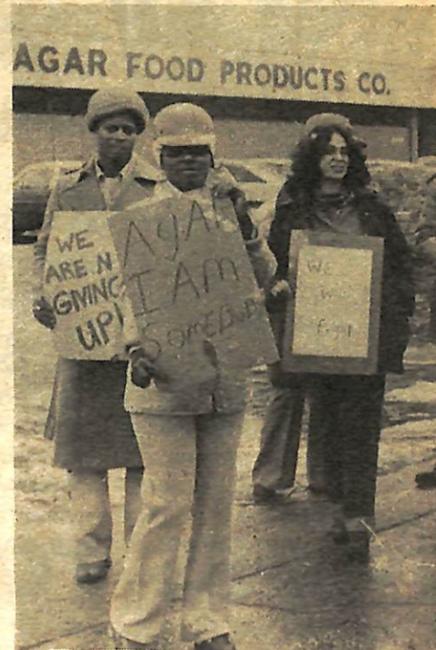
The bosses used the law that denies P.O. workers the right to strike as a "justification" for their attacks. But in the past workers have struck the post office without reprisals.

In 1970 postal workers wildcatted nationwide and got both a better wage increase and an agreement that no-one would be disciplined. Again in 1974, a N.J. Bulk Mail Center

(cont. on page 12)



Postal workers in N.Y. and scores of other cities spoke up February 27 in defense of the 200 fired and their own right to strike.



Lunch-time pickets rip firing

Agar meat cutters fight firing of 39

CHICAGO - Lunch time at Agar Food Products is usually a time to get off your feet, out of the coolers, and away from the stares of the white-hatted foremen. But for a week in February several dozen meatcutters spent their lunch break picketing out front of the pork processing plant on Chicago's far south side rather than relaxing in the cafeteria.

As the meatcutters came outside each day, they were met by a contingent of fired workers. Together they walk in protest of thirty-nine arbitrary firings Agar had ordered in response to a sitdown strike the week before. Most of the workers wore number "39" decals on their hard hats.

It all started February 15, when the company posted notice of shortened lunch breaks on every bulletin board and time clock. Everybody saw it as a challenge, a new attack from the team of efficiency experts that had been lurking in the plant for the past 8 months.

Behind the productivity move, was the aggressive cost-cutting of the parent company, Bluebird, Inc., one of the fastest growing pork processing firms in the U.S.

Everyone remembered the successful walk-out 4 years ago, the last time Agar tried to chip away at the rest period. The stage was set for another showdown.

After morning break over 110 people were hit with warnings for not obeying the new regulations. At lunch time the boners were docked 15 minutes for not coming back at the bell. When word of these disciplines spread, everybody came into the cafeteria. All lines came to a halt.

At 3:00 the company finally met with the grievance committee. The people's position was clear - no work until the old break schedule was brought back. Agar took a hard line. Rudy Beiber, a hated personnel manager, said anyone not back at work by 5:00 would be fired.

As the deadline approached, the rank and file kept arguing to keep up the sitdown until the company backed

(cont. on page 12)



Tenneco is actively recruiting scabs and has plenty of cops to escort them past the picket lines in an open strike-breaking effort.

Mass rallies...

(cont. from page 1)

tactics from legal delays and police protected limited production to big newspaper ads for permanent scabs.

They threatened that those strikers not back to work in 5 days would be canned. When a few panicked and scabbed, company officials brought out picket line photos and fired some of these former strikers.

If Local 8888 can stand strong in the face of these attacks from the nation's 19th largest company, if they can force Tenneco to the bargaining table, it will be a big breakthrough for workers throughout the South.

Huge solidarity actions laid siege to the yards as the walkout entered its second month. On February 24, the strikers were joined by fellow unionists from other parts of Virginia. The workers marched two abreast in a line that stretched for 15 blocks. Thirty-five hundred rallied at the gates of the ship building colossus. All were aware of how key the strike is for the young labor movement in Virginia's hostile "right to work" climate.

ANOTHER MASS MARCH

The following week on March 2nd, the national AFL-CIO brought in bus loads of pickets from as far away as Canada and Texas. Four busses rolled in from the Chicago-Gary steel center. Banners for Steelworkers District 15 in Pittsburgh waved in the breeze. The crowd filled the streets in sidewalk to sidewalk solidarity. Handshakes all around expressed the support that was pouring in and the spirit that could be taken back to the locals.

The strike has developed a flavor of its own, from the blue and white steelworker caps that are on nearly every head to the catchy chants the strikers sing. When anyone calls out, "What time is it?" a whole crowd answers back, "It's Steelworker Time!" Or when a line of pickets chants the local's number, "Eighty-eight. Eighty-eight," a boisterous response echoes, "Close the gates. Close the gates."

DELAY AND DISOBEY

Steelworker President Lloyd McBride announced at the March 3rd rally in Hampton Roads Coliseum that all but two of the company's legal challenges to the union's election victory had been dismissed by a federal appeals court in Richmond, Virginia. These two minor points will be the focus of new NLRB hearings that could take two months to begin and will undoubtedly be appealed if

Tenneco loses. Also the union's certification was removed pending the hearing results.

Throughout the struggle, the ship building giant has used delay and disobey tactics made famous by J.P. Stevens in its 16-year effort to foil textile worker organizing at its 84 southern mills. They are hoping to use the re-opening of hearings to stall for months.

At the AFL-CIO winter meeting in sunny Bal Harbor, Florida, Steelworker President McBride hedged on the importance of the struggle. Earlier the union had correctly emphasized the strike as a driving force for unionization of the South. But in the company of top labor hacks he retreated. McBride said it was a "tactical blunder" to describe the big walkout as anything more than a normal strike.

The union men and women have their sights set on victory. For 39 years, they were represented by the company-dominated Peninsula Shipbuilders Association (PSA). This outfit saddled them with pay rates way below other Atlantic yards, a pension of less than \$1,000 a year for 30-year retirees, and virtually no grievance procedure. Safety violations and discrimination were rampant.

BLACK-WHITE UNITY

Not long after an organizing drive led by the International Association of Machinists was defeated in 1964, the company union tried to block a civil rights suit that would open up job opportunities to Blacks. At this time the workforce was changing dramatically. In the '60's and '70's a new wave of younger workers entered the yards with increasing Navy orders, especially for submarines. Now the payroll is over half Black and there are many Vietnam vets. There are 2,000 women.

As the workers became restless for a better deal, the sell-out PSA shamelessly traded off incentive pay and a paid lunch hour. Five Black board members began filing suits against the undemocratic and discriminatory policies of the PSA leadership. They were suspended from their union posts and one of them, Willis Hayes, was fired.

The five dissidents became the core of the steelworkers organizing drive. As they expanded the campaign from 50 members of the new union to 500, unity between whites and Blacks grew. Their success is evident in the strong Black-white solidarity on the picket line.

The workers' chances of victory depend on how well they are able to

Milwaukee activists meet, chart path

United Workers Organization

The United Workers Organization of the Milwaukee area, a local rank and file group, held a successful working conference on February 18. Seventy-five activists from close to twenty local unions, including over a dozen stewards, met to chart a course for the organization. The meeting helped strengthen the UWO as an effective local force in organizing against declining pay and working conditions and against the sell out bureaucracy controlling the labor movement.

Dating back to the "buck-a-month clubs" that formed to support a meat-cutters' strike in 1976, the UWO grew by emphasizing in-shop committees as organized centers of resistance within the unions.

From small day-to-day struggles to plant-wide issues, the UWO gained a reputation for taking a fighting stand. Most of the shop committees publish newsletters to give a voice to the rank and file as well as tie together the generally sporadic and isolated in-plant struggles.

In the opening session of the conference activists gave reports from the contract struggles at the Milwaukee Transport Company and American Motors. They pointed to the role of the organized militants in defining the issues and uniting the rank and file actively to fight for them.

In UAW Local 72 (AMC) the UWO group had been pushing the slogan "No Contract, No Work," for three straight contracts in their newsletter, Fighting Times. In the recent fight, many of the grievances Fighting Times had popularized became points of negotiation. As the strike deadline grew near, the UWO united with a

network of militants including several chief stewards to spread the "No Contract, No Work" stickers.

When the deadline came, the UWO helped lead the second shift in a "jump the gun" wildcat. The midnight action caused AMC bargainers to "start making some sense."

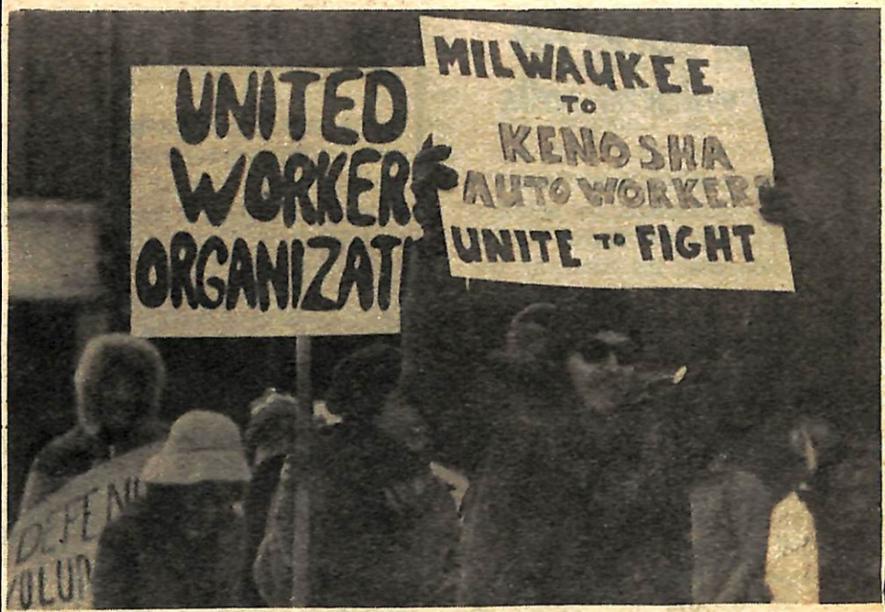
In the Singer Controls strike in 1977, UWO efforts helped the strikers turn back two bargaining committee-recommended sellout offers. The same pattern was to repeat itself a month later at the bus company, where the UWO linked up with strike militants helping to forge a caucus in local 998 and building city-wide support.

The UWO became such a thorn in the sides of the local ruling class that the Milwaukee dailies and the AFL-CIO Labor Press went on a binge against it. When a wildcat shut down Pabst Brewing, the third shift militants were branded as United Workers, even though they weren't.

The conference workshop on union elections brought out a lot of experience in trying to reform the unions. As the committees have gotten involved in daily and shop-wide fights, they have come dead against the blocking actions of union bureaucrats who don't want to fight for fear of losing favor in the eyes of the companies and the internationals.

Several UWO members were involved in the Milwaukee chapter of Steelworkers Fightback when Sadlowski challenged the Abel-McBride machine in the USWA. Others spoke of how they are getting increasingly involved in running for union positions, building united front slates, or working on union committees.

(cont. on page 11)



United Workers Organization pickets UAW headquarters, demanding a fighting stance in 1977 American Motors and Allis Chalmers talks.

stop the scabbing PSA officials and other strikebreakers. Right now two thousand scabs and twice that many foremen are escorted into the yards by a battalion of 150 police and state patrolmen each day. The union estimates that at least 6,000 workers are needed to make any kind of dent in the backlog of sub repair work and orders for new vessels. Most strikers realize that more militancy is required because if the scab movement takes root, it will be hard to remove.

The importance of this shipyard strike demands that workers and unions everywhere take a stand, pass resolutions, send money, and build solidarity actions. By giving these brothers and sisters the kind of support the coal miners won last year, the working class can stand up to Tenneco and all the anti-union, unorganized rip-off outfits.

When asked if 8888 can beat the huge Tenneco conglomerate, a striker grinned and said, "The bigger they are, the harder they fall."

National Freight Contract Strains Guidelines

Will Teamsters Strike?

With the contract expiration date only weeks away and the rank and file buzzing with strike talk, negotiators for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters announced in mid-March that they wanted a whopping 137 per cent wage-and-benefit increase on the National Master Freight Agreement (NMFA).

The IBT proposal is in part a political bombshell to force the government to ease pay and benefit guidelines. It is also a move to diffuse the most extensive rank and file unrest and organization in recent Teamster history. Throughout January and February, rank and file drivers gathered at truck stops across the country to lay plans for the national freight expiration date on March 31.

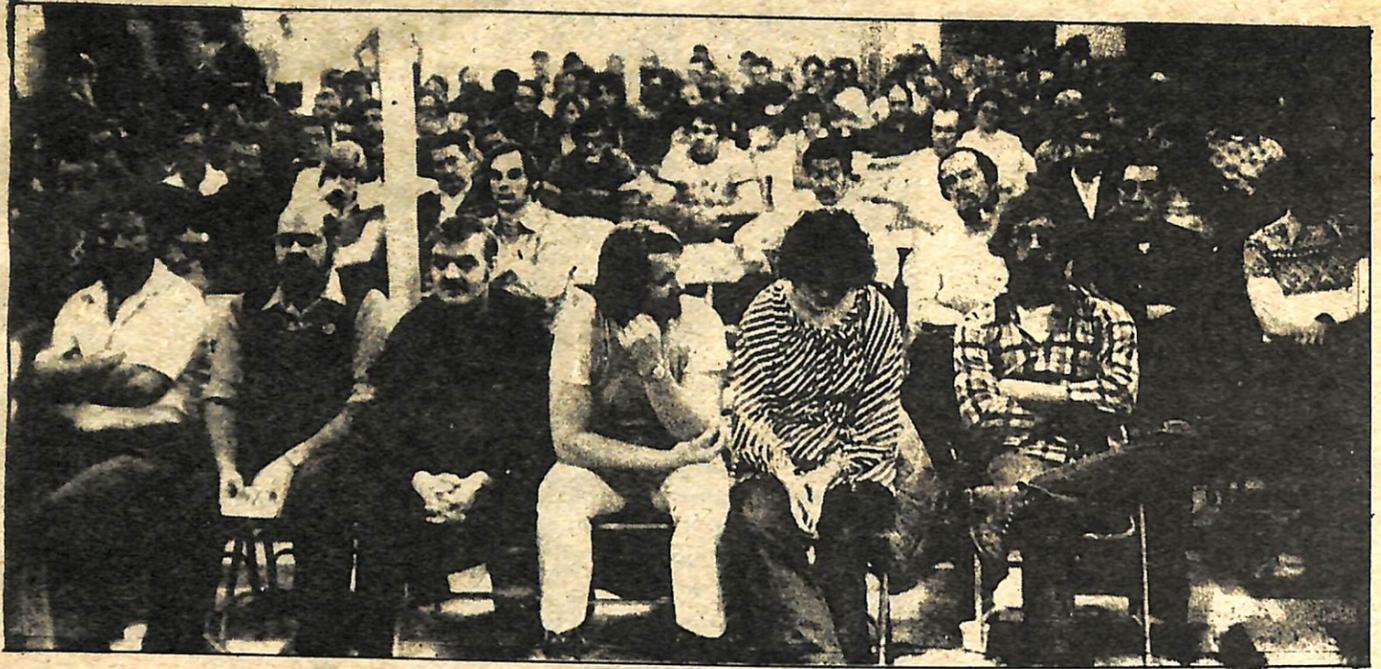
The meetings were sponsored by activist rank and file groups with several thousand members, Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) and the Professional Drivers Council (PROD). Held in at least 30 locations, the meetings were especially well-attended in the heart of the nation's trucking routes. One in Ohio drew 500 people. Also stickers, buttons, shirts and jackets with rank and file slogans are appearing nationwide.

The drivers and dockworkers covered by the NMFA have seen conditions on their jobs deteriorate rapidly over the last few years. A major issue is "70 hour slavery" (forced overtime). They've also watched mafia "families" loot their retirement fund with their International officers' cooperation. They demand improved pensions, upgrading in working conditions, more job rights and increases in wage and health benefits.

The workers are serious about their demands, and the trucking companies are serious about trying to use the contract to screw them. Trucking Management Inc.'s chief negotiator termed the IBT's 137 per cent proposal "ridiculous."

The employers want big takeaways, like a limit on seniority rights and the ability to institute "productivity" (speed up) measures without consulting the union. They offer a total wage-and-benefit package within President

(cont. on page 11)



Hundreds of drivers turned out to TDU initiated pre-contract meetings, like this one in Detroit.

Price guidelines are a joke!

How long can they hold our pay down?

Pretty soon gas will be almost a dollar a gallon at the pump. Supermarket prices make eating seem like a luxury. In January and February all prices were going up so fast that they'll be 12% higher by the end of the year. To no one's surprise, federal guidelines have been held for wages but not for prices.

Petroleum leads the soaring inflation. Increased world oil prices and monopoly price gouging are totally unregulated by the guidelines. Oil is a raw material for numerous products. Shipping companies have asked for increases to cover higher fuel costs. These hikes will in turn raise the price tag on almost all consumer goods.

Food prices are outrageous. Pasta makers are gleefully saying that \$2 a pound hamburger will inspire shoppers to buy macaroni instead. Lettuce and other fresh fruits and vegetables are nearly unaffordable.

The federal price guidelines have so many loopholes and exceptions that they're virtually meaningless. First of all, food, rent and fuel aren't regulated by the guidelines, nor are imports. Factory owners who say their raw material costs are skyrocketing get special dispensations. The list goes on.

The wage guidelines have widened the gap between the paycheck and the necessities of life. But three major national contracts on the horizon - Teamsters, Rubber and Auto - will make or break the wage guidelines.

The wage/price squeeze, combined with the threat of recession and higher unemployment, is social dynamite. The government wants to deflate the mood of resistance among workers who are not content to accept contracts that bite further into their buying power.

If Big Labor would only stay within the guidelines, says Alfred Kahn of

the President's Council on Wage and Price Stability, everything would be fine. Of course workers will lose in real wages immediately, the logic goes. But if workers stay within the guidelines and let the companies jack up profits, he insists, real wages will magically rise by the end of the year.

Yes, Alfred, and Santa Claus will bring the raise. . . .

In some crucial industries rank and file activists are better organized than they've been in many years. In trucking and auto, nationwide communication networks are reaching out to thousands who are discontent with the calls for further sacrifices.

The unstoppable inflation and the new upsurge of rank and file activity is making even the top union officials speak out against the guidelines. So far the AFL-CIO's official strategy has been oriented to legal and legislative maneuvers. They've filed suit against the government's use of the guidelines as if they were mandatory. They also ask for a tax rebate for those who get burned by guidelines and inflation.

The demand is growing among workers to fight the guidelines. Whether these will translate into the union leaders calling for necessary actions remains to be seen.

STEEL News & Views

Local union elections are on in the USWA and happily it looks like some more dead heads are going to roll.

Who are we talking about?

We're talking about grievance men you can never find, but who always sock the local for big lost time checks. Officials who think that enforcing the contract is old fashioned or a "radical" demand. Union presidents who run the local as an iron clad clique, who only serve their back-slapping "boys" and whose main job at union meetings is to gavel down any opposition.

In general guys whose idol is Monte Hall and whose aim in life is to keep starring in their own local version of "Let's make a Deal." Guys who have been in bed so long with the bosses that they probably qualify for maternity benefits.

These guys have to go. And this elections like others in the past several years should be the scene of a good number of these "brothers" re-discovering what it means to earn an honest living or come clean and take their rightful place with management.

Local 1397 in Homestead, Pa. is seeing one such local union race. The "1397 Rank and File," an opposition group within the union, is running a complete slate of 20 men and women against a gang of sell-out artists and company stooges. Their main slogan is give the membership back the union hall. In addition they have developed the following election program:

- 1) A 24 hour grievance hot line.
- 2) An education program on the grievance procedure and contract.
- 3) Make dues totally accountable.

This includes: copies of financial reports at each union meeting, a distributed union meeting agenda, no meeting will be adjourned until everyone has had their right to speak, regular grievance meetings in each zone, and a committee report will be given every time an official draws lost time pay.

Union backing on the job, that's what the 1397 race and many others are all about. Fighters for the rank and file leading our departments, zones and locals who want to make our union something that backs up

the shop floor fight, rather than backing down whenever the company says so!

In March and April the fight will be on in scores of locals across the country where individuals and whole slates are being pulled together to throw the sell-out bums out. How well these brothers and sisters do will mark, to a significant degree, the progress of the insurgent movement in the steel industry.

Union Backing on the Job!

Steel blast Kills 4

A company's lust for profit exploded among workers at Chicago's Burnside Steel Foundry on February 16. It killed 4 steelworkers and injured 17 others. The foundrymen were trying to repair the mechanism carrying a ladle full of molten steel when it unexpectedly tipped. Three tons of the 3200 degree metal spilled into a pool of water that company had allowed to stand in the pouring area.

The resulting steam explosion blew the roof off the building, killing union president Steve Mahalik immediately, and burning 3 others so badly they later died. Another is still in serious

condition.

The membership of Steelworkers Local 1719 had walked off the job two days earlier in protest of the undrained pool. They'd been complaining about it since last summer. But the company showed criminal disregard for this and 50 other unanswered safety grievances.

After the explosion, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration filed 4 "willful" and 2 "serious" citations against Burnside for inadequate and negligent safety conditions.

OSHA is virtually powerless to enforce its regulations. Burnside has 15 days to pay a \$44,000 fine or contest the charges. But an OSHA inspector involved in the case told the Workers Voice that the company can reopen any time, whether or not the pool is drained or the fine paid. The agency has no power to close the plant.

In the wake of the Burnside murders, the American Foundrymen Society (an owners association), restated its position that OSHA shouldn't even be allowed inside plants. The AFS whines that safety enforcement will drive small foundries out of business. They counsel members on how to resist OSHA, either by requiring search warrants or refusing to honor them.

A system made up of money and clout killed four men at Burnside.

Chicago election shakes up machine

Black vote key to mayoral upset

"I watched train after train pass me by. More and more people kept coming up onto that cold, crowded 'L' platform. And the CTA didn't even have the decency to tell us that none of the trains were going to stop."

This complaint by a Black hospital worker from the South Side was just one of 400,000 reasons why incumbent Mayor Michael Bilandic was dumped in a surprise voter revolt in the February primaries.

The avalanche of voter resentment revealed major break downs in the notorious machinery of Chicago bossism.

For years, Richard J. Daley had presided over a tight triumvirate of big business, big labor and big politics. "The Machine," always boasting of its ability to deliver, kept a tight rein on the people of this mid-western financial and industrial hub.

The victory of loyal opposition candidate Jane Byrne shows that a shake-up in the power and unity of the ruling coalition is in progress.

The worst winter in Chicago history helped collapse the machine. It was like two feet of wet snow caving in the roof of a rotting warehouse. One snow-related abuse after another buried Bilandic's chances.

Transit drivers were told to cancel stops in the Black communities to bring in carloads of immobilized commuters. Side streets in workers' neighborhoods were clogged for weeks on end with hip-deep snow. Garbage accumulated, especially in the inner city.

When the Mayor referred to his "snow removal plan" it was revealed to be no more than a superficial "study". It was one of 9 studies costing taxpayers a total of \$240,000. All of the money went to Bilandic croney and 2nd generation machine hack, Ken Sain.

The demise of Bilandic was due to a lot more than the rough winter. Political machines are greased by two forms of favoritism: corruption and patronage. The Daley ward organizations specialized in rewarding loyalists with city jobs, fixing tickets, getting bail reductions for neighborhood youth in trouble, and speeding up delivery of social services. In today's Chicago, there's just not as much money to grease the old machine. The tax base is down due to factories moving to suburbs or sunny climates in the sluggish economy of the 70's.

Signs of the old coalition breaking down appear in the news almost daily. Byrne's victory has accelerated the infighting. Bilandic die-hards from Daley's former ward and other favored territories now scramble to keep as much patronage and clout as they can.

Jane Byrne rode to power by taking stock of some rising political tendencies among the people and carefully mixing a number of vague anti-machine issues with fond recollections of her association with the late mayor.

The Black vote catapulted her to victory, as south and west side wards went almost 70% against the machine. She made short term alliances with Black leaders and pledged to fill some key posts with minorities. From the Carter presidential win to the decline of Philadelphia Mayor Rizzo, Blacks are proving to be the largest, most cohesive swing force in big time politics.

Even in the best of times, the Daley machine kept Chicago the most segregated city in the country. Attempts at independent Black politics were repressed. The most vicious case was the murder of Black Panther leader,



Jane Byrne invoked the memory of Mayor Daley to upset the Chicago machine.

Fred Hampton. But the repression went much deeper. When the late Ralph Metcalfe, a Black alderman allied with the machine, spoke out against rampant and racist police brutality, he was ostracized.

Byrne also made references in her campaign to the problems of upper middle class residents who were turned off by all the corruption and real estate speculation. This vote

swung toward Byrne and also helped in the candidacies of a growing block of independent aldermen.

Byrne promised to grant collective bargaining to public employees. The move will weaken the patronage power of the machine. Around election time, city jobholders are expected to re-pay the machine with campaign foot work --and stay in their place the rest of the time.

But Jane Byrne was not an anti-machine candidate. And most voters did not expect her to be markedly different from the regulars. She came out of the Daley machine, billing herself as the true inheritor of that legacy.

Almost as soon as her upset was announced, this daughter of a steel company executive mended fences with the business community and the Democratic regulars. They in turn, have expressed trust in her mild reformism as a way to pull together a revised machine structure to contain the rising aspirations of Chicago's diverse nationalities and its laboring and professional population.

The high voter turnout was not pro-Byrne. It was anti-machine and a protest against the incompetent Bilandic. In knocking him out, the people got some satisfaction.

The most significant thing was the cracks that began to show in the form of rule. Increasingly open infighting will provide a chance for people to get themselves organized and fight back. Already Byrne has been forced to make good some promises.

She inherited a machine which, her own campaign proved, is starting to sputter.

Stop the railroad of MOVE!

PHILADELPHIA, PA. - A new railroad is being built in this city, from City Hall Courtroom 453 - where members of a mostly Black radical commune called MOVE are in pre-trial hearings - straight to the state pen.

It's 9:30 in the morning of January 2nd and Judge George Ivens is presiding. The courtroom is crawling with cops, fingering their service revolvers and displaying a shotgun and a submachine gun. Five minutes into testimony "His Honor" is in a rage because a MOVE member objected to his putting limits on the questioning of a Philly cop involved in the raid on MOVE's house last August 8.

"Sit down and shut up," he snarls.

Next the D.A. objects when a cop is asked if police had a warrant for the raid. The judge sustains the objections, then demands MOVE "stop giving speeches about your rights."

Ivens is so angry he flies to his feet and calls a recess. Twenty minutes later he flies into another rage at MOVE's persistent questioning and calls a second recess.

During one whole week in January, only one witness testified due to Ivens' frequent recesses. After two weeks of trying to scream MOVE down and denying them the right to speak and object, he struck his own outbursts from the record, along with the ob-

jections MOVE made.

MOVE is defending itself, with advice from lawyers, but on January 11 Ivens threw seven MOVE members out of court and ordered the back-up lawyers to speak for the defendants or be tossed out themselves.

This behavior got the D.A. hollering that he'd lose the case to a mistrial because of the judge.

The trial stems from an attack by Philly Mayor Frank Rizzo's storm troopers on MOVE headquarters. After being served an eviction notice for alleged housing violations the group refused to go, calling the eviction an

(cont. on page 12)



Mass demonstrations in defense of MOVE were an important stage in the development of a powerful Black movement in Philadelphia.



Milton Street was roughed up and arrested in Philadelphia housing battle.

Philly Blacks . . .

(cont. from page 1)

strip and rebuild existing homes as townhouses. The rest is to repave streets and pay for more cops — the last thing North Philly needs but essential to convince would-be buyers the area is safe. The plan would tear up a large section of the city, including some white working class areas where protest actions spread, too.

When people spoke to protest this plan, they were thrown out. That same night over 1,000 gathered at a church in the threatened neighborhood. They united around the demand, "Stop Recycling — Save Our Land!" Many of them have been thrown out of jobs by runaways and layoffs. Now they spoke against the threat of being thrown out of their communities. Milton Street says simply, "I represent the throw-away people."

When the throw-away people came back on February, the City Council thought it was ready. Six of the eight doors to City Hall were locked with fifty cops behind each. The two open doors had over 100 police, frisking and checking i.d.'s on every Black man and woman entering.

When the people tried to speak at the meeting, the cops went nuts. Milton Street and his brother John, a candidate for City Council, were arrested along with others. TV cameras recorded scenes of men and women being beaten, punched, choked and kicked by the cops and some racist Council members. Lucien Blackwell, a Black Councilman, was beaten just like one of the demonstrators.

Another evening mass meeting vowed to keep up the fight. During the following week Milton Street ridiculed charges that the movement uses disruptive tactics. For three years, he pointed out, we have been coming to City Council, testifying, begging, pleading — the press had nothing to say about it. Now we are taking the only course this City Council understands, they have the nerve to say we are disruptive. These people, the City Council, are disrupting the lives of Black people.

The following Thursday, the 15th, the City Council was scheduled to memorialize Cecil B. Moore, a long-time NAACP leader who had just died. Two thousand people showed up for the occasion. But Council President George Schwartz had the gall to order that all Blacks be kept out of

City Hall. He told Black leaders, "You can't control them." Enraged, but lacking the power to challenge him on the Council and win, they stormed out of City Hall and held a mass memorial service a block away. It was completely orderly.

GALLERY BOYCOTT

The showdown came on the final Thursday of February. City Hall was an armed camp. One hundred specta-

tors were "allowed" into the session. Twenty of them were arrested as they rose to denounce the vote to use city money to drive them from their homes.

Immediately, Milton Street and the 200-plus people locked outside went to the Gallery — an enclosed shopping mall Rizzo had built earlier with housing funds. They picketed to re-start a boycott of the luxury mall in protest.

Thirty-eight were arrested for vio-

Cops do little as death stalks Black women

Boston meeting: 'We have to do it ourselves'

BOSTON — Mrs. Elizabeth Muse, a Black woman from Dorchester, called police to help her find her missing teenage daughter. Yvette had been planning to go to a party that night. Before getting ready she asked her mother for \$3 to go to the store. She did not return home and never got to the party. Her mother looked for her and got some information that made her think her daughter had been kidnapped.

To the police, Yvette was just another Black woman out on the town. Unless Mrs. Muse filed a legal complaint against her daughter as a "stubborn child," the police would not begin to search for 48 hours.

Getting no help from police, Mrs. Muse turned to the media. She gave photos of her daughter to the press, but they provided almost no publicity. Meanwhile the papers were giving front page attention to a series of rapes in Brighton, a white working and middle class Boston neighborhood. (Even there, it took mass protests and a meeting of 500 residents to force the police to respond to the community's outrage.)

Several days later, on January 30, children playing in Mrs. Muse's neighborhood found Yvette strangled.

Yvette Stinson was the third of four young Black women murdered in Boston's Black community that week. The first two, Christine Ricketts, 15, and Andrea Foye, 17, were found outside a shoe factory in Roxbury on January 29. The fourth victim, Caron Prater, 25, disappeared a few days later on her way to run an errand for her grand-

father.

Black women, already fearful of walking outside at night, grew even more afraid when police came up with no suspects and no clues. In their homes, on the jobs, at the grocery stores, everywhere, Black people talked about these murders and their anger at the lack of any large scale attempt by police to find suspects.

WHY? WHY?

On February 7, one thousand Black people packed a community meeting and turned their fury on Mayor Kevin White, Police Superintendent Earl Butt and anyone else who dared defend the Boston Police Department's record of "service" to the Black community. Why did the police refuse to search the neighboring houses for Yvette, Mrs. Muse demanded to know. Why had the press tried to imply that Yvette and two of the other victims were prostitutes? Why had the police put far more effort into finding the Brighton rapist than to prevent the murder of another Black woman? "It's because we're Black that we're not getting the protection we need," Mrs. Muse shouted.

There is a long history of hostility toward the Boston Police in the Black community. Police are slow to answer emergency calls in the inner city. But squad cars will lose no time converging on a group of Black youths hanging out on a street corner.

Mayor White tried to cool the meeting out. He promised to put 100 more police on the street immediately. The mayor received a round of applause because every-

one wants more protection from the threat of crime. But he was also met with skepticism. "For how long?" "What are they going to do?" More police doesn't necessarily mean more protection and people knew it.

POWERFUL BLACK MOVEMENT

The current fight for decent affordable housing in Philadelphia is only the biggest current manifestation of a powerful Black movement that has developed over the last few years. This movement fought to defend MOVE (see article page 6) and to deprive Rizzo of a third term in office for his racist crimes.

Now this movement is confronted directly with the question of what the road ahead is. Much attention focuses on the upcoming city elections. Can the Black people use the unity they have forged to consolidate some of their gains like the defeat of Rizzo, through the political system?

Many activists have concluded that the opportunity exists to break through the political disenfranchisement that has left Blacks easy targets for the city's power structure. They argue that cracking the City Council is an even more important battlefield than the upcoming mayoral election.

The coming months in Philadelphia will be marked both by intense struggle like the March on Whitman Park April 4 and searching debate over how to build the struggle and what relationship the elections have to that process.

"WE HAVE TO DO IT OURSELVES"

The mayor called for an intermission and slipped out the back door. As soon as the meeting reopened officials called for adjournment. But before they could shut it down, some from the audience jumped to the podium and called for a meeting to set up neighborhood patrols — no police allowed. "If we're going to secure our community, we have to do it ourselves."

Since the meeting at the Lee School, another Black woman, Daryl Hargett, 29, was found strangled in her apartment in the South End.

Black people have continued to hold meetings to organize to protect the community and to demand some real action from the police and city. The police belatedly announced the arrest of a suspect in one case.

The reign of terror during the last few weeks has brought to the surface the hatred and anger many Black people feel. Hatred over having to live under the constant fear of violent crime. Anger at the lack of any real police protection. The Black community in Boston will not allow these brutal murder cases to be filed away and forgotten under the category of unsolved crimes.

THE SOVIET DRIVE FOR WORLD DOMINATION



Soviet tanks on maneuvers. Their new military equipment gets battle tested in Southeast Asia, the Mideast, and Africa.

What's behind the China-Vietnam clash?

On February 17, 90,000 troops of the Chinese People's Liberation Army drove across the Vietnamese border. The assault, which pushed up to 25 miles into Vietnam's border provinces, was aimed at punishing Vietnam for its constant attacks on China's border and for its aggressive efforts to control all of South East Asia. Additionally, the Chinese military action was intended to demonstrate to the world that it is possible and necessary to resist the expansionism of the Soviet Union and its allies.

The key battle of the campaign took place in the first week of March. The Vietnamese sent crack main force troops to defend the contested city of Lang Son. After several days of combat, the Chinese decisively won control of the town. With this powerful blow to the Vietnamese army, China's leadership ordered the complete withdrawal of troops from Vietnam and warned that attacks on units pulling out would only prolong the conflict.

WHY CHINA STRUCK

The Chinese move was not much of a surprise. For over a year, Vietnam has been encroaching on China's south-

ern border, acting as the leading edge in Soviet efforts to encircle China.

Ever since the massive Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia last December, Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao Ping) and other leaders have been warning that Vietnam should be punished for its actions.

In early February, when Vietnam was preparing to legitimize its conquest and occupation of Cambodia by signing a "friendship treaty" with the puppet government it had just installed, China made a final appeal. Vietnam, it said, should "stop on the precipice, retreat from the wrong path and not go any further."

At that point, China launched its limited attack, which had three main objectives:

1) It was punitive, to make it clear to Vietnam that actions like the overthrow of Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia) and raids on China's border cannot be undertaken without heavy consequences. This was why it was limited in space and time, with the Chinese making it very clear that they "do not want an inch of Vietnamese territory."

2) It was aimed at confronting the Soviet Union, which is Vietnam's spon-

The USSR is on the move around the world. Using Cuba and more recently Vietnam as their hitmen, the capitalist rulers of the once-socialist Soviet Union are challenging the US ruling class everywhere. They are seeking to replace America as the dominant power exploiting the wealth of other lands.

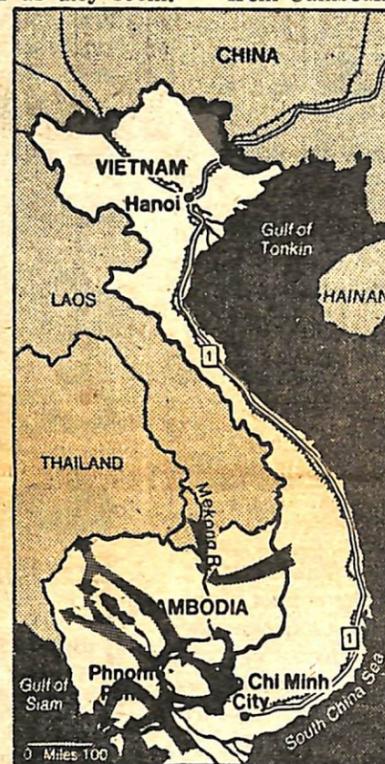
In the last year, Vietnam invaded Cambodia, and Cuba aided the savage Ethiopian dictatorship in an all-out offensive against the Eritrean liberation struggle. Pro-Soviet elements staged a coup in Afghanistan, Soviet-armed and Cuban-trained mercenaries invaded Zaire, and North and South Yemen plunged into a bloody border war stirred up by the USSR.

Since the massive Cuban intervention in the Angolan civil war in 1976, the tempo of Soviet-backed aggression has stepped up year by year. At the same time, the USSR has kept up its

talk of detente and world peace, and continues to push for arms limitation deals with the US.

3) It aided the Cambodian people in their guerrilla war against the Vietnamese occupation, forcing Vietnam to shift troops and attention away from Cambodia. The rainy season, traditionally a bad period for foreign invaders, begins in April.

Both Vietnam and its Soviet backers admitted, in deed if not in word, that the attack was limited and thus very different from the all-out Vietnamese assault on Kampuchea (Cambodia). The Vietnamese didn't even move to transfer main force troops from Laos and Cambodia to the border area until two weeks into the fighting — after the total failure of their border divisions to deal with the Chinese. Likewise the Soviet Union, bound by treaty to defend Vietnam from attack, restricted itself to beefing up forces on the border it shares with China, and swearing and hollering about how China was trying to conquer Vietnam.



Top: Areas occupied during China's action.

Bottom: Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea.

Unlike Vietnam, China responded favorably when many countries in the United Nations began discussing resolutions calling for China to withdraw from Vietnam and Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia. The Chinese restated their intention to withdraw, and challenged Vietnam to do the same, saying, "We do not think that you dare."

CONFLICT GROWS LAST FEW YEARS

The three issues that pushed the Chinese people past the breaking point were Vietnam's aggression in Cambodia, its mistreatment of the Chinese minority in Vietnam, and its constant military pressure against the Chinese border. All three have seriously escalated from 1977 to the present.

When fighting first broke out between Vietnam and Democratic Kampuchea in that year, the Kampuchean (Cambodian) government denied reports that it was just a border conflict,

saying the Vietnamese wanted to dominate their country. China immediately expressed concern over the fighting between its neighbors, and offered to mediate. As the fighting continued, and reasoning proved unsuccessful in

PRE-WWII ERA HOLDS LESSONS FOR TODAY

The danger of a third world war is on the rise. The USSR in its drive for global domination has come face to face with the rulers of the US, who are scrambling to prevent the collapse of their own world-wide empire.

The Chinese Communist Party has pointed out important similarities between today's situation and the decade leading up to the outbreak of World War 2. At that time Africa and Asia were controlled by Great Britain and France. The US dominated Latin America and much of the Pacific. Germany, Japan, and Italy were growing capitalist powers, but could find nowhere to expand — the world had been divided up without them getting much of the take. To redivide it meant war.

In September 1931, Japanese troops marched into the Chinese province of Manchuria. To cover its seizure, Japan set up a puppet government and declared that Manchuria was now the independent nation of Manchukuo. Japan's troops stayed on.

Four years later, in October, 1935, Italy invaded and occupied Ethiopia. Linking Italy's smaller African colonies of Eritrea and Somalia, this gave Italy control of the Horn of Africa and the shortest sea route between Asia and Europe. Although Britain and France were bound by treaty to defend Ethiopia, they did nothing.

This made the fascist powers bolder. In 1936, they backed General Franco who launched a civil war to overthrow the Republican government of Spain. Tens of thousands of Italian and German troops fought, gaining combat experience. Again, Britain, France and the US refused to honor their commitments to the democratically elected government of Spain and declared "neutrality."

The Soviet Union, at this time a developing socialist country, time and again proposed to the non-fascist imperialist countries the need for joint action to check fascist aggression. But Britain and France refused, hoping that Hitler would either stop his drive for world domination or attack the USSR and get bogged down in a long war.

This appeasement policy helped drive the rulers of many countries, especially in Eastern Europe, closer to Germany. They feared that if they didn't bow down, they would be invaded and overthrown, in particular after German troops annexed Austria in March, 1938.

The last act in the pre-war drama began that fall. Hitler demanded control of part of Czechoslovakia. At a conference in Munich, Britain and France agreed.

This betrayal made the immediate advent of World War 2 inevitable. Germany was now the dominant power on the European mainland. It had control of Czech arms plants and other heavy industry it needed to fuel its war drive. With its Japanese and Italian allies, Germany was confident that it could take on the Western capitalist powers which had proved themselves so spineless in the face of German aggression.

Less than a year later, the invasion of Poland kicked off World War 2.

liberation. They promote splits among African organizations to create, in this resource-rich and strategic area, new Angolas, where local leaders will depend on Cuban troops and Soviet "aid" to stay in power.

* The Middle East. Control of the Middle East and its vast oil deposits would give the USSR a powerful stranglehold on wealthy industrial Western Europe. Despite being pushed out of Egypt and Somalia, the Soviets have continued to make inroads. Ethiopia and South Yemen straddle the main sea route between Europe and Asia. With loyal junior partners also running Afghanistan, and ties with Iraq, Libya, and other countries in the area, the Soviets are in an excellent position to take advantage of the continuing struggle of the Palestinian people and Arab countries against Israel and popular rebellions against reactionary rulers like the Shah.

curbing Vietnam's appetite, the Chinese government gradually changed from a position of neutrality to one of support for Cambodia.

During the same period, beginning in 1978, Vietnam began expelling Vietnamese citizens of Chinese origin and Chinese nationals from the country. Over 200,000 have been forced out in the last year.

Although the Vietnamese claim they are capitalists unable to adjust to socialism, the majority come not from the recently liberated South, but from the North, where socialist construction has been going on since 1956. The Chinese in Vietnam made a convenient scapegoat for Vietnam's economic difficulties. Also, Vietnam's Soviet sponsors delight in the hardships that resettling so many refugees is causing China.

As thousands fled over the border to China, Vietnam began trying to destabilize the border area itself, increasing pressure on China. In the last half of 1978 alone, the Chinese report over 700 different incursions by Vietnamese troops, resulting in the death of 300 Chinese soldiers and civilians. Until the Chinese counter-attack, the main beneficiary of this ongoing aggression was not Vietnam, but the USSR, which has over a million troops menacing China's northern borders and could thus threaten China with military attack on two fronts.

NEW WORLD SITUATION

The current turmoil in Southeast Asia underlines the fact that there has been an irreversible change in the relations among the world's countries. At the heart of the change is the Soviet Union. A socialist country turned capitalist, the USSR has replaced the United States as the most aggressive imperialist power in the world, and the greatest source of war.

Kampuchea, only three and a half years after driving out the US, is now fighting an occupation backed by the USSR.

Vietnam, having defeated the US, has now fallen under increasing Soviet domination. With its economy devastated by war, Vietnam turned to the USSR for aid. But although Vietnam's food situation is almost as bad as Bangladesh, Soviet aid is designed to beef up Vietnam's military strength, not build a self sufficient economy.

The Vietnamese rulers have gone right along with this. Their army is now 50% larger than it was during the war with the US. The Soviets see Vietnam's army as an expeditionary force to use in Asia and maybe elsewhere. The Chinese call Vietnam "the Cuba of the Orient" because this is the role Cuba has played for the USSR in Angola, Ethiopia, Yemen and elsewhere.

(cont. on page 10)



Kampuchean troops in Takeo, a battlefield before the big invasion and now.

Vietnam blitzkrieg bogs down in Kampuchea (Cambodia)

First hand report from S.E. Asia

Following is a Workers Voice interview with George C. Hildebrand, a Southeast Asia scholar and journalist, who is co-author of one of the few books in the English language on Kampuchea today, "Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution." Some comments were added by Stephen Heder, a writer for Time magazine from Cambodia from 1973-75, and currently a student of Southeast Asian affairs. Hildebrand and Heder were in Asia in January and February where they spoke with Kampuchean and visited China, Thailand, and the Thai-Kampuchean border region.

Since the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea December 25 and marched into the capital, Phnom Penh, January 7, how much do they control?

They hold the cities and the major highways - not the people. At first the western press was impressed by the Vietnamese attack. But we do not want to be misled by this blitzkrieg. The Kampuchean chose not to fight where they were weak; they evacuated the cities and fell back on the countryside where they could organize peoples' war. The Kampuchean military, largely intact, regrouped in the countryside, many into battalion-sized units.

There's a pretty high level of very heavy, organized resistance going on. The Kampuchean Revolutionary Army forces have been able to launch attacks in all major parts of the country. They occupied the city of Takeo - very close to Vietnam - for almost a week. They attacked the port of Kompong Som on the sea, and downtown Pursat, right in the middle of the country.

As for the outlying areas, peoples' war means you fight everywhere the enemy comes. There are peoples' militias throughout the country supporting the larger military units.

What do these civilians do?

Heder: Everybody is organized to do something for the front. The military conscription-age men are all at the front lines. And everybody else is back behind. They're all armed. The women and the old people make bam-

boo traps and package rice in banana leaves. And then the children load the rice packets on the trucks to be driven off to the front. The children go out and put the bamboo spikes in place. Everybody is busy. Everybody seems to have their own task.

If the Kampuchean are waging a peoples' war, how would you describe what the Vietnamese are doing?

The Vietnamese launched a massive invasion on a number of different fronts in armoured columns with heavy air support. It was very much like an American-style attack - an extremely heavy, modernized conventional war approach. The Vietnamese describe it as a "blooming lotus" approach. You hit hard at the center and then fan out and try to mop up the opposition in columns. It's a full transition from peoples' war to conventional war, which mirrors the political transition from being a nation fighting for its independence against U.S. imperialism, to being an

aggressor nation trying to attack a neighbor state and take it over.

Who is leading the Kampuchean resistance now?

It's a standing military committee of the political committee of the Kampuchean Communist Party. It's under the direction of the Prime Minister and Party Secretary Pol Pot.

So politically and militarily it's a continuation of the Democratic Kampuchea government?

It is Democratic Kampuchea. My guess is they're been prepared for an invasion for quite a long time.

What do you know about how Kampuchean lived under the Pol Pot government from 1975 when it liberated the country from the U.S. and the Lon Nol regime until the Vietnamese invasion?

American journalists (from the Washington Post and the Philadelphia
(cont. on page 10)



Kampuchean civilians pack rice rations in banana leaves to be sent to guerillas at the front.

BLACKS BURNED BY COLLEGE SPORTS

Dwight Slaughter was robbed. He spent four years at California State University, Los Angeles (CSLA) as a criminology major. But Slaughter never took a criminology course — he played basketball for the school. Today he works for Firestone Rubber to try and make a decent living for his wife and three kids.

In exchange for his services on the court, Dwight Slaughter had been offered a full scholarship, fringe benefits, all the tutoring he needed, and a criminology degree. In his senior year he found that he was not graduating and that his "scholarship" was a government loan he had to start repaying.

Today, Slaughter, Randy Echols, and six other Black athletes have a multimillion dollar suit against CSLA for fraud. Promised an education, they were steered into gut courses like badminton and backpacking, given stand-ins to take their exams, and awarded Dean's list grades without even attending most of their classes — until their senior season was over.

Their experience is typical. Successful athletic teams are a big money proposition for many colleges, who frantically compete to recruit promising prospects from high schools around the country. At traditional basketball powerhouses like DeWitt Clinton in the Bronx, whole varsity teams are flown to campuses as far away as Arizona and Hawaii, shown a good time, and promised the world by eager recruiters.

For some, college sports does become a ticket out of the ghetto — into a pro team. But only a handful make it every year. For the others, there are only four years of broken promises.

Black sports activist Harry Edwards says that as many as 90% of Black athletes never graduate and as many as one in four are still functionally illiterate after their four years in college. And with over one million injuries in college sports every year, many leave with permanent disabilities that cut their future opportunities.

Dwight Slaughter, who is standing up against this robbery, knows that victory in the lawsuit will be a victory for the young Black athletes coming up now and facing the same collegiate exploiters. He says, "We have to show them that we won't allow ourselves to be just thrown away."

farmers (cont. from page 2)

But talk is cheap. Carter, who likes to call himself a farmer, has no more intention than previous presidents of seeing that farmers get what they need. Granting parity — or even 90% of parity — would cause a larger budget deficit and result in some increase in food prices. The rich who Carter serves can't afford this now, either economically or politically. So Agriculture Secretary Bergland, who regularly called for 90% of parity when Earl Butz had the job under Nixon, now proclaims parity is an outmoded concept.

But the government and the ruling class are in a bind. The farmers are not going away. They refuse to go broke in silence while producing the country's food. They are reaching out to consumers and workers to get allies in their fight. "Labor is in the same place we are," says Minnesota AAM leader Tom Benson. "They are losing about 5% a year in real income, the same as farmers. We're not the only ones in trouble. We're trying to develop rapport with everyone."

Kampuchea interview (cont. from page 9)

Inquirer) who visited in December, right before the invasion, were quite surprised at a number of things. They didn't see guns, except right along the frontier where the problem with Vietnam was developing. They didn't see people working under armed guards, as had been charged. The people looked good, they had food and medicine.

They had a self-reliance strategy for the country as a whole and also on the local level. Every area was responsible for itself. Agricultural communes produced rice and other food products.

There was a decentralized industrial system. There were repair shops and small factories all around the country to serve the people. They would make things like dinner plates or repair tractors.

In the areas which had been organized by the resistance for a long time leading up to liberation, things were very good. There was enough food and medicine. People were satisfied. In some other areas there wasn't enough. These are the most newly organized areas, where many people came from the city, who didn't have a developed political consciousness or understanding of what they should do.

In 1976 and '77 there wasn't enough rain, which made the situation more difficult. Last year was a much better year. They were beginning to make things work. That's not bad in such a short time.

Here is one indication of how things were organized. We met a group of 200 Kampuchean who had just come into Thailand after the invasion. They fled Kampuchea because they heard rumors that many people in a neighboring village had been killed.

We took some cigarettes and candy to them in the tent where they were staying. One guy took the candy and went around the room and gave one piece to each child. No child grabbed. No child asked for more. They took the 25 packages of cigarettes and emptied them all into one large plastic bag. One man took them around the room and gave 4 or 5 to each man. Everyone smoked exactly one and put the rest away for the future. It was eerie-impressive. The impression we got was there was some kind of faith in the distribution system, that it would be fair. Without anyone telling

anyone, or anyone creating a fuss in the other direction, it was like, "this is the way things ought to be done." I think this is an indication about the way they were living.

Are there those who maybe didn't support the Pol Pot government before and now are participating in the resistance?

There's been something of a re-organization into a new national united front — the National Democratic and Patriotic Front. They're stressing the broad participation of all sectors in this. I think this would strike a chord with those Kampuchean who might have disagreed with the government beforehand. The Kampuchean want their own country, they don't want a Vietnamese country.

This united front is internal and external. Former Prime Minister Prince Norodom Sihanouk went abroad to speak for Democratic Kampuchea. When I was in Thailand, Kampuchean refugees who had been anti-communist and anti-Democratic Kampuchea, held demonstrations against the Vietnamese invasion as soon as they heard about it.

It seems that the Vietnamese are running into a lot more problems than they expected. Why do you think they invaded in the first place and why are they running into such problems?

The Vietnamese established the so-called Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation which set up a new government in Kampuchea. But even journalists who went in who were sympathetic to the Vietnamese said there did not seem to be very much to this Front, either in terms of state administration or popular support. They said this privately — they didn't publish it.

I don't see any program the Salvation Front can offer that could bring them wide support. They lose on the nationalist issue, because they are backed by the Vietnamese and that's obvious to everybody. If you take the idea of freedom — if any free or even slightly free system is set up in the areas they control, it would allow scope for guerrilla activity. And the moment guerrilla activity appears, the Vietnamese will repress to terrify the population into

stopping their support for the guerrillas.

Another problem would be rice. In Vietnam a lot of people are starving. They don't have enough rice. Well, what do they do with the Kampuchean rice? If they decide to take it to Vietnam, obviously the Phoney Front isn't going to be very popular, they can't win support there.

If the Vietnamese are willing to go to such extremes, like you're saying, wholesale purges, killings, taking food, what's their reason for doing this?

They're extremely isolated in Asia. They decided they needed to break out of it. They saw Kampuchea on their doorstep as getting stronger and stronger, as being anti-Soviet and closer to China. They wanted to be independent, but at the same time they wanted a much closer relationship with the Soviet Union.

What do they want to gain from that?

They hoped for economic aid and support, a development plan. They say they wanted to be independent, that they didn't want to get into relying on the Soviets, that they wanted American recognition, and U.S. aid. But with their policy in Kampuchea, they needed an extraordinary amount of supplies and political support. Their feeling on Kampuchea was they've got to insure compliance with what they wanted on every level, not only international alignment, but in terms of the kind of development scheme that is favorable to the development of Vietnam itself. That forces them to turn to the Soviets, in order to deal with Kampuchea.

How would you describe the aims of the Kampuchean?

They want a strong and independent country. They say, "How can we guarantee the survival of our country, how can we guarantee there will be a Kampuchea in 10 or 20 years?" That requires a lot of sacrifice, a lot of patriotism. That explains the combativeness of the Kampuchean. They say that in the long run, "Nobody's going to stand up for us—we have to rely on ourselves. We've got to get our show together."

With these two sides so diametrically opposed, what are the reactions of the other countries in the region? What did you hear while you were in Thailand?

First off, I don't see that there's any compromise possible. The Kampuchean are not going to give up their independence. The Vietnamese don't think there's any solution but a military conquest to insure that Kampuchea is subservient to them. I don't see any possible agreement.

So the prospect is that the war is going to go on.

There was a condemnation of the Vietnamese invasion at the emergency meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations. In Thailand, the sentiment has been largely against the Vietnamese. The Thai military regime itself is not unhappy that the Vietnamese are going to be bogged down there fighting for a long time. Their second preference would certainly be an independent Kampuchea under Pol Pot.

Among the left I would say there are probably some people who are sympathetic with Vietnam, and there are some pro-Soviet tendencies in that area, but largely the left is not in sympathy with the Vietnamese. The implications for the Vietnamese in the long run are not so good. They're putting themselves at odds not only with the right-wing governments, but also with the left movements in the area.

China-Vietnam (cont. from page 9)

The US government did not attack China outright for the invasion. While criticizing it, American officials linked the call for China to withdraw from Vietnam to a call for Vietnam to leave Kampuchea.

But the US ruling class revealed something else in its response. Politicians and the news media alike fretted that China's "desperate gamble" would drag the Soviet Union into the conflict and precipitate a new world war. President Carter gave a speech in Atlanta, vowing that under no circumstances would the US involve itself militarily in the conflicts breaking out around the world. In part, this position is an acknowledgement that since Vietnam, the American people are not willing to go to war to defend the interests of the corporate giants that run this country.

But it also shows that the ruling class of this country is dazed by a long string of defeats and unable to come to grips with its decline in the world. Deng Xiaoping highlighted this kind of thinking on February 22 when he said:

"Both the Cuba of the Orient and the Cuba of the West seem emboldened by the so-called tremendous

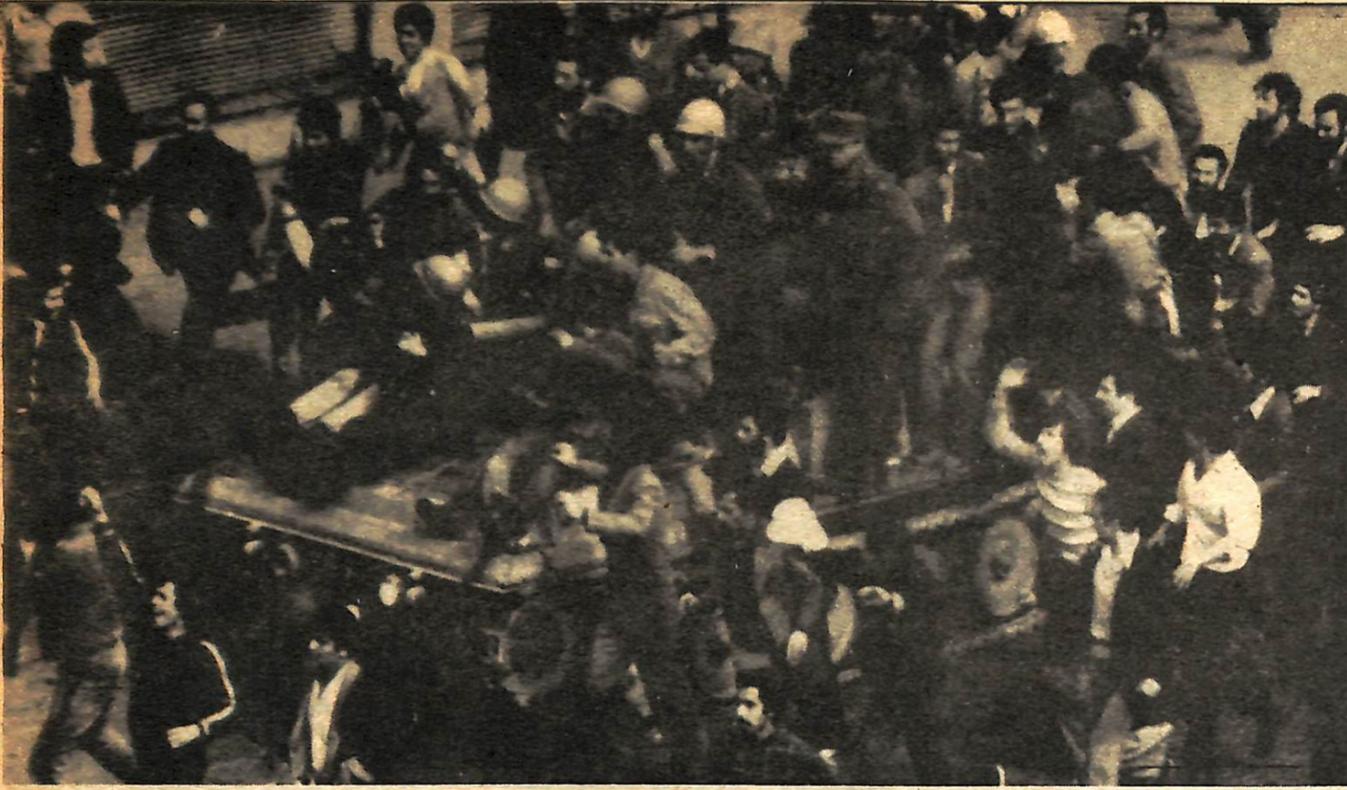
backing force behind them. Now some people in the world are afraid of offending them.

"Even if they do something terrible, these people wouldn't dare take action against them. It's a question of being afraid of them."

PAPER POLAR BEAR

China's leaders speak and act from long years of experience. In the war against Japan, the Chinese learned the importance of uniting all who could be united against the main enemy. And they have summed up that the period preceding World War 2 shows that efforts to appease Germany's rise to power with concessions only added to its appetite.

In the past two decades, revolutionary struggles in countries around the globe have shown US imperialism to be a paper tiger. China's action against Vietnam shows that the Soviet's agents have to pay for their aggression. And China wants to demonstrate to the world by standing up to the Soviet Union and its huge military machine that this mighty power is, in the final analysis, just a paper polar bear.



The Iranian revolution and the road ahead

It is a matter of weeks since the Iranian revolution smashed the old regime of the Shah in an armed uprising February 10 and 11. The days since have seen the revolutionary people of Iran battling to consolidate power and set a new course for their country. The forces which united to topple the Shah are now struggling over what that course should be and how it should be determined.

The seizure of power came in a sudden, uncontrollable upsurge from below. During the first week of February, negotiations were underway between the two forces claiming power in Iran. On one side were the Shah's generals and the government he had appointed just before fleeing the country in January. On the other was Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, an Islamic religious figure and the universally recognized leader of the revolution, and his negotiator, the man he had named Prime Minister in defiance of the Shah, Mehdi Bazargan. But as the bargaining went on, the struggle grew.

THE INSURRECTION

On the evening of February 9, rebel airmen at Dashan Air base near Tehran were attacked by units of the Shah's elite Imperial Guard. Outnumbered, they called for help.

Milwaukee Activists . . .

(cont. from page 4)

Another workshop focused on discrimination, including how to build Black-white unity and how to mobilize people overall. Workers from A. O. Smith explained how they fought for a brother fired by a racist foreman and collected money to help him out.

The Weber case, getting a contract translated into Spanish at a steel foundry, and a victory against a company's refusal to pay pregnancy benefits were also discussed.

In the closing session organizers pointed out that regular area-wide meetings have been given too much emphasis. The base and strength of the UWO is in the individual shop committees. The area-wide newsletter will be strengthened to best hold together the group. Conferences like the one just completed and area-wide meetings will be held when necessary for bigger campaigns like during the coal miner's strike or the support work for Tupelo, Mississippi.

Thousands of armed civilians, led by the Fedayee Khalq, a Marxist guerrilla group, fell on the Imperial Guard from behind. After 24 hours, members of the Guard killed their commander and fled.

The rebel air cadets and the guerillas began distributing the base's arsenal to the people. Attacks on military bases and police stations multiplied, in Tehran and across the country. With over a quarter of a million guns in the hands of the people, the Imperial Guard ripped to shreds, and unrest rampant in the rest of the armed forces, the Shah's generals declared neutrality and ordered their troops not to interfere. By February 11, all government buildings, the radio and television stations, the telephone network, the whole country were in the hands of the people.

In the weeks that followed, all the wealth the Shah had plundered from the people was confiscated. Generals who had ordered the massacre of demonstrators were executed and the dreaded secret police, SAVAK, disbanded. The smashing of all his statues symbolized the end of the Shah's machinery of terror.

Also facing destruction is subser-

vience to foreign control. US advisors were sent packing and American spy centers shut down. Iran has resigned as the US government's favored policeman for the Middle East.

Nor is Iran looking to switch masters. Ayatollah Khomeini met with the Soviet Ambassador to warn him Iran will fight "those who interfere in our internal affairs."

The revolution has moved to control Iran's oil production in its own interests, not those of Exxon or Royal Dutch Shell. Finally it cut oil supplies and diplomatic ties with the reactionary regimes in Israel and South Africa, longtime pals of the Shah.

CONSOLIDATING VICTORY

National independence and political liberty, democracy, were the two main demands of the Iranian people in their revolution. Although much has been done to break the country free of foreign control, Iran is still in danger.

Finally realizing their Shah had had it, the US ruling class rushed to recognize Bazargan's government and woo Ayatollah Khomeini. Their Soviet rivals have several irons in the fire — they praise Khomeini to the skies; they pump funds to the Tudeh Party, their agents in Iranian politics; and they have over 100,000 troops who speak Farsi (the main

Teamsters . . .

(cont. from page 5)

Carter's guidelines. If they get their productivity clauses, they may pay slightly more.

Teamsters have good reason to be skeptical at the intentions of the International leaders. They believe the huge package demand is nothing but hot air designed to bail them out of their isolation within the union and stabilize their shakey economic set up which is typified by the nearly bankrupt pension fund.

But the rank and file also knows it's time to fight. A popular TDU button reads, "Draw the line in '79. Strike April 1."

One of TDU's founders, Mel Packer from IBT Local 249 in Pittsburgh

explained some of the implications of a possible nationwide strike and wildcat in a newsletter of the Committee of Concerned Unionists:

"... Many Teamsters are hoping that Steelworkers, Autoworkers, and all trade unionists will understand that this fight we are waging on April 1, 1979, may ultimately determine our success in contract negotiations.

"The Teamsters Union is the first big test for the government of Carter's guidelines. Rank and file Teamsters (including TDU and PROD members) have created a new group called the Majority Contract Coalition (MCC). If we can put enough pressure on to call a strike, then all unions will be in better negotiating position.

"If Teamster leaders don't call a strike, but rank and file members walk out anyway and pull off a successful national wildcat, you will also gain and be stronger...."

Iranian language) poised on the border in case a power vacuum develops.

The question of what will replace the Shah's tyranny is the biggest one facing the Iranian revolution.

Three divergent paths are being presented by the three main centers of power which coexist in Iran now — the politicians and businessmen of the Bazargan government, who favor Western European-style democracy and capitalism, the Islamic Revolutionary Council headed by Ayatollah Khomeini which is calling for a government based on Moslem religious law, and the revolutionary masses, who are demanding a revolutionary democratic government to serve as a bulwark against oppression and exploitation.

These programs will continue to evolve and contend. As forces realign and a single center is forged, elements of all three will be incorporated in the new state structure.

Khomeini's Council has continued to be the main core leading the revolution ahead. The necessary executions of the generals and SAVAK heads were undertaken without the approval or even knowledge of the Bazargan government he appointed.

The Prime Minister frequently threatens to quit unless given more power. But the rising demands of the people constantly drive both of the centers forward, strengthening the revolution against the twin threats of foreign intervention and internal counterrevolution.

For instance, Bazargan appointed one of the Shah's Brigadier Generals to lead the 16th armored division near Teheran. When he showed up to assume command, he was immediately arrested by "his" troops and taken to Khomeini's headquarters. The Ayatollah himself sent the general back with some mullahs (religious leaders) to persuade the soldiers to accept him. The revolutionary soldiers council said, "Nothing doing." Incidents like this forced Bazargan and Khomeini to adopt a new policy — appointing low-ranked officers as "provisional supervisors" of the armed forces.

Women in Teheran marched in the tens of thousands every day for a week straight in early March, demanding full equality and protesting a reported Khomeini order that all women wear a chudar, the traditional veil. They received some support from the official government, and the Islamic Revolutionary Council said Khomeini had merely suggested "modest attire."

One of the most important trends among the masses is the workers councils which developed in the oil fields and other heavy industry. Since the revolution, people have resumed work, but are pressing demands for control over their workplaces and for the inclusion of representatives of their councils in the new government.

A powerful force backing and working within these mass movements is the Fedayee guerrilla organization, the largest and most influential left group in the country. While pushing hard for a consistent and wide-ranging program of democratic reforms, their leaders have taken special care not to break the fragile unity of the various forces who made the revolution. When a planned march of theirs was banned by the Islamic Revolutionary Council, they transformed it to a rally, which still drew over 70,000 supporters.

Iran is not at the point of socialist revolution. The masses and the developing left are fighting to keep the initiative and incorporate their demands into the new Iran in this critical period. How successful they are has much to do with how well they will be situated to push the struggle ahead in years to come.

Workers' actions hit back at firings

Clairton don't own me

"We own you body, soul and mind." That's what United States Steel meant when it suspended Mike Solito for 3 days in February. Solito, a grievance committeeman at the Clairton, Pa. works, was disciplined because he wrote an article criticizing a U.S. Steel foreman in his union local's newsletter.

Outraged at the suspension, his department filed a grievance and sent a delegation of 30 workers to picket U.S. Steel headquarters. The union - Local 1557 of the United Steelworkers of America - also filed charges against the company with the National Labor Relations Board.

Within the week the country's largest steelmaker had to back down and agree to the terms of the grievance. Solito was paid for the day he was out and the union said the company agreed to "cease trying to tell us what we can write in the newsletter."

Maryland ship builders: Our safety and our steward!

Bethlehem Steel tried to frame and fire militant shop steward John Reynold Ochs from its Key Highway, Maryland shipyard on February 1. But today he is back on the job. When foreman Schneider grabbed

at a petition that welders and burners had against him, Ochs told him to give it back. The steward was falsely accused of "assaulting" Schneider.

Key Highway, notorious for safety hazards, especially asbestos, was glad to get rid of Ochs. Two days earlier Beth had been fined for OSHA violations based on complaints filed by Ochs. Last year they were found guilty of causing industrial illness when Ochs led a legal battle for 30 workers who got metal fume fever.

Workers talked of doing something on the job like "don't work unsafe" when over 100 welders and burners met at the union hall February 6 to organize to fight the firing. Two days later over 75 workers held an informational picket line in almost a foot of snow chanting, "Rehire Ochs. Fire Schneider."

On March 8, Ochs won his grievance in arbitration.

Twin Cities Ford On the rampage

On Tuesday January 30 rank and file members of UAW Local 879 charged Ford Motor Company with unfair labor practices at its Twin Cities Assembly Plant.

The charges were filed immediately after a union activist and Unity Caucus member was fired in the midst of a company speed up and job elimination campaign. The charges covered a 3-month period and included surveillance and intimidation of rank and file oriented committeemen, discrim-

inatory disciplines, threats to union members about using the grievance procedure, and attempts to stop leafletting, shop floor union meetings, and other forms of communication between union members.

The move, announced at a press conference in front of the union hall, received broad support from the local membership. The Executive Board took no position on the charges, but immediately launched an investigation of how they were presented to the press.

The Unity Caucus sponsored a party to raise money for the labor board case and publicize the injustice of the firing in its newsletter, Nuts and Bolts.

Engine lines "slow down" harassment

On February 8 a hoist cable snapped, sending an 800-pound diesel engine crashing to the floor at International Harvester's Melrose Park plant outside Chicago. It narrowly missed a worker.

Everybody left the line and went to the general foreman's office to demand that immediate steps be taken to ensure safety. The superintendent threatened to fire anyone not working. The guy who nearly got crushed retorted, "Take my name first. I could have been killed."

Department 46 steward Chuck Marino backed the job action, so the company tried to fire him. The union

responded by voting 98% to strike over safety problems. Department 46 workers then met to plan a slow down during the official determination of Marino's case.

Engine line workers hit stop switches at every opportunity. One worker stopped the line 8 times, a new record. Marino won his job back with a 3-day suspension on his record.

Harvester has since declared war on Department 46. A new set of rules limits bathroom trips to 10 minutes. One week of the July shutdown was taken away, disrupting workers' vacation plans. Worse, they disconnected most of the buttons that stop the line. Now it is run uninterrupted, which ups production, lowers safety and makes slow downs difficult.

Department 46 is presently in the midst of a ban on overtime. They won a support pledge from over 100 workers at the last union meeting.

150 Steelhaulers fired for FASH strike

A score of trucking companies are conspiring to blackball about 150 drivers for their participation in the Fraternal Association of Steel Haulers strike. While some of the 150 have been re-hired temporarily due to steel shortages caused by the 3-month long FASH strike, they are not guaranteed long term work. A FASH court case contends that the firings violate the back-to-work injunction won by the companies.

Defend MOVE . . .

(cont. from page 6)

attempt to harass them and vowing to defend themselves and their house.

Rizzo's cops sealed off the whole neighborhood for months. Neighbors had to show identification to get to their houses. The city couldn't starve MOVE out, so on August 8 they assaulted the house in a storm of bullets and water from high power hoses.

The attack left one cop dead, evidently shot in the back by his own partners.

Millions watched their television sets in shock as Delbert Africa surrendered, then was kicked and stomped by police while he lay spread-eagled on the ground.

Small children cried, "Don't shoot" as they exited the flooded house to find hoards of cops pointing rifles at their heads.

Rizzo attempted to use his tough-guy handling of "the MOVE crisis," which he himself had created, to gain votes for a City Charter change which would have let him run for a third term. His racist campaign backfired and tens of thousands of whites joined Philly's Black community, 42 per cent of the city, in voting to reject the charter change by a 2-1 margin.

But Rizzo remains in office until January of 1980. He is intent on carrying out his vow to break up MOVE and put its members in the electric chair.

And so the kangaroo court continues. MOVE's house was demolished directly after the raid, destroying defense evidence against the original charges of housing and health code violations and the murder charges.

Weapons the D.A. contends were taken from the house have evidence tags on them marked with wrong serial numbers, inaccurate descriptions and missing addresses and dates.

On January 25, heavily armed police

raided the home of MOVE legal advisor Jeannette Knighton. With a no-knock search warrant, they busted in supposedly looking for automatic rifles, shotguns, a mortar and a bazooka.

The police couldn't find any such weapons - which some meter reader had allegedly told them about. After turning the house inside out, they did find and take two tape recorders, 24-40 tapes of conversations, TV and radio interviews with city officials, hundreds of news clippings and court documents, all needed to prepare MOVE's defense.

In an interview with Workers Voice Jeannette Knighton said, "Why would we let some stranger (the meter reader) into our house with weapons right out front? The whole purpose of this raid was to seize our evidence to be used in the trials later."

Part of the attack on MOVE comes from the media. After headlines and front page stories covering every development leading up to the raid, articles on the violation of MOVE's rights in the court battles now appear on the back pages, when they're mentioned at all.

The biggest coverage the trial has received came when the D.A. told reporters that two of the MOVE children, ages five and nine, said their parents started the shooting. He then admitted he had no intention of using the kids as witnesses (news men at the site reported that the first shots came from behind police lines). It appears the papers are again gearing up for an anti-MOVE blitz when the actual trial starts.

It remains for the Black movement which was strengthened in the heat of Rizzo's attack on MOVE and the racism it represented - and for all people interested in justice - to spread the word and stop the railroad.

Amnesty for Postal Workers

(cont. from page 3)

strike against changing hours won some demands and the post office agreed not to retaliate.

Now the fight is against the federal authorities who, feigning an even tighter economic crunch, want to "make an example" by firing activists. But the example workers followed was their brothers' and sisters' resistance, and the amnesty movement has grown steadily.

So far 30 Jersey City Bulk workers have got their jobs back and more actions are planned to maintain the fight until victory for the remaining 170 is won.

TRAITORS IN UNION OFFICE

Renewed national actions as well as a new wave of legal suits will have to be organized over the treachery of APWU President Emmett Andrews. At a recent Executive Board meeting, Andrews voted for National Amnesty Day - a proposal submitted by Mail Handler Vice President Kenny Leiner who is a fired N.J. Bulk employee.

But Andrews refused to do anything to make the demonstrations happen. He finally issued a call only three weeks before the day of actions. Some national union publications carried no news about amnesty whatsoever and there were locals which never heard about Amnesty Day until it was over.

Andrews also proposed recently that the 5 federal arbitrators assigned to the firings set the basic principles to guide the cases. Two of the five have already gone on record against the fired workers. How the other three stand is unclear. The workers involved went to court for an injunction against Andrews' latest scheme.

In sharp contrast to the inaction at the top of the union, workers and local officials in the NY/NJ area took mass legal and in-the-street actions to get their fellow workers

rehired. A militant force within this motion is a rank and file group based in New Jersey, the Postal Workers Defense Committee.

In the February issue of their newsletter, The P.O.W. (Post Office Worker) they stated:

"For Patty Hearst, Richard Nixon and city policemen who shoot down unarmed Black and Puerto Rican youth a slap on the wrist is the order of the day. For 200 postal workers who demonstrated peacefully for better wages and working conditions, it's six months out of a job with PMG Bolger still demanding the maximum penalty...One standard for the rich and powerful and another for the workers?"

Amnesty for all fired and disciplined workers now!

Fight for the right to strike!
Down with butcher Bolger!

Meatcutters Fight firing . . .

(cont. from page 3)

down. But some union officials attacked the idea, saying the company was ready to lock the workers out.

The following day, Agar fired 39 workers who were not back at work by the 5:00 deadline. Some had left for the day. Others had been told there was no work. Some were turned away by foremen when they tried to come back. Two stewards were punched out on union business. The 39 included one worker with 20 years seniority and workers from every department, nationality and age group represented in the plant.

Not able to rely on the union leadership, the thirty-nine set up the Fired Worker's Committee of Local P-500. They went as a group to the Amalgamated Meatcutters headquarters to press for swift action on their cases. They won official sanction for the daily informational pickets and a promise that all 39 would go to arbitration.

Strike sentiment in Philly transit

One month ago, nobody would have bet a subway token that Philly's transit workers would go on strike when their contract expires on March 19.

Burned by a losing 44-day strike two years ago, many rank and filers had a pretty negative attitude. Now the members of Transport Workers Union, Local 234, are on a collision course with SEPTA (South East Pennsylvania Transit Authority). Strike talk is in the air everywhere.

On March 11, workers voted 2500 to nothing to strike over two key issues. SEPTA is out to get rid of the no-layoff clause and to push through part-timers. This is the latest word in transit union busting. Washington, D.C., Seattle, and Baltimore have all brought in part-timers in the last couple years. They are being used to push out full-time workers, get rid of benefits and some overtime provisions, and undermine the union.

SEPTA has been given a jump

start by a report from some so-called "objective factfinders" appointed by the state. The report not only calls for part-timers and dumping the no-layoff clause, but also for no pension increase, no additional holidays, no COLA improvement, no improvement in working conditions, and a mockery of a wage offer - 5.3% a year, a whopping 37¢/hr. increase.

The local union leadership, new since the last strike, has taken a hard line. They've sworn to "strike 'til hell freezes over" before letting SEPTA have its takeaways, and have taken the workers' cause to the public.

One problem is that they don't do the negotiating. Matt Guiman, head of the International, does. He's the one who gave the New York Transit Authority the right to use part-timers in the sellout contract negotiated last spring, and then used vote fraud to push it down the throats of enraged union members.

Driving Force, a 6 year old rank and file group, along with others have taken up the call "No Takeaways or

Strike!" and spread it across the city. However serious the local union leadership was about holding firm to their position, they don't have many options now.

One key way Driving Force has been building the resistance is by addressing the questions raised by the last strike. The slogan, "If we have to strike, let's do it right!" has struck a powerful chord in people and unleashed a lot of discussion about how to strike to win. The group has put forward a 3-point program, called "Build a Strike Force."

1) Form teams of strikers to shut down other forms of mass transit the city uses to bypass SEPTA during a strike - commuter lines, private bus companies, etc.

2) Provide forces to help the union collect strike relief funds and jack up the International for money.

3) Unite with Black organizations and the Black community who have been fighting transit cutbacks - this will help isolate the city government.

Victories in small struggles have helped turn around pessimism about the possibility of a winning strike. At Allegheny Depot, decent equipment has been a major demand. After a Driving Force leaflet put out the call, the union safety committee had a quorum for the first time in six

months - a double quorum in fact. Workers drew up a list of defects that would keep buses off the street and talked to drivers in the other bays about it.

All hell broke loose during a cold spell soon after, when one driver was canned for an accident. The brakes failed on a bus he had been given moments after another driver turned it in as unsafe. SEPTA had to take him back with a clean record and let a paid union man approve all outgoing vehicles.

Later in the week, Philly Mayor Frank Rizzo's right-hand man, Hillel Levinson, sent down an order that all buses for a route through a mainly white middle-class area were to go out before any went out to the Black community. Drivers, many of whom are Black and already angry at racist treatment of the Black community, came to Driving Force. The next morning a leaflet was distributed calling for drivers to take buses out in order and threatening a noon press conference. Sensing the sentiment at the depot, SEPTA backed down, claiming it was all a misunderstanding, as the drivers cheered.

The rank and file emerged from these two victories with a heightened confidence in their ability to fight and win the strike to come.



Battles in the fields erupt constantly as cops and growers try to keep strikers from pulling scabs out.

UFW

(cont. from page 1)

were charged with Contreras' murder but released on \$7000 bail in a county where the bail for murder is usually \$250,000.

A striker arrested for alleged rock throwing in a separate incident a week later had bail set at \$10,000.

Contreras' slaying fueled the anger of farmworkers at struck and non-struck farms alike as word spread up and down the valley. Chavez tried to cool things out by calling a halt to picketing until after the funeral. But workers took their own action.

On February 12 virtually no one worked in the valley which produces 95% of the nation's winter lettuce crops even though only about one third of the workers are on strike. Several dozen buses came to pick them up, but the workers refused to board.

Contreras' funeral was held two days later at El Hoyo (The Hole) - a "shape up" area in the border town of Calexico where workers wait each morning for buses to the farms where they work. Again that day there was no production in the valley.

Nearly half of the 5000 who attended the rites conducted by 10 priests arrived before sun-up. Union brothers carried his casket in a dramatic hour-

long procession to the cemetery three miles away. There each man and woman filed by the grave throwing in a handful of dirt and rededicating themselves to the fight that sent this 27 year old man to his early grave.

In the weeks since Contreras' death, the off-again on-again talks between the union and the growers have been largely unproductive. The growers have upped lettuce prices 110%, yet they insist they can't afford to give the workers more than a 7% raise. They cite the federal guidelines as their limit. On February 21, the growers offered a slightly higher package, but even that would barely put farmworkers' wages over \$4/hr.

The UFW wants a raise from the current \$3.70/hr. to \$5.25 in order to bring their members' wages up to par with other food processing workers.

While battles in the fields injured dozens and numerous strikers have been arrested, the growers conducted a smear campaign in the press. Represented by a fancy public relations firm, they contend the farmworkers make \$13/hr. (Only a small handful can work fast enough to make this kind of money on piecework.)

They hired teenagers right out of the schools to replace striking workers. White kids who skipped classes to work were not disciplined, but

Chicano students who protested the scabbing received warnings. A UFW court case in Holtville gained a ban on advertising for strikebreaking in the high school.

On February 21 the Imperial Valley was again the scene of a bitter clash when 1000 picketers were teargassed by deputy sheriffs. The next day hundreds of strikers in the Salinas Valley also confronted deputies.

The growers asked Governor Jerry Brown to call in the national guard. But Brown, who is already on the presidential campaign trail chose not to come out against the militant strikers. Two weeks earlier he attended Contreras' funeral, preaching that people should live together like brothers and sisters. But farmworkers are not brothers of Southern Pacific, which owns 20 million acres of California farmland, or of Tenneco with its 350,000 acres and 1 million in other states. Nor are they brothers to the likes of United Brands (formerly United Fruit), or with the world's largest carrot producer. While these millionaires profit from the workers' daily stooping in the broiling sun, many farmworkers do not live to see 50 years.

The workers are determined to fight for change. And their increasing militancy and unity shows they know their real brothers and sisters.

Iowa drivers pull 'Rule book slowdown'

IOWA CITY - Bus drivers here began driving the speed limit on February 5th. For once "law and order" threw the city's managers into a frenzy. This tactic also threw the bus schedules further out of kilter than usual in this town of 50,000.

Members of AFSCME Local 183 have been forced to drive their buses over the speed limit by increased ridership and lengthened routes. They still couldn't stay on time. And like in many cities, the buses were in poor and unsafe condition. Transportation Superintendent Hugh Mose had increased revenues and decreased expenses. He overcrowded the buses, ignored their condition, and cut drivers' starting salaries.

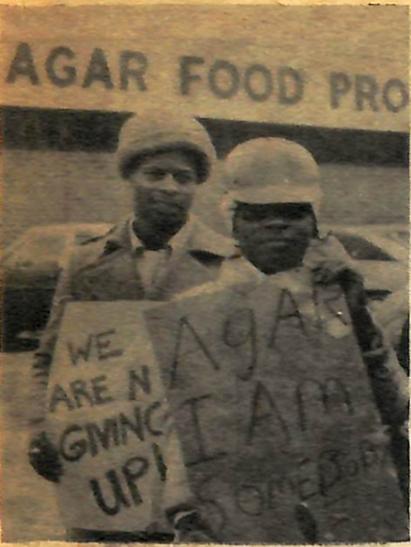
Union grievances and the "proper channels" got the drivers nowhere. So in this state where public employee strikes are illegal, they were forced to start a slowdown. A large majority of the 40 drivers took part in the "rulebook slowdown" - all regulations and traffic laws were obeyed.

Slowing down to the speed limit put the buses so much further behind schedule, the city was forced to revise some bus routes and schedules and to improve bus conditions. The city also promised the workers that they would take driver input on route and schedule decisions in the future.

Good public relations was important to the success of this job action. The Friday before the Monday slowdown, drivers leafleted the public explaining who's to blame for the inadequate bus service and what the drivers planned to do about it. Union Local President Laura Iliff explained that strong support came because drivers convinced the public of their common interests in safe, reliable bus service.

The city is of course counter attacking and trying to renege on some of the changes. The pressures to break traffic laws are growing again. But now both the drivers and the riders are on firmer ground to fight for decent bus service.

Carniceros de Agar combaten despidos



Cuando los carniceros salian cada dia, eran recibido por un contingente de obreros que habian sido botados. Juntos caminaron en protesta de los despidos arbitrarios de 39 que Agar habia ordenado en respuesta a una huelga "sitdown" la semana anterior. La mayoría de los obreros en la planta se pusieron botones con el numero 39.

La hora del almuerzo en Agar Food Products es usualmente un tiempo para sentarse, salir de los congeladores, y escapar las miradas de los capatazes. Pero por una semana en Febrero docenas de carniceros pasaron sus horas de almuerzo piqueteando el frente de la planta de procesar cochinos en el sur de Chicago en vez de decañar en la cafetería.

Todo comenzo el 15 de Febrero, cuando la compañía anuncio una hora de almuerzo mas corta. Todos lo vieron como un nuevo ataque por los expertos de eficiencia que han estado andando por la planta los ultimos 8 meses. Tambien era una prueba para el recién elegido Stewart del taller, que habia sido elegido con una reputación de militante. Tras la nueva medida de productividad esta la política agresiva de reducir costos de la compañía que controla a Agar, Blue Bird, Inc., una de los procesadores de cochinos que esta creciendo mas rapidamente en el país.

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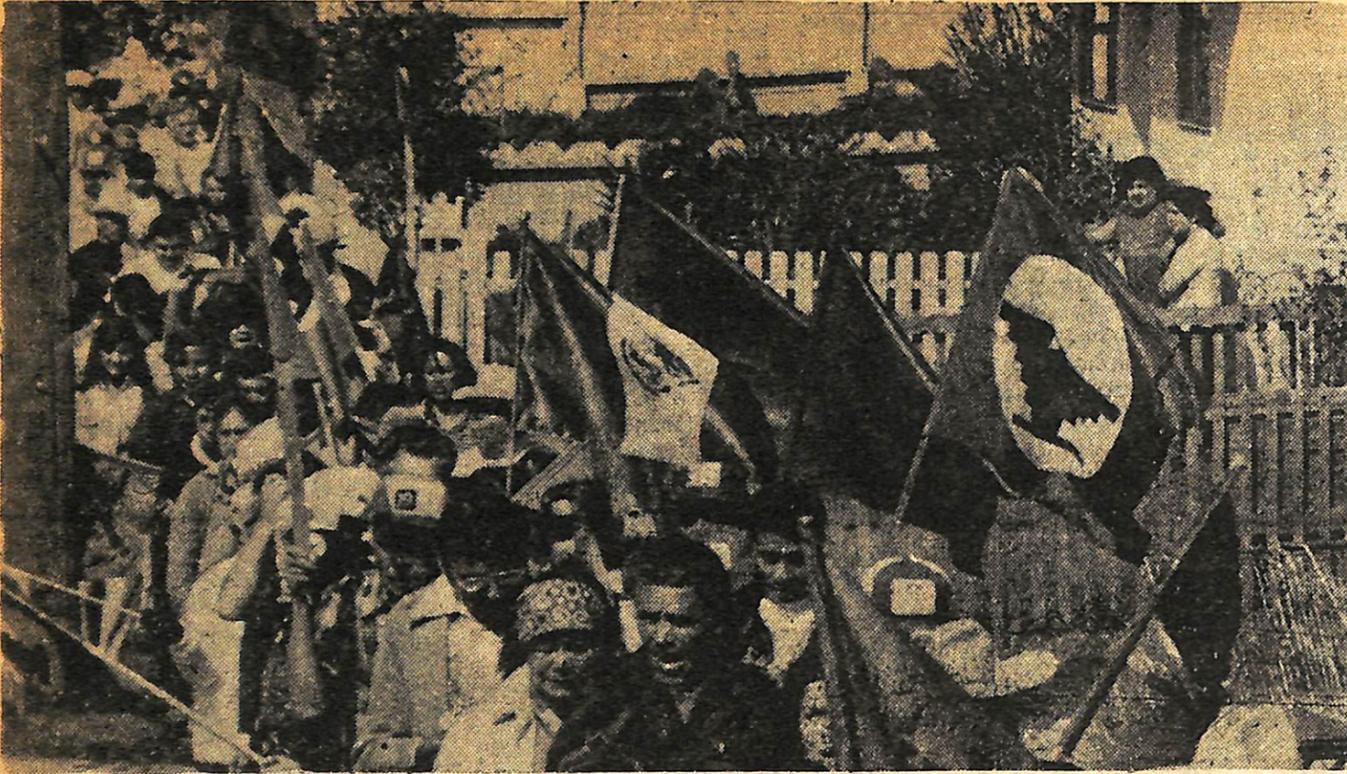
VOZ DEL OBRERO

ABRIL, 1979

ANTERIORMENTE EL OBRERO

VOL. II, NO. 3

Viva la huelga! Batallas diarias en campos



1,000 campesinos en huelga marchan por las calles de Salinas Marzo 4.

La huelga de hace dos meses de 4200 campesinos contra once fincas en California y Arizona ha continuado con confrontaciones diarias entre los huelguistas y los dueños desde el asesinato de un compañero de la union Refino Conteras, el 11 de Febrero.

A la vez que los piquetes se extendian del Valle Imperial cerca de la frontera Mexicana al Valle de Salinas 500 millas al norte los dueños aumentaron sus esfuerzos para romper la huelga que ha sido una de las mas militantes y unidas desde la fundicion de la Union de Campesinos Unidos en los 60.

La historia del hermano Conteras es tipica de la vida y de las demandas de los campesinos atraves del suroeste. El fue uno de miles de Mexicanos que cruzan la frontera legalmente para trabajar cada dia.

Se unio a la huelga cuando comenzo el 10 de Enero porque los \$3.70 que ganaba por hora no era suficiente para soportar a su esposa y dos hijos.

Conteras fue herido en la cara por partidarios de los dueños cuando el y unas cuantas docenas de otros trataron de convencer a rompuelgas en el rancho de Mario Saikhon que ue dejaran de trabajar.

En muchas de las fincas que estan en huelga los Mexicanos y Chicanos desafiaron ordenes de cortes que no entraran a los ranchos, entrando a los campos para hablar con los esquiros. Los empleados de los dueños "respondieron con balas," dijo el

(vease pagina 2)

Movimiento de derechos de welfare protesta muerte de niña en N.Y.

NUEVA YORK - El 7 de Febrero fue otro dia en la cadena de dias frio de este invierno. Y con sus temperaturas baja vino la muerte del bebe de una familia en Queens, NY.

Cynthia Filliccea solamente tenia 6 meses. Es otra victima del sistema de Con Ed, el Welfare, y del sistema capitalista. Pero este cuento de horror no para aqui. Los mismo criminales que causaron la muerte del bebe con cortes de calefaccion y negandole asistencia de emergencia

adecuada a la empobrecida familia de diez, ha acusado a la familia por la muerte de su propia hija.

El 9 de Febrero, el entero movimiento para mejorar los servicios sociales de la ciudad de Nueva York se unio para luchar por justicia para el infante muerto y para las miles de otras gente pobre que se estan congelando poco a poco mientras Con Ed se enriqueze. Celebraron una conferencia de prensa para denunciar el departamento de servicios humanos

(welfare), las tasas altas de Con Ed y su política de cortar la calefaccion, y los gobiernos de la ciudad y el estado. Participantes incluyeron curas, lideres de uniones, activistas y politicos, ademas de organizaciones

de welfare de base como la Welfare Action Coalition, y el Downtown Welfare Advocate Center. Todos condenaron el sistema de welfare que fuerza a la madre a escoger entre

(vease pagina 2)

p3 Que queda al fondo de conflicto China-Vietnamita



Huelga de lechuga

(viene de pagina 1)

presidente de la union Cesar Chavez en su elogio a Conteras.

"La compañía mando pistoleros a callar a Rufino Conteras. Dondequiera que los obreros de campos organizan, se levantan por sus derechos y justicia. Rufino Conteras esta con ellos."

Dos capatazes y un camionero fueron acusados con el asesinato de Conteras mas fueron dejados libres con \$7,000 en fianza en un condado donde usualmente la fianza por asesinato es \$250,000.

Un huelgista fue arrestado por tirar una piedra en un incidente separado una semana luego y su fianza fue puesta a \$10,000.

El asesinato de Conteras solamente aumento la furia de los campesinos contra ambas las fincas que estan en huelga y la que no estan. Chavez trato de calmar las cosas a traves de suspenders los piquetes hasta despues del entierro. Pero los obreros tomaron su propia accion.

El 12 de Febrero casi nadie trabajo en el valle que produce cerca de un tercio de la cosecha de le-

Trabajadores agricultores piquetean por la orilla de campos de lechuga a lo largo del Imperial Valley

chuga en el invierno aunque solamente un tercio de los obreros estan en huelga. Unas cuantas dozenas de autobuses vinieron a recojerlos pero los obreros rehusaron montarse.

La funeral de Conteras ocurrio dos dias despues en "El Hoyo" - el area de la frontera sonde los campesinos de Calexico esperan cada mañana a los autobuses que los llevan al trabajo. Denuuevo este dia no hubo produccion en el Valle.

Casi la mitad de los 5,000 que fueron a l los servicios oficiados por 10 curas llegaron antes del amanecer. Compañeros de union cargaron su ataud en una procesion dramatica a un cementerio tres millas distante. Alli cada hombre y mujer paso la tumba tirando puñadas de tierra y rededicandose a continuar la lucha que mando a este hombre de 27 años al cementerio.

En las semanas sigiendo la muerte de Contreras las negociaciones entre la union y los ranchos han tenido poco resultados.

Los dueños han aumentado los precios de lechugas por mas de 110 por ciento, pero insisten que no le pueden dar a los campesinos un aumento de poco mas de 7 por ciento. Ellos citan las regulaciones federales como su limite. El 21 de Febrero

los dueños hicieron una oferta un poco mas halta, pero aun esto solamente aumentaria los salarios de los campesinos a un poco mas de \$4 por hora.

La union quiere un aumento de \$3.70 por hora a \$5.25 para traer el nivel de los salarios de sus miembros al nivel de otros obreros que procesan comidas.

Mientras las batallas en los campos hirieron a dozenas de huelguistas y muchos de ellos han sido arrestado, los dueños han estado dirigiendo una campaña para defamarlos en la prensa. Representados por una compañía de relaciones publica han estado presionando que los campesinos hacen mas de \$13 por hora.

(Solamente un puñado puede trabajar suficiente rapido pra hacer este tipo de dinero.)

Han empleado a jovenes que estan supuesto a estar en la escuela para reemplazar a los huelguistas. Jovenes blancos que no asistieron al colegio para servir de esquiroles no fueron diciplinados pero estudiantes chicanos que protestaron contra esta practica recibieron una amonestacion. Un caso de corte de la UFW en Holtville gano alto a los anuncios en busca de esquiroles en la escuela secundaria.

El 21 de Febrero el Valle Imperial denuuevo fue el sitio de otra batalla recia cuando 1,000 piqueteros fueron atacados con gas por la policia. El proximo dia cientos de huelgistas en el Valle de Salinas tambien confrontaron a la policia.

Los dueños le pidieron al Gobernador Jerry Brown que llamara a la guardia nacional. Pero Brown que ya esta corriendo para presidente decidio no salir en contra de obreros militantes. Dos semanas anterior el atendio la funeral de Conteras predicando que la gente debe de vivir como hermanos y hermanas.

Pero los campesinos no son hermanos de Southern Pacific que es dueño de mas de 20 millones de acres en fincas en California o de Tenneco con su mas 350,000 acres, 1 million en otros estados. Ni son hermanos de United Brands (anteriormente United Fruit) el productor mas grande de zanahorias en el mundo. Mientras que estos millonarios se enriquezen del druisimo trabajo de los campesinos, muchos de estos no llegan a ser 50 años.

Los obreros estan determinados a luchar por cambio. Y su creciente militancia y unidad muenstra que ellos conocen cuales son sus verdaderos hermanos y hermanas.

Carniceros de Agar

(viene de pagina 1)

Todos recordaban la huelga exitosa hace 4 anos, la ultima vez que Agar trato de recortar los periodos de descanso. La escena estaba lista para una nueva lucha.

Despues del "break" de la mañana mas de 110 gente recibieron amonestaciones por no cumplir con las nuevas regulaciones. Durante el periodo de almuerzo los "boners" fueron penalizado 15 minutos por no regresar al trabajo despues de la campaña. Cuando la noticia de este castigo se difundio, todo el mundo fue a la cafeteria. Todas las lineas pararon.

A las 3:00 la compañía por fin se reunio con el comite de quejas. La posicion de los trabajadores era clara - no mas trabajo hasta quel horario viejo fuera implementado. Agar se puso dura. Rudy Beaver, un capataz odiado, dijo que cualquiera que no hubiese regresado a

trabajar a las 5:00 seria botado.

Mientras se acercaba el limite, los obreros de base insitieron en mantener el "sitdown" hasta que la compañía cediera. Pero algunos oficiales de la union atacaron la idea, diciendo que la compañía estaba preparada a cerrar los obreros fuera de la planta.

39 BOTADOS

El dia sigiente, Agar despidio a 39 obreros que no habian regresado al trabajo antes de las 5:00. Algunos se habian ido a sus cazas. A otros le habian dicho que no habia trabajo.

Algunos fueron parados por los capatazes cuando habian tratado de regresar al trabajo. Dos "stewarts" de Union estaban ocupados con asuntos de union. Los 39 incluian un obrero con 20 años de senioridad, todos

departamentos, nacionalidades, y grupos de edad presente en la planta. Habian Negros, Latinos, blancos, hombres, mujeres, jobenes, y viejos.

No pudiendo depender en el liderato de la union, los 39 establecieron el Comite de Obreros Despedidos del Local P-500. Ellos qui-

eren que los lideres de los Amalgamated Meatcutters presionen a la compañía por su reempleo sin demoras. Ganaron sancion oficial de sus diaria linea de piquetes informacional y una promesa que todos los 39 iran a arbitraje. A esta hora, los 39 siguen luchando por sus trabajos.

N Y welfare

(viene de pagina 1)

alimentar, vestir, o mantener a los niños en un lugar caliente. Todos llamaron por un aumento inmediato en los fondos para existencia publica y otros cambios.

Mientras el cuerpo de Cynthia Fillicca descansa en su tumba fria, el Comisionado de los Servicios Sociales de Nueva York trabaja desesperadamente en su comoda y caliente oficina en el Centro de la ciudad. El tiempo se le esta escapando al Comisionado Bernstein. Acciones como la conferencia de prensa del 9 de Febrero reflejan un renacimiento en el movimiento de welfare de la ciudad.

Hace casi una decada desde que que ese movimiento tubo su pico. En los ultimos años de los 60s y los primeros de los 70s luchó arduamente y gano algunas victorias concretas para gente bajo welfare. Le monstro a la macion la terrible condicion del sistema de welfare.

El movimiento para derechos de welfare se esta remobilizando no solamente en Nueva York si no a traves del estado. Ahora esta concentrandose en ganar aumentos de fondos durante la corriente sesion de la legislatura en Albany. Han pasado diez años desde el ultimo aumento significativo. Diez años de inflacion, desempleo, mudanzas de factorias.

Una decada que se va terminando con un nuevo grupo de crisis, cortes en cuidado medico, y escuelas. Diez años de muertes por el frio, suspension de servicio de utilidades, aumentos en rentas y comidas, y la cesacion de los fondos especiales para ropa - todos multiplicados en las comunidades Puertoriquenas y Negras.

Varios politicos del estados, bajo presion del joven movimiento de derechos de welfare y otros militantes como el Frente Unido Negro de Brooklyn, por fin han introducido legislacion en Albany para quel presupuesto aumente para recipientes de welfare. Nadie sabe si un aumento substancial se podra ganar en el clima de estos dias con sus cortes y ataques racistas. Pero gente como el Welfare Action Coalition estan librando una lucha dura. Han habido reuniones en masa de welfare de mas de 500 personas, una audiencia publica asistidas por politicos con testimonio de lideres de la comunidad y recipientes, y una manifestacion en Nueva York.

La campaña avanzara otro paso con la manifestacion en la capital del estado Albany, el 14 de Marzo. En los escalones del capitolio empobrecidas madres y sus niños y otros recipientes se levantaran para que ningunos mas de nuestros bebes muera de frio.

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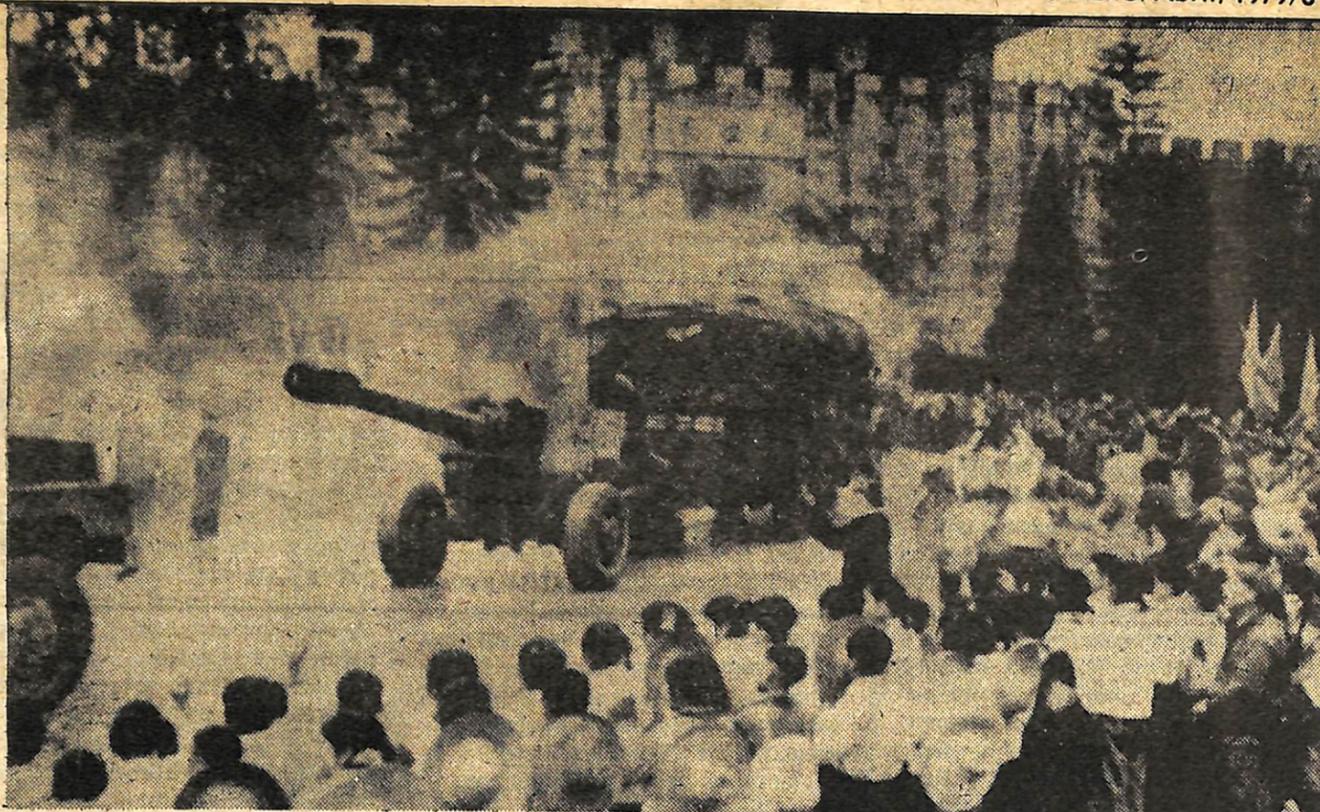
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Que queda al fondo de conflicto Chino- Vietnamita



Los Chinos entraron a Vietnam para advertirle a ellos y sus aliados Sovieticos contra mas agresion.

El 17 de Febrero, noventa mil tropas del Ejercito Popular de Liberacion Chino cruzaron la frontera Vietnamita. El asalto, que penetro hasta 25 millas dentro de las provincias de frontera de Vietnam intentaba castigar a Vietnam por sus ataques constantes atravez de la frontera China y por sus esfuerzos agresivos para controlar a toda Asia del Sureste. Adicionalmente la accion militar China intentaba demostrar al mundo que es posible y necesario resistir el expansionismo de la Union Sovietica y sus aliados.

La batalla clave de la campana ocurrio la primera semana de Marzo. Los Vietnamitas mandaron sus mejores tropas regulares a defender la disputada ciudad de Lang Son. Despues de varios dias de combate, los Chinos ganaron control decisivo de la ciudad. Habiendo ganado su objetivo con este golpe poderoso contra el ejercito Vietnamita, el liderato Chino ordeno la retirada completa por sus tropas de Vietnam y advirtio que ataques contra unidades que se estaban retirando solamente prolongaria el conflicto.

POR QUE CHINA DIO EL GOLPE

La accion China no vino de sorpresa. Por mas de un ano Vietnam ha estado adelantandose en la frontera sureña China, haciendo el papel de fuerza avanzada en el esfuerzo Sovietico para rodear a China. Desde la enorme invasion Vietnamita de Kampuchea (Camboya) el Diciembre pasado, el vice-primer ministro Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao Ping) y otros lideres han estado advirtiendo que Vietnam debe ser castigado por sus acciones.

A comienzos de Febrero, cuando Vietnam estaba preparando para legitimar su conquista y ocupacion de Camboya con el "tratado de amistad" con el regimen títere que acababa de instalar, China hizo su ultimo suplico. Vietnam, ella dijo, debe "parar en el precipicio, y retirarse del camino erroneo y no proceder mas."

A este punto China lanzo su ataque limitado, que tiene tres objetivos principales:

1) Castigar, hacerle claro a Vietnam que acciones como el derrocamiento de Camboya y los ataques en la frontera China no se pueden hacer sin malas consecuencias. Es por esto que el ataque es limitado en tiempo y espacio, con los Chinos haciendolo muy claro que "no queremos ni una pulgada de territorio Vietnamita."

2) Tiene el objetivo de confrontar a la Union Sovietica que es el patrocinador principal de Vietnam, antes de que las firmas en el tratado de "defensa mutua" entre la URSS y Vietnam esten secas. China quiere atacar los esfuerzos Sovieticos de rodear

a China y mostrar a otros paises que los Sovieticos no son aliados tan poderoso como paracen.

3) Alluda al pueblo Camboyano en su guerra de resistencia contra la ocupacion Vietnamita, forzando a los Vietnamitas a transferir tropas y atencion fuera de Camboya. La temporada de lluvia, un periodo tradicionalmente malo para invasores extranjeros, comienza en Abril.

Ambos Vietnam y sus patronadores Sovieticos admitieron en hecho si no en palabras, que el ataque era limitado y por eso muy diferente al ataque desafiado Vietnamita contra Camboya. Los Vietnamitas ni tuvieron que transferir tropas regulares de Laos y Camboya a la frontera hasta dos semanas despues del ataque - despues del fracaso total de sus divisiones de fronteras de parar a los Chinos. De misma manera la Union Sovietica, obligado por tratado a defender a Vietnam de ataque, se limito a gritar que China estaba tratando de conquistar a Vietnam y reenfocar a sus fuerzas en su frontera con China. Desemejante a Vietnam China hasta respondio favorablemente cuando muchos paises en las Naciones Unidas comenzaron a discutir resoluciones pidiendole a China que se retirara de Vietnam y a Vietnam que se retirara de Camboya. Los Chinos reafirmaron su intencion de retirarse y desafiaron a Vietnam que hiciera lo mismo, diciendo "no pensamos que se atrevan."

EL CONFLICTO CRECE EN ULTIMOS ANOS

Los tres puntos que forzaron a los lideres Chinos a tomar accion fueron la invasion Vietnamita de Camboya, el maltrato de la minoria China en Vietnam, y sus incesantes ataques contra la frontera China. Los tres han escalado gravemente desde 1977 al presente.

Cuando batallas comenzaron entre Vietnam y Kampuchea Democratica (Camboya) en ese año, el gobierno de Camboya nego el reporte que era un conflicto de frontera, diciendo que Vietnam queria dominar a su pais. China inmediatamente expreso inquietud sobre las batallas entre sus vecinos, y ofrecio mediar. Mientras las batallas continuaron, negociaciones fueron sin excito en restringir el apetito de Vietnam, el gobierno Chino cambio gradualmente de una posicion de neutralidad a una de soporte de Camboya.

Durante el mismo periodo, comenzando en la primera parte de 1978 Vietnam comenzo a votar a ciudadanos Vietnamitas de origen Chino y ciudadanos de su pais. Mas de 200,000

fueron votados en el ultimo año.

Aunque los Vietnamitas dicen que son capitalistas que no pueden ajustarse al socialismo, la mayoría no vienen del sur, pero del norte donde el socialismo ha existido desde 1956. Los Chinos fueron victimas propiciatorias para las dificultades economicas de Vietnam. Ademas sus patronadores Sovieticos delicias las dificultades que la repoblacion de tantos refugiados le esta causando a China.

Mientras miles huieron a traves la frontera hacia China, Vietnam comenzo a tratar de deestabilizar el area de la frontera, aumentando la presion contra China. En la ultima mitad de 1978 solamente, los Chinos reportaron mas de 700 diferentes incursiones por tropas Vietnamitas, resultando en la muerte de 300 soldados y ciudadanos Chinos. Hasta el ataque Chino el beneficiario principal de esta agresion constante no era Vietnam si no la URSS, que tiene mas de un millon de tropas amenazando la frontera norteña de China y asi podia amenazar a China con un ataque militar en dos frentes.

NUEVA SITUACION MUNDIAL

El alboroto corriente en Asia del Sureste subraya el hecho que ha habido un cambio irreversibile en las relaciones entre los paises del mundo. En el centro de este cambio esta la Union Sovietica, un pais socialista que se ha transformado a capitalista. La URSS a reemplazado a los EEUU como el poder imperialista mas agresivo en el mundo, y la fuente de guerra mas grande.

Camboya, solamente tres años y medio despues de botar a los EEUU esta ahora luchando contra una ocupacion respaldada por la Union Sovietica.

Vietnam, habiendo derrotado a los EEUU, ha ahora caido bajo la creciente dominacion Sovietica. Con su economia devastada por guerra, Vietnam se viro hacia la URSS por ayuda. Pero aunque la situacion de alimentos en Vietnam es casi tan mal como en Bangladesh, ayuda Sovietica ententa reenfocar al poder militar Vietnamita, y no a una economia independiente.

Los gobernantes Vietnamitas han accedido a esto. Su ejercito es ahora 50% mas grande que era duante la guerra con los EEUU. Los Sovieticos ven el ejercito de Vietnam como una fuerza expedicionaria para usar en Asia y quizas en otras partes. Los Chinos llaman a Vietnam "la Cuba del Oriente" porque este es el papel que Cuba ha hecho por la URSS en Angola, Etiopia, Yemen y otras

partes.

El gobierno de los EEUU no ataco a China abiertamente por la invasion. Mientras criticandola oficiales Americanos unieron la llamada por la retirado de China de Vietnam a la llamada por la retirada de Vietnam de Camboya.

Pero la clase gobernante de los EEUU revelo algo adicional en su respuesta. Los politicos y la prensa se preocuparon que el "riesgo desesperado" Chino podia envolver a la Union Sovietica en el conflicto y precipitar una nueva guerra mundial.

El Presidente Carter dio un discurso en Atlanta, prometiendo que bajo ninguna circunstancias se iba a envolver los EEUU militarmente en los conflictos estallando al rededor del mundo. En parte, esta posicion es una admision que desde Vietnam, el pueblo Americano no estan dispuesto a ir a la guerra a defender los intereses de las corporaciones gigantes que gobiernan a este pais.

Pero tambien enseña que la clase gobernante en este pais esta golpeada por una linea larga de derrotas y no puede acostumbrarse a su caída en poder en el mundo. Deng Xiaoping subrayo este tipo de pensamiento el 27 de Febrero cuando dijo:

"Ambos la Cuba del Oriente y la Cuba del Oeste paracen haberse hecho mas audaz por la llamada gran potencia respaldandolas. Ahora alguna gente en el mundo tienen miedo ofenderlos."

Aunque hagan algo terrible esta gente no se atreveria tomar accion contra ellos. Es una cuestion de tenerle miedo a ellos."

OSO POLAR DE PAPEL

Los lideres de China estan hablando de larga experiencia historica. En la guerra contra Japon, los Chinos aprendieron la importancia de unidad contra el enemigo principal. Y ellos han concluido que el periodo precediendo a la Segunda Guerra Mundial enseña que esfuerzos para apaciguar el creciente poder Aleman con concesiones solamente aumento su apetito.

En las ultimas dos decadas, luchas revolucionarias en paises alrededor del globo han mostrado que el imperialismo de EEUU es un tigre de papel. La accion de China contra Vietnam muestra que los agentes Sovieticos tienen que pagar por su agresion. Y China quiere enseñar al mundo que atraves de enfrentarse a la Union Sovietica y su enorme maquinaria de guerra que este gran poder es, en el ultimo analisis, solamente un oso polar de papel