

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
January 10, 1975

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND TRADE UNION DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

The enclosed reports and correspondence on organization activities of social workers and strikes of teachers will be of special interest to those employed in these fields. The problems discussed should be of general interest to all YSA and SWP members, and further discussion of them ought to be useful to our comrades in the union movement.

We hope that similar reports will be sent in from other branches, keeping us informed of important developments in the local labor movement and our participation in these developments. Such reports can be in the form of articles for The Militant or can give background material for articles on current developments.

Comradely,

Frank Lovell
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Frank Lovell
Trade Union Director

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

December 20, 1974

Walter Lippmann
Los Angeles

Dear Walter:

Your Dec. 2 report on the SEIU organizing campaign in San Diego was very informative and probably is an example of anti-union moves by state and local agencies in other places, but I don't have reports or facts to substantiate my feeling about this.

In Michigan the local school boards in several districts around the Detroit area have a pact to limit teacher salaries and squeeze out the Mich. Education Association. You will see in The Militant that came out today (Dec. 27 issue) an "In Brief" piece about the Garden City teachers' strike. Unfortunately this got squeezed down and almost out. It was a very good article by Paula Reimers and much of the material she had in it will be used in future articles about this and other teacher strikes there. The strike leaders were jailed in Garden City for defying back-to-work court injunctions. We will have more on this when we resume publication Jan. 10.

Private employers are getting much tougher to deal with, too. We have a story on further developments in the Cleveland newspaper strike, which was settled by the Guild yesterday under great pressure on company terms. Next come the ITU. The printers' contract expires Dec. 31, and it is unlikely that they will get anything different from what the Guild was forced to take. We will have follow-up stories about this.

In your situation, it seems to me that the SEIU could continue to collect dues (as you have proposed) from those case workers and aids who want to continue to belong. Why not? Of course, the union will no longer have the check-off. Probably the County Welfare agency in San Diego will refuse to recognize SEIU stewards, and may refuse to discuss grievances with them. Agency supervisors may try to prevent the stewards from collecting dues during working hours. This would greatly limit the activities of the union, and I am sure the membership rolls will decline. But even under such circumstances there are still some things the union can do that will win support and serve to keep the organization together until it can petition for a new election.

Unemployment is increasing rapidly as you know, and this changes everything in the welfare and state employment centers. The union movement will be forced to call some demonstrations for jobs (as it already has -- see Bldg. Trades in N.Y.), and SEIU will probably be one of the main organizers of these demonstrations in California. This kind of activity on a statewide basis will help the situation in San Diego, and might even bring the majority of case workers there over to the side of the union before another election can be held.

I don't know exactly what to do with your report. Of course, I have put it in the mail file here where it circulates among all comrades in the NO and on the Mil. staff, but I would like to give it

wider circulation. If I mail it to all N.C. members and branch organizers, it would require a brief introduction by me. I would also want to explain that one of my reasons for circulating the report is to solicit information about similar trends in other areas.

There may be an opportunity for you to write this up in the form of an article for The Militant which would give it much broader circulation and probably it would be read more attentively. It would need to be a take-off from the general pressure upon the working class and the poor today as the crisis of capitalism deepens. This is an example of how the unions are affected, especially in the public workers sectors. A good deal has been written lately about the growth of these unions, AFSCME especially, but as these unions come under increasing attack it is likely that their growth rate will slow down -- unless they organize mass demonstrations for full employment and against the cutbacks of poverty funds and unemployment benefits.

Please let me hear from you about this.

Comradely,
s/Frank Lovell

December 2, 1974

Dear Frank,

At the last state executive board meeting of Local 535, a number of interesting things occurred. I sold 21 Militants and 3 subs, but that wasn't unusual. I introduced and got passed the resolution on the Boston situation. But that wasn't unusual, either.

As I walked into the meeting, the executive director grabbed me and said that a leading organizer for the SEIU had specifically asked that I come down to San Diego to participate in an election campaign. They said they'd pay all expenses and make up any lost salary as well. After talking it over with our branch organizer I accepted.

In San Diego, the union was the certified collective bargaining agent for most workers in the welfare unit (except clerical). With some 8-900 members on checkoff, it was bargaining for a unit of 1900. At the same time, the San Diego County Employees Association (PEA) was able to collect dues from those who wanted to continue to belong to the Association.

For reasons I don't understand, the association felt it was strong enough to mount a campaign to decertify 535, circulated its petitions, and an election was set for late November.

A top organizer for the SEIU was sent in to handle Local 535's campaign to beat back decertification. He had been 535's previous executive director. I hadn't had much use for him when he was that, but he has a big reputation as an organizer, which I believe has been justified. I know of some other jurisdictions he has been assigned to which successfully built union locals. By the way, despite sharp disagreements between us, he had given me the key to use the union's offices for SWP and YSA business meetings during the time that our old headquarters was burned out by gusanos. So he knew quite well who he was asking for when he asked for me.

The union planned and carried out an extensive campaign of leaf-letting the welfare department. It had, unfortunately, accepted a provision in the election rules forbidding it from campaigning during the 24 hours preceding the balloting, and during the 3 days of voting itself.

To get around this they developed a petition demanding that the civil service commission schedule an exam so that a group of Masters Degree Social Workers, the most highly paid workers in the welfare system, could get jobs. We were to talk to people about this and try to get out the vote as well.

My initial reaction to this was why were we asking for something for the most highly paid and narrowest layer? However, in actuality going around campaigning I found that the lowest paid workers were the most sympathetic and ready to sign. There must be an inverse relationship between formal education and class consciousness. I.e., the more education you have, the more confused you get. . . .

On each of the final days of the campaign (I was in for two), we were all awakened at 5:30 A.M. and on the road by 6:30, and in the offices from 7 A.M. to 6 P.M. (They have a four-day, ten-hour set-up there). The workers were friendly for the most part, but none of us

had any idea how people would VOTE. It was a most annoying situation. In the evenings there were meetings to go over the day's efforts and plan out the next day's deployment of forces.

The voter turnout was high, 1600 out of 1900. But 535 lost by 975 to 625 (approximately).

The immediate result is that 535 loses its checkoff rights in San Diego, something of paramount concern to union officials.

San Diego was the second major jurisdiction 535 has lost this year. In Sacramento, a group of union activists, in fact the original core of activists which had organized 535 there in the first place, and which had led a long and difficult strike, decided to rip off the dues money for themselves. They set up their own outfit, organized a decertification campaign, and won it. They had maybe 700 members in the Sacramento 535 chapter.

I have no solid information on what 535 has been doing in San Diego over the time that it has been collective bargaining agent. However, I know the business agent in charge there, a rather dull, unimaginative sort.

I assume that the union simply hadn't produced enough in the way of solid achievements to have won the loyalty of the workers. They must have run things in a business-as-usual way, with no interest in mobilizing and involving the membership in the activities and life of the union. This is at the minimum. Beyond that, the lack of a class-struggle program, the reliance on politicians-as-usual, etc., etc., etc., are most likely at the root of the loss.

By the way, the only significant existing tendency acting in the San Diego scene was PL-WAM. They apparently have half a dozen activists in the welfare department, concentrated in one of the large offices. Of course, they're very hostile to the union officialdom -- at all times and places. During the leafletting campaign, however, they wrote a leaflet for the union's use (attached). As I heard it, the sectarian stuff was taken out by a member of NAM, who also works in that office. And the leaflet was then printed up and distributed by the union as a part of the campaign. It is one of the best pieces of literature I saw.

So a certain modest amount of discussion on the aftermath and meaning of the San Diego defeat has begun among union activists. At first it seemed that the officials were resigned to accepting the loss of dues checkoff. This comes about because the county's rules say that if you don't represent any group, no matter how small, you can't have dues checkoff.

The first inclination of the union's staff was to file charges of unfair campaign practices against the county for things they did to attempt to influence the election, such as making one well-publicized concession to the employees association during the heat of the campaign. I thought this was OK, but that it was a bureaucratic approach. I explained that, in the aftermath of Watergate, in the whole present public climate of opinion, that it should be possible to win a court judgment protecting the union's right to continue collecting dues, since at least 600 people showed an interesting in supporting the union. True, the union has lost its right to bargain collectively

but that's no reason why it shouldn't be able to handle grievances, distribute literature, etc. After all, the PEA was able to do that during 535's period as bargaining agent, and to request the same rights would only be asking for equal protection under the law. I don't know if they'll do anything about this idea.

Another factor which partially explains the loss to me is the fact that the union was the incumbent, in-power organization, and everyone could blame their dissatisfaction on the group which was, for better or worse, formally responsible for whatever was won or not won over the past period. In other words, in addition to anti-union sentiment, there was also "vote the rascals out" sentiment as well.

If the remaining union activists can't keep their checkoff, they could consider moving into the employees association and trying to take it, or at least its welfare section, over.

It remains to be seen what will come of all this, and I'll participate in the upcoming discussions as best as I can. I've been saying that these two defeats show how vulnerable 535 is at present to other challenges of a similar nature. Therefore, the union had better do a better job elsewhere if it isn't to be cut to ribbons by competing organizations.

I also waited and wondered if anyone was going to ask me if I'd brought along any Militants and not to sell them. No one did. I finally asked one of the business agents, the one I worked with, at the very end, why I specifically had been asked for, and they said it was because they knew I was a dedicated union activist and could be counted on to carry out the gruelling assignment which was on the agenda.

Comradely,
s/Walter Lippmann

SOCIAL SERVICES UNION LOCAL 535 SEIU, AFL-CIO, SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

Dear Fellow Employee:

We are all worried about our living standards and our security as County employees. We all lost 10% of our buying power in the last year, even after making allowances for raises we received. The threatening depression makes concern over mass layoffs of some government workers and downgrading and speedup of others, items of serious discussion. It is neither out of paranoia, nor as a scare tactic that we say, **LET'S EVALUATE WHAT TYPE OF ORGANIZATION WE NEED TO REPRESENT US IN THE LIGHT OF OUR NEEDS AS WORKERS WHO WILL HAVE TO FIGHT VERY HARD IN THE MONTHS AHEAD--FOR MORE WORKERS TO PROTECT US AGAINST SPEEDUP, AGAINST RACE DISCRIMINATION IN HIRING WHICH DIVIDES US AND DOWNGRADES ALL JOB CLASSIFICATIONS, AND FOR SALARY INCREASES WHICH CORRESPOND WITH OUR NEEDS, NOT WITH SOME GOVERNMENT OFFICE'S STATISTICS!** In the immediate future we must stop the loss of \$40 to \$50 per month threatened by possible loss of home calls and Option "c". We will have to prevent the wholesale layoffs or transfers of Homemakers and Social Workers if more money isn't granted by the legislature in Sacramento. We must stop a computerization of budgetting which threatens to double our paper work now and will allow the Administration to stop hiring as many E.W.'s in the future. If we allow this to happen it will INCREASE the unemployment rate in the whole country.

Most important of all -- if we don't aim to do what's necessary to win around a 25% wage hike this year, cost of living increases will force many of us to sell houses, miss car payments, and ultimately face poverty even as we remain "employed."

Is there an answer? Many say that there is no money available--if we try to protect ourselves we're just pitted against the "taxpayer." But this is a fallacy. We are workers just like all others. Big business and industry are as wedded to government administrators as it is possible to be. Money which should pay us is going to big business as tax breaks and benefits. The perfect example is the recent case of City Workers: Mayor Wilson is giving free utilities hookups to big corporations while he raises all small family's rates and refuses to grant cost of living raises to City Workers.

There is only one answer to all this: We are workers, we must unite as workers, and we must unite to protect ourselves with the tools that we have.

The first tool is a real union: A democratically run organization of workers which DOES NOT INCLUDE high management on the mistaken assumption that "if we all work together professionally we'll get whatever we need."

The second tool is rank-and-file union stewards ready to file EVERY grievance, enforce EVERY contract provision, and organize his/her fellow workers to stand up to management intimidation all together instead of giving up because an issue is "non-grievable" according to management, or because the person representing you belongs to that management.

The third tool is the organizational ties with other groups of workers who stand up for themselves--especially our brothers and sisters in San Francisco Public Employment whose STRIKE last year is what scared San Diego's Board of Supervisors into granting all of us wage

increases ranging from 6 to 8 percent. Do not underestimate the fact that all these workers in other cities with whom we can ally, all those other workers in real unions in San Diego, are our greatest possibility of mutual support--no matter what lies are spread about how our interests oppose that of the "taxpayer." Our allies are other working people, not the San Diego County Administrative officials who all belong to PEA.

Right now Local 535 Stewards, office reps, and members, have made the following issues official union business:

1. TO BUILD A MOVEMENT TO REOPEN THE CONTRACT RIGHT NOW FOR
 - a. massive mid-year cost of living pay increase
 - b. iron-clad yardstick protection against speedup
2. TO GUARANTEE THAT EXTRA FUNDS ARE GRANTED IN SACRAMENTO TO PAY HOMEMAKERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS WHEN EXISTING FUNDS RUN OUT IN MARCH 1975
 - a. legislative proposals
 - b. organizing of workers to fight to protect their own jobs
 - c. busload of workers to Sacramento on Inauguration Day, Jan. 18, 1975 to demand guarantees of funds to protect all jobs
3. ENFORCEMENT OF YARDSTICK--SPEEDUP PROTECTION
 - a. mass refusal to work over yardstick organized by union office reps in El Cajon
 - b. grievances in all offices
 - c. threats to walk out if over-work wren't corrected: issued by union members in National City
 - d. VICTORY: intake workers voted unanimously in AFDC intake in El Cajon, and massively in GR/MI intake, to "reserve the right to refuse intakes over yardstick." HOMER DETRICH ACCEPTED THESE ULTIMATUMS AND (TEMPORARILY) ACCEPTED HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO STAFF ADEQUATELY IN SOME AREAS
4. TO GUARANTEE NO JOB LOSSES DUE TO COMPUTERIZATION
5. TO SAVE THE FOUR DAY WEEK (an official union demand last year was to negotiate a 32 hour week of four 8 hour days while receiving 40 hours pay, as a part of the salary increase package)
6. TO SAVE HOME CALL SERVICES FOR THE CLIENTS, AND THE MILEAGE MONEY OF E.W.'S

In conclusion, we face sharp attack, and we must respond accordingly. Even with its weaknesses, Local 535 is the only group which includes the outlook and experience which can win. The so-called "professional" approach of PEA is a complete dream in a world of starving millions in India while farmers slaughter cattle in Illinois.

VOTE FOR UNION

(signed) some members and office
reps of local 535

Detroit, Mi.
5 December 1974

Frank Lovell
New York

Dear Frank,

I want to give you a more complete report on the strike in Garden City, than the articles because I think it is a good example of the new teachers' militancy we have been talking about. It is especially significant because it is challenging the state legislation on the right of teachers to strike and is pointing up and teaching some very powerful lessons about the role of the government, especially the courts. Also, the example set by the Garden City teachers is spreading -- teachers in the Crestwood School District struck on Tuesday.

Garden City is one of the suburbs of Detroit. The teachers are represented by the Garden City Education Association (GCEA). There are 525 teachers and about 12,000 students. The teachers struck on Sept. 3 this year as part of the 1974 strike wave that affected some 25 Michigan districts. They were forced back to work on Sept. 26 by injunction issued by Judge Kaufman. They rejected a fact-finders report which did not meet their main demands, which are for a cost-of-living allowance and a limit on class size. In October they voted to strike again on Nov. 11 in defiance of the injunction if a satisfactory contract had not been negotiated. On Nov. 11, they struck again. On Nov. 14, Kaufman jailed 11 teachers for defying his injunction -- 10 for five days and one, John Melchor, the chief negotiator, for 30 days. He refused bail and refused to release the teachers pending appeal. The next day a three-man Appeals Court panel released the teachers pending appeal.

Since that time the strike has continued for nearly a month. The teachers rejected nearly unanimously a proposal to go to binding arbitration. A mediator was appointed by intervention of the governor's office. The mediator met with the two sides and then came up with his proposal to end the strike. The teachers met on Friday, November 29, and, on recommendation of the negotiating team, turned down the mediator's proposal again almost unanimously, and resolved to continue the strike. The teachers said the mediator's proposal was simply a "stale rehash" of the already-rejected fact-finder's report and did not contain anything meaningful on cost-of-living allowance or class size. So the strike continues.

The situation is shaping up as a real test case, closely watched by school boards and teachers locals all over the area. The two sides are facing off in what looks like a confrontation, with the teachers on one side and the board on the other, clearly assisted by the courts and state executive departments. The teachers clearly understand what is at stake, not only for themselves in terms of their own contracts, but for all teachers in all districts. They feel "that we're doing this for everyone."

The confrontation attitude on both sides becomes clearer with a little background history. About two years ago, representatives from 36 school boards in the Southeast Michigan area met and decided on certain guidelines, what they would and would not agree to in negotiations with teachers unions. The group they formed "Task

Force 36" and meets secretly each year, I think. One of the key things they have agreed to is no cost-of-living. The person who drew up the guidelines is Wizinsky, the head of the Garden City school board. This has led to the intransigence of the GC board; the board also feels it is "doing this for everyone" -- that is, all the school boards. For the teachers in Garden City to get what they want and need would be a major blow at Task Force 36 and its guidelines, and would by example weaken all other boards in subsequent negotiations.

Partially in response to TF 36 and as a measure of self-defense, 16 Education Association locals agreed to coordinated bargaining. I'm still not sure of all the implications of the agreement -- people are vague on what it entails -- but it does not mean group bargaining. One of the provisions of the agreement is, however, that in the event of mass firings (or arrests, although no one foresaw that at the time) in any one of the 16 districts, the teachers in all the other districts are pledged to walk out. So far none of the boards has wanted to test the pledge (which I think, by the way, is quite realistic, especially in the current situation); although a number of boards last fall threatened mass firings, none carried out the threats. Basically, they got the courts to do their dirty work for them by injoining the strikes.

The spirit of the GC teachers is very high. They are proud of their jailed colleagues and are clearly prepared to fight like hell, even if it means jail. They are clear on the issues they're out for and are convinced that they're in the right. Despite a hostile press, they've tried to get their case before the community, setting up community meetings, leafletting, etc. They've also gone to board meetings to explain their side, and have attended the board's community meetings. (By the way, the community and the teachers are virtually all white.)

The composition of the activists is young, in the 25 to 35 age group. The new president, Ann Riley, is 29. The chief negotiator, John Melchor, is also 29. Most of the governing council -- made up of officers and building reps -- is also young.

(One interesting indication of the aggressive attitude taken by the teachers, as well as their -- perhaps one could call it social consciousness (?), I'm not sure exactly what to call it -- is their attitude to the law and the jailings. They call their jailed compatriots "the Garden City Eleven" and clearly indicate that they mean an identification with the Berrigans, Ellsberg and the Chicago Seven, and all the other people "unjustly railroaded into jail." Also, when challenged for defying the law, they point out that the law has been unjust before and point to the civil rights movement's defiance of the law as a precedent, which they are proud to be following.)

The local has had teeshirts printed up that say "GC 11 - jailed for justice - Nov. 14, 1974." Also popular are teeshirts from the South Redford district which struck in fall that say "Teacher Power" with a fist holding a pencil.

John Melchor, the chief negotiator, is an interesting person. He's a 29-year-old Chicano, and is the union's chief negotiator. He seems to have a really good understanding of all the issues involved, and a very good feeling for what the teachers want. The teachers have full confidence in him and give him unqualified support. He is a tough negotiator, which is what the teachers are looking for. He gives very

good reports to the teachers meetings, describing what is going on at the table, what the Board's proposals are, what the team's positions are. He also explains some of the tricks the Board has used and how to respond to them. (I find this especially impressive in contrast to the reports we hear in my local from our negotiating teams, which seem to give reports for the express purpose of totally confusing the ranks -- and seem to have the attitude that the less the ranks know the better.) As a result, the Board's attempts to set the teachers against the team, and to portray the strike as a result of manipulation of Melchor and/or the MEA have ended in failure. One of the most popular picket signs carried by the teachers on the lines is "We support our team."

Melchor has also done a good job, in conjunction with the rest of the leadership, in educating the union ranks on key questions like the importance of the cost-of-living allowance clause and opposition to third-party intervention. I have never met a group of people who were so clear on these points. I have generally found that teachers do not understand the importance of cost-of-living allowance and hence tend to be unwilling to fight hard for it. GC teachers do understand it and are willing to fight for it. The other thing that has impressed me is the depth of hostility to third party intervention in any form -- fact-finding, binding arbitration, and even mediation. (They only met with the mediator when one was appointed by the governor.) They also do not trust the courts (understandably), or the governor. A number of teachers told me that any outside intervention destroys the process of collective bargaining -- I couldn't have said it better myself. Melchor has said the same thing on many occasions, and said that the issue should be "settled in the streets by the parties concerned." He was quoted in the News as saying that he "would not obey any court order that would lead to the Association being crushed." That sentiment is completely shared by the ranks.

I don't want to imply that Melchor's a radical, or even that there's a strong radical current. In fact, many teachers take great pains to explain how they're not radical, but have been driven to the point where they have to stand up or die. (I've pointed out the radicalism is not in what you say you are or think you are, but in what you do. And people seem to accept that.) Melchor always dresses in a three-piece suit and his hair is always neatly combed, and he projects the image the teachers want to project -- but he's tough.

What has happened is that the teachers have assimilated the lessons of the experiences of other teachers' unions. From their own experience and others, they've learned that to return to work without a contract destroys your bargaining power. From Detroit's experience last year and this, they've learned that binding arbitration is a trap to be avoided at all costs. And from their own and others' experience they've learned that the courts and agencies of the government are not "neutral."

The MEA is clearly uncomfortable with the situation, but has pledged its full support to the teachers. The MEA said that it would fully support the GCEA, and went on to say that this was the local's own strike and that the MEA would not try to direct or control it. That sounded to me like a statement to reassure the local that the MEA would not step in and try to settle it or make a deal over the head of the local and its leadership -- I understand that that has happened before. It was also calculated to answer charges that the GCEA teachers didn't want the strike, but the MEA was "putting them up to it," and "manipulating the teachers."

Sympathy among EA rank and file is very high for the GCEA. Many locals and regional organizations have voluntarily assessed themselves per capita tax to provide a strike fund for Garden City -- and now Crestwood as well.

Sympathy among MFT rank and file is also high, but the MFT's role has been, shall we say, less than adequate. The intense sympathy of the ranks has been given little direction. The Administrative Board met on Nov. 18 and passed a resolution asking locals to collect money, help with literature distribution, and join in a support picket line if the MFT called one in consultation with the MEA. So far it hasn't.

The GCEA wants and needs support, but the MFT and MEA are putting the bureaucratic infighting ahead of mobilizing the widespread support that exists among teachers of both organizations. The MEA is hostile to the idea of united action with the MFT. This hostility is of long-standing duration, and is buttressed by the MFT's new Shankerite aggressive raiding policy toward the MEA locals.

On our role -- I walk the picket lines three times a week and am identified as representing my local and also as a reporter for The Militant. I have had some very good discussions with some of the teachers, especially on the question of merger. Everyone's in favor of merger -- there don't seem to be any obstacles in the eyes of the ranks; they just want the merger and they want it soon. They can't understand why it hasn't been done. On the other hand, they don't seem angry at either the NEA or AFT for "holding it up." They think it's a good idea and want it done without fixing "blame" for the delay. I've had some discussions about Shanker and his role, and I find there's a lot of confusion. Most people have heard bad things about him, but it's very vague what they've heard about what issues. There are a lot of illusions about "what he did for the NY teachers." I hope when the teachers pamphlet comes out, that it deals with some of these questions.

I've been trying to get some other comrades to come out, but it's difficult since the teachers only picket from 8-10 AM and most comrades work then.

I have been trying to push the idea of a labor support rally for the teachers. The GCEA would like it, but doesn't want to go out and ask the union movement for it. That makes it difficult, because the unions absolve themselves from responsibility by saying that the teachers haven't asked for a rally. One comrade is pushing the idea in his EA local and trying to get his local to sponsor the idea in the EA. If you have any other suggestions for how to work on this, or if you have suggestions for any other support work, please let me know as soon as you can.

You will have read about labor support in the Militant article, so I won't duplicate the information here.

This has the potential to be a very important, precedent-setting strike, closely watched by all school administrations and teachers' unions. The importance goes even beyond teachers; this strike's outcome is an issue of concern to all public employees. It is a serious challenge to the Michigan law denying public employees the right to strike.

Just a word on Crestwood. It's a smaller district, with some 4800 students and 207 teachers. The teachers struck on the expiration of their contract in fall of 1973, were forced back to work by injunction, worked 1973-1974 without a contract, struck again in Sept. 1974, went back to work under injunction on Oct. 3 (they were one of the last districts to go back this year). They have been working without a contract for one and a half years, and they're really fed up. They made no progress on the contract for the time they worked without it. Garden City in a sense broke the ice by doing the unthinkable -- going on strike in defiance of the injunction -- and Crestwood teachers felt the only way they could get a contract was to follow suit. (There are a number of districts in that position, by the way. I don't expect they'll all follow the example.)

The strike wave in September 1975 is shaping up to be explosive.

Comradely,
s/ Paula Reimers