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WORKER'S JOURNAL

By CHARLES DENBY

Many workers in the plant where I work had a feeling that taking strike action against the company was somewhat useless because the union officials in the last several years always line up with the company on disciplining the worker, especially when the issue involves production disputes.

Some weeks ago the company removed a number of workers from an operation and wanted those who remained to put out the same amount of production. The workers continued to work but slowed down and rode the lines the first day. The second day this caused production to pile up in other departments. The company fired eight workers. The department struck. The committeeman tried to insist that those workers continue to work. They were so angry at this that I was told they chased the committeeman out of the department and walked out, closing the plant down.

They went to the union hall. I never witnessed such an angry group of workers before in my life. They would not listen to the local officers. They were booing and cursing them, from a to z.

The third day the company fired four more workers. The department went down again. When I got to the union hall there were many workers standing outside looking in. I was told by some that the union officials would only let workers in who were directly involved in the issue. Not even those who work in the department could come in.

I said, "I have put money in this union for years to buy this hall. It is ours, not the officers' " I went in. My first attention was drawn to the fact that all over the hall were chief stewards and others who are part of the bureaucratic machinery that does not work in the department where those striking workers are. One union official asked me what I was doing there. I pointed to those chief stewards and asked what were they doing there. I said, "This is our union hall. I have as much right as any one else." He said: O.K. Just keep quiet.

The union officials were sitting on opposite sides of the hall from the workers.

They asked for a vote: those who are for the committeeman's agreement and those for time study. This by secret ballot. This was only for the workers on the first operation. The union felt they could railroad it over half of those workers, then they would be in a position to persuade the others to accept.

THE WORKERS MEET ALONE

While they rushed to hand out the ballots, some worker suggested that all who were voting should meet alone in the back of the hall and discuss what they really want to vote for. The official agreed. Those workers arose and went to the back of the hall, not letting a single union leader in, not trusting them at all. The union leaders were all sitting on the platform seeming somewhat pleased, looking as if they were saying: We got them hooked.

When the workers returned, one official jumped to his feet. Say, here is the ballot, let's get it over with.

A worker said: We have someone to make a statement for us before we vote. The worker took the mike and said: We realize fully that you officers have sold us out and are trying to trick us to vote for what we struck against. If there is no other way, we will accept the agreement the committeeman signed with the company IF those twelve workers who were fired are back tomorrow. And if they are not back, we are striking again.

Every official jumped as though stuck with a hat pin, yelling: Is that why you wanted to meet by yourselves? We cannot promise you that. A worker yelled: You can promise nothing we want, but you want promises from us. You and the company want the shop to roll. But not until we get a guarantee when those fired workers will be back.

TAKING THE MIKE

The officers forgot the voting. Another worker started to the mike. The president ordered him to speak from the floor. He said: I am using the mike, unless it is your personal belonging. If so, you put it in your pocket because I am speaking from this rostrum.

The tension was so stark, we were expecting a violent outbreak. The worker used the mike. Another worker yelled: What good is this union? This president? If it were not for the union you would not be striking. But there were strikes before we had a union and there are strikes where there are no unions now. The official said they would guarantee these workers that the fired workers

CONTENTS

Coal and Its People	P. 2
Labor	P. 3
Editorials	P. 4
Negro	P. 6
Youth	P. 7
Women	P. 7
Read: TWO WORLDS on P. 5	

MORE FRIENDS . . . BUT FEWER

Rocky Marciano, heavy-weight champion of the world is a man who suddenly

Yet in many ways his life falls far short of being what he wants it to be.

He has more friends than ever before, but yet has fewer friends than ever before. He is suddenly in a different world. Even his mother feels that she cannot talk to him.

HE FEELS IT

As much as Marciano fights against it, he feels it himself. He says, "When I get together with my old friends in Brockton it isn't the same either. They never start a conversation. They answer my questions quickly and I never do find out how they feel and what they're thinking and we never have the laughs about the little things we used to have before."

He tells one speech that didn't endear him to the manufacturers of shoes. He relates that he told them that in a way they are responsible for his being champion of the world. He said that for years he used to carry his father's lunch box to work. He saw how tough the work was and how little his father got. His father used to tell him to stay out of the shoe shops. "So to keep away from them I became a fighter instead, and therefore I think you men had a part in making me a fighter."



"You can tell the steward is on the ball because he has all those friendly conversations with the supervisors."

Strikes Against Auto Contracts

A production auto worker told NEWS & LETTERS, "Reuther says this new contract is the biggest victory we've won. He says this is the greatest achievement for the country and proves that labor and management can live side by side. But, even before Reuther closed his mouth there were wildcats in auto. The workers can't live side by side with their own union leaders."

THESE STRIKES ARE NEW

This is what is new in the situation. Never before have the workers, in plant after plant throughout the country, expressed their dissatisfactions in so many wildcats after negotiations had been concluded and before ratification.

No sooner had the Ford agreement been announced than the huge Ford plant at River Rouge was shut by wildcatting workers. Detroit papers openly called this a revolt. Ford workers at Rouge belong to Local 600, the largest local in the UAW and in the world. Local 600's president, Carl Stellato, went down to coax the strikers back on the job. He pleaded and explained the "great gains" won by the agreement. The workers booed him although, as distinguished from Reuther, he has enjoyed wide support among Local 600 members.

When asked, "Wasn't it only the skilled workers who walked out at Rouge?" a production worker exploded, "Hell it was. The skilled workers started it. The papers played that up and tried to make believe the production workers weren't in on it. We don't like that contract and we went out."

WILDCATS BEFORE AND AFTER

At the same time, UAW was carrying on negotiations with General Motors. And GM workers were wildcatting all over the country forcing GM to close 20 plants. These pre-contract walkouts, no doubt, delayed negotiations. Reuther charged that they were sabotaging the talks.

No sooner did Reuther and GM finally come to agreement than 175,000 workers walked out in more than 40 GM plants throughout the country. The union and the press tried to say that these

post-agreement strikes were simply the result of local con-
The truth is, these walkouts were explosions resulting from years of accumulated pressure which had been building up during the time the workers were tied down by the previous five-year contracts.

"ONE YEAR IS ENOUGH"

Throughout the industry workers were saying, "Never again. No more five year contracts. On year is enough." They were willing to go along on two years. But they have now been confronted with three-year agreements.

"What's bothering me," said the production worker. "is why the big corporation leaders are praising Reuther. Why are they saying that he's won us a revolutionary gain that means 'peace and prosperity' for auto workers and everybody? In the old days they used to say that old man Ford's \$5-a-day was also revolutionary. That was the time when it was slave conditions at Ford."

The fringe benefits are just so much pie-in-the-sky. The cash raise, widely announced as 6c, actually boils down only to a single penny, since they would automatically have got 5c more under the old contract.

FOR SHORTER WORK DAY

There is no doubt the workers preferred cash to the fringe "gains." But the real issue is a shorter working day and a voice on working conditions. So true is this, that in a GM Fisher Body plant, there was a two-to-one vote against Reuther's slate in local elections. This "no confidence" vote took place in the midst of negotiations.

These are the stirrings in the shops on the eve of ratification. They will not be silenced by the final vote.

NEWS and LETTERS

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With Liberty and Justice for All

It seems there was a man who worked for the State Department. Now he was a very loyal sort of guy. He firmly believed that his relationship with his fellow-man could seriously effect the bastions of defense against Communism thrown around the country by his wise and all-knowing superiors.

Now it seems that the mother of the attractive young thing that he was about to marry was under suspicion of associating with some people who in turn were suspected of associating with people who were suspected of being Communists. Sounds complicated? It is.

Now this loyal citizen, not wishing to incur the wrath of either his superiors in the State Department or any of the official or private snoopers who are so numerous today, acted to prevent the wrath of the nation from falling upon his shoulders. He officially requested permission of the State Department to marry his fiancée.

In due course of time, and these grave matters do take time, the official blessing of the State Department, on the forthcoming nuptials, was given. They were married. I wish I could say that they lived happily ever after, but, no, such was not the case.

About a year after the happy event, our unfortunate hero was called upon the State Department's red carpet and discharged for associating with people who associate with those who associate with you know who!

It also turns out that the information on which this action was based came from the ultra-loyal staff member of

the State Department who was given the information by none other than our hero himself!

I wish that I could give you a happy ending to this little tale, but contrary to the foreword in class C movies and TV, all the facts in the story are true. Only the newspaper has been changed—to give you a truthful ending.

The hero of the story is out of a job.

THREE PRONGS IN A PITCHFORK

Slums are the shame of every big city in the world. In the biggest and richest city of them all—New York—the problem has a special flavor. Not only can't the city fathers solve the housing problem, they're inventing new tricks to cut down on the competition for apartments in the public housing projects.

1. New York State Rent Administrator Abrams, in his annual report to Mayor Wagner, said that far from increasing the supply of decent housing the city was doing little more than replacing slums.

2. The chairman of the City Housing Authority said, in answer to Abrams, that there was still a long way to go, but he is confident that "New York will one day be a city without slums."

3. The very next day the City Housing Authority announced that it would move to evict some 8,500 project tenants who failed to sign loyalty oaths, swearing that no member of the household has ever belonged to any of over 200 organizations labeled subversive by the U. S. Attorney General.

WORKER'S JOURNAL

(Continued from Page 1)

would be back day after tomorrow at nine if the striking workers would work tomorrow. The position of the officers is that when workers are fired over speed-up or production to leave it solely up to them. Some time one or two workers will be out a week or more. Every week after, and sometimes months after, one or two more get rehired, and some never get back. They never get back all at one time.

WE WIN

They had the former president at one of the meetings mainly to beat the workers into line on this strike. When he got the floor, he pointed his fingers at the audience and yelled: "You . . ."

Those workers started to yell and boo, asking, what did he call them. He could not say another word. He sat down after trying for the third time. A Negro committeeman spoke and asked the workers to let the former president speak: Please!

The ex-president, who is now a big wheel in the International, said: Brothers and sisters, I am a member of this union just like you. All my time as president I never interrupted any one while he was speaking. I gave that respect to every member. I think you should give me the same respect.

Whatever he had prepared to say in his notes, abusing workers as he had on other occasions, he did not say at this meeting.

The morning the fired workers were supposed to be on the job, at nine, workers started to slow down. At five minutes after nine all twelve walked in and were part of the same operation.

As a worker there said: We feel we won the greatest victory since 1937, in this wildcat strike. We feel we beat the company and the union, although they are both mad about it. They are going to try it again, but we will be ready. An hour later the company moved one worker. Those workers stopped working. He was put back and production began rolling again.

THE MAN I WORK WITH

Fairmount, W. Va.—When I first got the buddy I work with, I was sure that what the other men he had worked with said about him was true. As a matter of fact, the only reason I got him as a buddy was that he couldn't seem to get along with any of the other men he worked with. Of course, I had heard what the others had said about him—that he was lazy, didn't want to work, made his buddy carry his load of work and so on. But when my boss asked me to take him for a buddy, I figured that I'd give it a try anyway. I knew that the company didn't like him so he must have something in his favor; I knew, too, that if he couldn't get along with anyone the company would fire him.

ONE SPEED WORKER

The more I worked with my buddy, the more I became convinced that the other men were right about him. He was always looking for the easy things to do. Or rather, he wasn't looking for anything to do, but if he had to do something, it was always the easy thing. There was another thing about him. No matter what it was that had to be done or how much, he had his one pace and that was slow. Nobody or nothing could change that. There would be times when I'd get real sore at him. I'd bawl him out until I'd get tired, but he'd just look at me and go on about the work at the same speed. I've never gone to a boss about a man in my life. I've always figured that if I had anything to say to a man that I can go to him myself. But trying to speed my buddy up just couldn't be done. I used to get so mad at him that I'd come home and still be mad. Then I'd raise hell about him to my wife, even though she couldn't do anything about it and I knew it.

BLESSING IN DISGUISE

I finally decided that nothing was going to change my buddy. So I figured that I'd just go along and do what I had to do and let it go at that. Then I started to do some thinking. The more I thought about the situation, the more I began to realize that he wasn't such a bad buddy at all. With the way things are in the mines now, he's just right for me. The bosses are always on your necks trying to get you to put out more. But that just isn't going to happen with a buddy like mine. We'll go along and do our work, but there isn't anything extra that they can put on us. We work together fine now.

I know now that it could be a lot worse. I could have gotten a buddy who'd want to set the world on fire, who'd do everything a boss would tell him. And that would be too much for me.

COAL AND ITS PEOPLE

If I got a buddy like that, he'd always be pushing me. And I'm getting to the point where I can just take so much. With the situation the way it is, I can set a pace for myself that I can do easily enough. If I start to go over too far, I've always got my buddy who helps keep me in line. Now when I think about it, I realize that my buddy is a blessing in disguise. It pays to think about all the angles before you start knocking a fellow worker.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN COAL

FAIRMONT, W. Va.—They wanted to cut out some more men because of three new machines. It would cut down to one man on a machine and put all the rest out of work. I asked them, "What do you think is going to happen to the government if they keep this sort of thing up?"

It's taxes that keep the government going. But you have to work to have an income to pay taxes on it. Pretty soon they'll have so few men working they won't be able to collect any taxes. I wonder what they think they'll do then.

A Coal Section Because

Morgantown, W. Va.—The coal miners of America have played, are playing and will play in the future, an important role in the shaping of the history of the United States. In the achievements of labor in this country, the miners occupy a singularly important position. They have been in the forefront of the battles that have resulted in gains, both large and small, for the whole of American labor. The term, "Shock Troops of American Labor," has been applied to them with good cause.

LIVES UNKNOWN

And yet, it is not by accident that the miners occupy this position. It is a natural result of the conditions of their work and the lives that they and their families lead. This knowledge, however, is known to very few outside of the ranks of the miners themselves. Most of the things that the public hears about the miners center around strike situations. The press that reports the occurrences is almost invariably prejudiced in favor of the company's position. The miners themselves have no press wherein their views or positions are honestly presented. There is, of course, **The United Mine Workers Journal**, but this official publication of the UMW generally concerns itself with the dealings of high politicians. It's a rarity to see anything of the day-to-day existence of the men appear in its pages.

It is, nevertheless, the day-to-day experiences of the men that shape their attitudes and aspirations. It is

Fooling The People

All the laws and talk are just to fool the colored people. They only passed those desegregation laws on account of Russia.

They try to fool the whites, too. The only thing that keeps them from fooling them, sometime, is when they get the same thing the colored get. When they call a white man a "hunky" for example. That's the same thing. And that's the time when the white man will come close to the colored, the way he feels.

There's one difference, though. They'll call a white man a "hunky" to his face, and get away with it. They'll try to pass it off as a joke, because, after all, he's white, too.

But they'll never call a colored man a "n—" to his face. They only do that behind his back. They know better. They're afraid to do it to his face, anymore. No colored man would take it as a joke. And they know it.

That's why they pass all those laws and talk. To try to fool the colored man. And to try to fool the rest of the world where they go to preach "democracy" to them. Miner Pursglove, W. Va.

from an understanding of these circumstances that a true insight can be gained into why the miners act as they do, and why they must do it.

INDUSTRY DIFFERENCES

Unlike workers in other major industries, the miners are not gathered together by the thousands as they are in a plant or factory or mill. The average mine will employ some 2-300 miners. When a critical situation arises in a factory or mill where there are thousands involved, it is a relatively simple problem for these workers to put out a publication of their own, stating their positions. The miners on the other hand, because of the comparatively small number in a mine, cannot do this very easily. Yet their positions are just as important and mean just as much to them and their families. Very often they mean much to the whole nation. But few people outside of those directly involved are aware of the true situation that exists. This should not continue.

PAGES OPEN

It is sincerely hoped that miners and their families everywhere will make free use of the pages of **NEWS AND LETTERS**, particularly that of the coal section. It is something that can be used not only to give a true picture of their lives and work to the world. It can also be used as a weapon to help in their struggles to obtain those things they feel will make for a richer, more satisfying life for themselves.

LABOR

STRIKES in the SOUTH

Birmingham, Ala.—Southern Bell Telephone workers who struck, and the strike of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad workers in the South, dealt the biggest blow against the whole Southern system since the days of the Civil War. The outcome is very important from the point of view of workers' gains and the reorganization of all the Southern industries.

THE CITY WAS SHAKEN

On the other hand, the effectiveness of the strike, the struggle that these workers carried out against the reaction of the company, is making the people of this country see the old way of the Southern system is doomed. As one worker from the strike reported, the officials there are frightened. They tried to force the governors to call out the state troopers to break the strike. Workers in all other industries in Birmingham, Alabama, have said they would have come out on strike in support of the striking workers if the state militia had been called upon to break the strike. This same worker stated, when the threat of the troopers was first mentioned, every worker in the city was ready to shut down everything there, the steel workers, the mine workers, and all others. The whole city was shaken to its foundations and the officials quickly retreated.

Shortly afterwards, John L. Lewis appeared in a restaurant commonly used by workers. This put more fear and fright in the officials. What the striking workers have done in changing the South is clear, in my opinion. I remember a statement made some years ago, by an official there, who said, if Lewis ever appeared there he would not leave alive.

THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

The South is the basis of the conception of the "right-to-work" law. It is a law designed to break strikes. Whether the workers struck in defiance of the law, we cannot say. But since the strike began, and the total rejection of the law that was on the books, we can see that bill of law has been killed. We can also see what can happen to all reactionary laws designed to shackle workers when the workers revolt against them.

CLOSER HUMAN RELATIONS

These Southern workers and their successful struggle can help free the stranglehold that the company and union leaders have on the workers in other parts of the country. It also brings closer human relations and understanding between Negro and white workers. This same

worker from Birmingham, says, in one of the most prejudiced cities in the South, he has never witnessed such close relations between workers of different races before. This is one of the most important factors in breaking up and wrecking the old Southern system—workers organizing a new way of life, closing the door in the face of the Northern big industries who have been rapidly forming a policy of moving their industries down South in their search for peace and cheap labor.

WILDCAT AT BOWER ROLLER BEARING

A friend of mine who works for a bearing company was telling me how the company is now compelling the workers to time themselves when grinding tool bits they use while running production lathes.

The company issued an order that all lathe hands would have to fill out a time slip as to how long it took them to grind a tool bit each time it was necessary. The company said this was for the purpose of determining the life of a tool bit. However the men could see that the company wanted to time each man. It was not to determine the life of a tool bit, but as a speed-up. They told the company that they should get a time study man for that; that they could determine the life of a tool by the amount of pieces run.

The first day the company didn't say any more, but the second day they gave 17 workers three days off.

The 17 workers set up a picket line when they went out. Then the company gave them notice they were fired. The steward of the department was included in the picket line.

The union came down and said the workers were wrong and would have to break up the picket line; that they would handle it. After a week, nine of the workers got their jobs back but there were still eight workers without their jobs. So now the men are wondering just who the union officials were working with, the company or the union members.

Les.

Behind the Steel Talks

Pittsburgh, Pa.—The mills are working better now than they were before. That is, the men are making more money. But there's less men. They came out with the report for the first quarter that U.S. Steel with 7,000 less men had made more money.

The men who are operating the furnace in the mill are making more than ever before. And guys on one open hearth are making more than guys on another open hearth. They're on the incentive plan. That gears them up. And then they'll chop it down the next year. I don't know how those guys that are going at high speed are going to survive this summer at the rate they're going now.

In steel, what the stockholders and everybody else gets, depends entirely on what the furnace will put out. That's the starting place.

Regardless of how much preparation is made before, like in the mine ore, and lime and iron ore and all the magnesium and the rest. That's all additional, but they don't make any money until that steel starts to come out.

When we put up a new furnace, the first heat out of that furnace pays for the whole entire works. One heat. Every heat after that, they're making money. That's practically all profit.

But when there's a lay-off, they lay off the guys on the furnace. The guys in the office stay on.

SPEED-UP

I guess they've been running job studies ever since I've been there. And they really put it into effect after the lay-offs; when they started calling men back. They got it geared down so far now that they might have one foreman watching one worker. Before he had about seven or eight men. They have it placed so that everybody's accounted for. At all times.

They have it geared now that if you're not doing your prescribed job, you're doing something pertaining to it. Before, each man would do his own job. Now everybody works together. There's very little time you have to your own out there, now. The only break you get is what you make yourself.

But most of the men have been off for so long, they're glad to get back to work. There's not much "tension" like you hear about in the auto shops. The contract doesn't expire until next year, but they're opening negotiations now. There's not much talk about it. What the men seem most concerned about right now is the incentive system.

Workers' Strikes Upset British Politics

Almost 70,000 British railway workers ended their 17-day strike a few days ago. Another 20,000 British dock workers are still on strike tying up some of England's biggest ports. Striking seamen have prevented the scheduled sailings of British luxury ocean liners. As a result, Anthony Eden's Conservative government declared a "national emergency."

The biggest opposition to these strikes, however, came from the official Trades Union Congress because they are unauthorized strikes. Eden relied on them. (The Trades Union Congress is what the merged AFL-CIO will be like.)

When the Conservative Party, under Anthony Eden, won the elections for Parliament last month, the official propaganda was that the Conservatives were re-elected because they brought prosperity back to England. They said the workers had become middle-class. That they were turning their backs upon the Labor Party because they were prosperous.

It is true the workers are turning their backs upon their leadership and upon the Labor Party with its bureaucratic state plans. But they're not turning Conservative. Two days after Eden was elected, the railway workers struck. Shortly before that the miners wildcatted and are expected to do so again in the near future.

Not two weeks after he was elected, Eden warned that the nation was facing a grave crisis because the workers were undermining the new prosperity. If in two short weeks they could do that, then it is very clear that they alone are responsible for whatever prosperity the nation has. Yet for years, since the war ended, both the Labor and Conservative governments have strenuously opposed demand by the workers, saying that they could better their conditions only by more production.

In the face of the strike movement there are new threats of additional restrictions to "discipline" the workers. But the strikes continue to flare up, now in one industry, now in another; now with one form, now with another.

NO WOMEN WANTED

About 85 percent of the workers in my plant are women. Yet in the recent union elections there wasn't a single woman candidate for local chairman.

The unions big shots said the job was too big for a woman. I asked him if he thought women are too dumb to know what's best for them since we are in the majority. He said the wear and tear and strain of the job was too much. A woman would just break down under it.

His wife must really have a tough job on her hands.

JERRY KEGG

THE UNION ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE

By Jerry Kegg

Yesterday we had a union election at our plant. Three hundred voted out of eight-hundred union members. This was no surprise to either the candidates or the voters. This is the kind of response the union has been receiving since the big strike in General Motors in '46.

The attendance at local union meetings has been almost exclusively union officers and potential union officers. The rank have dropped out of formal union activity almost completely. The gulf between the union representatives and the union members is constantly growing wider. Even the recent threat of a strike for a new contract didn't bridge the gulf. A union activist is looked upon with suspicion.

The reason for the workers' attitude toward the CIO has been shown in the recent negotiations between Reuther and the auto companies.

NOT WHAT WE WANT

Reuther's first move was to deduct from the members' pay for a huge strike fund—for a strike which he knew would never exist. He is as afraid of workers' activity as the company. He then went into negotiations with his own proposals, not the members' proposals. We wanted a 30-hour work week before a guaranteed annual wage. Reuther's economic proposals call for money taken out of our pay for various plans and we want a larger take-home pay.

Reuther is willing to let the company have complete control over production, allowing unreasonable scheduling of overtime and unreasonable production standards. But we want to have plenty to say about that.

WHAT EVERY WORKER KNOWS

No, the union today isn't what it was in '37. The workers who participated in organizing the unions had something to say about their contract and working conditions. Today the International and the company make these decisions. The only thing that remains, of the past attitude toward the CIO in the factory, is the strong sense of organization every worker knows is necessary in order to fight both the union and our own union bosses.

**Workers Talk
About GAW
in
READERS'
VIEWS,**

—Page 4.

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EDITORIALS

WHY WE APPEAR

This is the first issue of NEWS & LETTERS. We exist primarily to provide the means whereby workers, Negroes, women and youth can express their ideas, attitudes and feelings about those things that mean most to them: work, recreation, family and friends.

Readers may ask: "Why do you single out Negroes, women and youth? Are they not also workers? Why do you place them into separate groups for special attention?"

Humanity will have moved a long way to complete freedom when workers can live their lives fully and freely, taking deep satisfaction in work and in relations with their fellow-man. In this sense, Negroes, youth, and women are, of course, workers. But it is also specifically as Negroes, youth and women that they are denied the rich fulfillment of their lives. NEWS & LETTERS does not make this inhuman separation. This separation is imposed upon us by the total crisis in the modern world.

Those who rule shop and society today, and those who hope to replace them, are largely responsible for the mess the world is in. However, basically, the impasse is founded in the fact that those who are fundamental to the needs of modern society are in irreconcilable revolt against their conditions at work, at home and in society.

Contrary to the official propaganda, to the mouthings of the labor bureaucracy and other spokesmen for the highest levels in society, there exist nowhere organizations, institutions or a press through which workers can speak or act in their own behalf. Now, in NEWS & LETTERS, they can freely express their ideas and aspirations and use it in their struggles.

What they think and say today gives a glimpse into the future. What they say and do about their jobs, relations with fellow-workers, with the company and the union leadership; what they say and do about their conditions of life at home, at play and in relations in society at large, will determine the future. That is why we publish and thereby contribute toward making that future possible.

We ask our readers—especially the workers, Negroes, women and youth—to join us in making this paper a reality by writing, editing and circulating it.

AFTER A YEAR OF WAITING . . .

When the Supreme Court laid down its latest interpretation of ending segregation in public schools, when and where it was "feasible and practical," Thurgood Marshall of the N. A. A. C. P. called it a victory for the Negro people. The Negro people disagree with him. They say it is the same as the concession Reuther claims he won for the workers. The workers rebelled against it while the company and other leaders praise it. Thurgood Marshall says if you get a piece of meat for the Negroes they will want the whole hog. The Negroes want their rights as all other Americans, as any human.

The rank and file of the Negroes have continued their resistance against segregation. Their fight for full integration forced other peoples and countries the world over to take note and speak about our democracy for what it is worth. These are some of the factors that helped pressure the Supreme Court, a year ago, to make its decision that segregation is unlawful. But now that the leading justices of the land have turned the decision back to the individual states, it is just wrecking the school system. Some of the Southern states are openly planning to abolish free, compulsory, public schools.

The South may yell as loud as it likes about "separate but equal." They may get a few leading Negroes to act as go-betweens to pacify the Negro people. But the conflict is irreconcilable. Nothing short of complete integration will solve the problem of the school system in the South.

They want us to spend the rest of our time defining these words, feasible, practical, and deliberate speed.

It is a catch, like the contracts of the unions. There are so many trick phrases in certain paragraphs. When you are involved in an issue covering these phrases, the union leaders say it can be interpreted in many ways: This is our union interpretation; that is the company's interpretation; the other is some impartial interpretation, and so on. But a worker always ends up where he started when he ran into the situation. The same seems true with the decision Thurgood Marshall is interpreting. When he says we have won a victory, and the Southern school system say they have won a victory, the Negroes are where they were before the decision was handed down. It exposes this democracy for all its worth in the face of the world.

The fakery of some Negro leaders is no surprise to millions and millions of Negroes and other working people everywhere. It just means that the determination of the Negroes for full integration will take on a new form and gain new inroads into the whole of American society for full and complete integration.

WORKERS & GAW

The company is already beginning to break down classifications and putting the women wherever they want to. They most likely are preparing for what Reuther will give up for the annual wage. I can't see how you can guarantee an annual wage. A company can always go bankrupt, move out like Hudson did, or a depression come. If there is a war, they'll be drafting you to work. I hear some who say they will leave the cities instead of getting bombed. The surer way is for a shorter work week and less production.

GM Woman Worker
Detroit

There will be a lot of gimmicks in it, like the escalator clause with its five year contract and the bonus and vacation pay with its number of hours and being on time. They were just things that meant more production. The company will get rid of some low seniority men, as they won't want to have on the payroll unemployed workers. Those with more seniority will be doing everything from sweeping and cleaning to painting walls and machines, or they will put you from job to job, whether production or non-production. The company won't stand to see you paid for nothing. It will be a way of breaking down classifications and seniority to get more production. There are a lot of men in different classifications who can now sit down when there is nothing to do, but for steadier work in the form of annual wage, these men won't be able to sit around as much.

Chrysler worker,
Detroit

A wife of a GM worker I know was put into a funny situation over Guaranteed Annual Wage. She doesn't believe that GAW is all it is supposed to be, she doesn't believe in it, but she was forced to defend GAW against a neighbor of hers who said, "What do they want? Something for nothing." They worked this woman's husband ten and twelve hours a day for many months at the Los Angeles GM plant and then they went and laid him off for two months. She told this to her neighbor in defense of GAW.

Housewife,
Los Angeles, Calif.

"I like the idea of a Guaranteed Annual Wage but I'm more interested in seeing a better contract."

This was the comment of

Readers'

a Lincoln-Mercury assembly line worker as we spoke on the line several months ago, before the negotiations began. He is a man who has been in the Los Angeles plant since it opened in 1948. I jokingly asked him if he intended to be a twenty year man since he already has seven years seniority. He said, "Hell, no. They work you to death here. The Guaranteed Annual Wage would not help that either. Only a better contract would but the union is likely to bargain away some good contract features for GAW."

Another man in the plant, a skilled worker who at one time was in business for himself, said that GAW would bankrupt small business whereas big business could get along even with GAW by increasing speed-up and using more automatic machinery.

Ford Worker
Los Angeles

GAW is a phoney deal. It doesn't go into effect until June 1956. It was supposed to be a full year and now it's only 26 weeks. And before it can even go into effect the state laws need to be changed to allow payments to be made out of the fund.

The only thing I could see to fight for today is the idea of 40 hours pay for 30 hours work. Even the public could understand that. Automation is coming in. The working day needs to be cut but the workers' salary shouldn't suffer. GAW can't be applied. It doesn't mean anything to workers. In a small shop there's nothing that they could copy even as phoney as it is. But a 30-40 deal everyone could have applied.

Incidentally, the workers in the plant today were asking: What is going to happen to that big strike fund?

GM Worker
Los Angeles

Are the low seniority men who get laid off first going to get paid for not working while the high seniority men in the plants have to continue to work?

Auto Worker
Los Angeles

The Guaranteed Annual Wage Plan signed by Reuther and Ford is good only as long as the trust fund doesn't give out.

In case of a serious depression or severe layoffs, when a worker needs money to pay bills, that trust fund is going to be depleted very fast. And that will be the

end of payments to unemployed workers.

Another difficulty with GAW is that the state laws have to be revised to allow unemployment compensation payments to be made even while an unemployment wage is received from the company. Already California state officials have stated that the way the law is written now, such payments would be illegal.

Toolmaker
Los Angeles

The union leaders are going to do what they want to anyway. Why all this secret negotiating?

Skilled Worker,
Detroit

With all this automatic machinery, the lower class of people is going to be nothing, pretty soon. What are they going to do? You can't go back to the "good old days."

It all boils down to one thing. What is democracy? We're supposed to have democracy in this country, but what is democracy? They have us—now what are they going to do with us?

It can't go on, all these people with no work.

White Miner
Morgantown, W. Va.

War and Peace

"Strike It Rich" had some fellows on who were trying to get money to go to Russia. They wanted to tell the Russian people about the American people and that we don't want war. They said that they had been over there and had been treated real fine by some of the Russian people. The money just came pouring in. But I don't see that it's going to do any good. It isn't a question of war, it's the cause of war that's the question.

Miner's Wife
West Virginia

That four-power conference they're talking about is a sad joke. It'll be the same as Yalta or any other conference they ever had. They'll drink vodka or whatever they want to drink, they'll make jokes and have a private good time. The people won't know a thing of what they decide among themselves until it's too late. How can they make peace that way.

Saleslady
New York

I imagine some of your papers will get to Europe. That's good. When they have the facts and the truth, it'll spread all over.

Miner
West Virginia

Views

In England a man can get up and say anything. Free speech is much more there than it is here. The Communists can get up and yell for anything. And what they can harp on most is England being an aircraft carrier for America. That's what they operate on most because there are so many of our GI's over there. . . .

Those guys of course aren't real communists. There are real communists, but these guys are just paid by Russia and everybody knows it. What they're over there for is to get England to hate America. They figure if they can split up England and the U. S. their cause is almost a sure thing. . . . All it is, is England and America against Russia — as powers. There's not much more. France is gone as a power. Germany's been split up.

Ex-GI
West Virginia

Civil Defense

The biggest complaint of civil defense officials is that the people won't co-operate with them. Why should they co-operate with these fumbling bureaucrats?

Mother of Two
Los Angeles, Calif.

Due to a mix-up in the warning system a yellow alert was recently transmitted to the West Coast. That means enemy planes are approaching. Very few places got the warning in time. One place an official was sick at home and the message never got further than his office. Another place a man was new and didn't know what to do, so there too the population wasn't alerted. In Sacramento a thousand government workers crowded into a bomb shelter while many people in the city were walking about entirely unaware of the alert. It was just a good thing that enemy planes weren't approaching or a lot of people would have been needlessly killed and injured.

Civil Defense authorities tried to cover it up by saying it was a successful test of their system in the face of a yellow alert. It was a successful test in one sense; it successfully demonstrated that the government has no adequate civil defense.

Bomb Proof
Los Angeles, Calif.

Negro Americans

They say the people in Africa don't have enough intelligence to rule themselves. . . . But you don't have to go to Africa to see the same thing. Right in our own Army, one of our own generals, General Patton, came right out and said that the only reason they don't have

more colored officers is that there aren't enough who are qualified. It's the same thing. They know there are plenty who are qualified. And a lot who don't have the education maybe, are more intelligent and better qualified than the ones who do, anyway.

Sure there's plenty here to fight about. But I figure the only way to do anything is to just start fighting it out. What will they say to that? That's Communist, I suppose.

Negro Miner
Scott's Run, W. Va.

I'm afraid you alienate me when you keep referring to "workers, Negroes, women and youth. . . ." Are not Negroes also workers, women and youth? Why this special classification—treating some people as a "different" group????

L. S.
New York City

● See Editorial

So far as the Negro is concerned, he is well cared for through Negro publications and the Society for the Advancement of the Colored Race. When you publish the venom of the illiterate Negro or white you are only inciting Racial hatreds that would lead to violence. There is nothing attractive about a policy that bitterly attacks our government.

Usually when a new publication appears, the Communists and sexual degenerates appear like vultures. The Negro is desperate and will join anything that he hopes will advance the condition of his race and himself personally.

J. J. C.
Detroit

It doesn't make sense. When the government called my son he had to go in the army. They didn't ask him. They told him. He couldn't refuse what the government ordered.

But if he went South, even while he was in uniform, and they Jim Crowed him down there, he'd have to take that, too. It's government laws to be against Jim Crow, but if the South refused what they ordered, they don't do anything about it.

The government talks a lot, but don't do anything about it.

The government reminds me of a little child who

throws a rock and then holds his hand down to pretend he didn't do it.

Miner's Wife
Pursglove, W. Va.

As Others See Us

It would seem that your workers are even dumber than their counterparts in Europe judging by the letters and statements made by them. But surely the traveling overseas of many of your young men (on military service) will educate them in many of the things they lack in their mental make-up.

Anti-Americanism is quite common over here due, no doubt, to "dollar diplomacy" which stinks to high heaven. Due also to the rather arrogant manner of U. S. air force personnel stationed in England. But I am glad to say that they are becoming more civilized in their habits and in fact are becoming human beings instead of Eisenhower robots of war.

Rutherglen
Glasgow, Scotland

Your country like ours is run by a handful of men who are quite unconcerned whether they starve the people or not as long as the profits are high what does it matter. . . . We are being saturated with political propaganda just now as a General Election takes place on the 26th of this month (May, 1955) and the contestants are putting over their bull as usual. The Tories, as usual, are laying it on with a trowel while the Socialists are putting over some topsyturvy propaganda which is more or less big business watered down to suit the workers.

A. T.
Glasgow, Scotland

In the United States you find people with decency and devotion more than any place else. Europeans have lost that as they have had to learn to use their elbows. Europeans have been so terribly beaten which Americans have never had to face yet. I have been here long enough to know. I see it here in the young and in the old. I wonder what will become of it, this decency and devotion I see. It is being taken advantage of and it is going to the dogs. The sharpening of conflicts will kill it.

Refugee
New York

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Notes from a Diary

TWO WORLDS

LETTER WRITING AND NEW PASSIONS

As we were preparing to go to press with this, our first issue, I was asked why I had placed so much emphasis on letters to and from news committees as well as to and from workers outside these news committees. The daily press is so well-known for its being the voice, not of the people, but of big business, that we have all but forgotten the part the press played in the making of this nation.

The worker who put the question to me, said: "All I read the papers for are the sports and the comics." Were this indifference to all other sections of the paper a mere question of forgetting history, nothing much would be lost. But it is not a question of history. It is a matter of new passions as they are expressed in the daily lives of ordinary people. It is these that need to be heard. When fundamental changes are shaking society to its depths, the need for communication forces its way up, finds all sorts of unique ways of realization. One of these is letter writing.

The world over, each stage of freedom first announced its coming in the intimate expression of the common people to each other. But it is especially characteristic of this country's development at every great turn in history. Here it was largely in the form of letters that the passions of the struggle for independence of this country from Great Britain was first formulated.

THE PRESS AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SLAVERY

Or take the question of slavery which divided the nation into two. On January 1, 1831 William Lloyd Garrison almost single-handedly published the weekly LIBERATOR. This paper, which seemed so small, was an active force which brought about the final abolition of slavery.

I do not mean to put the press above the actual activity of the people. Quite the contrary. That same year a much more world-shaking event occurred than the publication of this organ of emancipation. A slave revolt, led by Nat Turner, shook the very foundations of the solid South which were being undermined daily by the runaway slaves. What I do mean to say is that the LIBERATOR was the expression of these new passions and forces for freedom which brought on the Civil War.

THE OFF-SPOKEN CONVERSATION THAT NEEDS TO BE HEARD

The American working people, with their great capacity for free association in industry and in politics, have in the press created an almost unique form of communication and inter-communication. Where an intellectual would, at best, consider letter writing a matter of "raw material," a sort of "unspoken conversation," the worker considers letters the off-spoken conversation that has finally been written down to be heard.

It seldom is nowadays. At this critical stage in American democracy, which seems to be in such contrast to the Communist totalitarian regime of Russia, the simple truth is that the working people have no press of their own. The daily press is in such disrepute because it reflects the views of the very people—the political leaders, the big industrialists, the labor bureaucrats—who have brought the world into the state of total, never-ending crisis in which it now finds itself, while the rank and file people are not heard at all. Yet it is only in their workaday world that you will find the elements of a new society, a new human being to whom his relations with his fellow workers, his acts against the labor bureaucrats as well as against the boss, his relations with his family and his neighbors mean more to him than the fact that he can buy a car and a television.

What is needed above all is a workers paper, one written, edited and circulated by workers themselves.

It is not that we reject the middle class—intellectuals, housewives, technicians. They are welcome, as is any and every part of the population that has nothing whatever to do with the two gigantic bureaucracies struggling for world domination, American as well as Russian. But the first necessity is that the rank and file have the paper in their hands to say what they want to, how they want to.

It is in the expression of the working people, on whose backs the total weight of state capitalism rests, that we will find the new passions and forces for a new society. All the others may desire as total a change but they are not so strategically placed in production that they can stop its wheels or change its course.

TODAY'S READERS AND TOMORROW'S

Old radicals, in starting a paper, used to say that. But their fear of being captured by the "outside" was so strong that they felt the need for all sorts of controls and hence special privileges for those on the "inside."

We feel no such need. Hence the emphasis on letters from those outside the news committees that are issuing this paper now. In truth, the only way this paper can be established is if the readers take matters into their own hands—they themselves write and edit and circulate this paper. Today's readers and tomorrow's.

NEGRO NEWS

We Are Somebody

by Ethel Dunbar

The struggles of the Negro people are still making a little gain toward civil rights since the old days. They have learned to go to school and get their college degrees and make something out of themselves, like going into some kind of business, being a doctor, teacher, lawyer, ball player or a prize fighter. And that is why the white American can see today that we are somebody.

The book on the story of Harriet Tubman's life is one of the most interesting stories I ever read. The fight and resistance she carried on against slavery, her escape to the North, joining the Underground Railway, working day and night to get enough money to buy clothes and food to go back South in slavery territories to escape with more slaves and bring them North to freedom.

How it impressed me to know she could not read at all and made more than eighteen trips South only using the stars to guide her. She brought those slaves out and never lost one.

The Negro woman of today is no Harriet Tubman. But they have carried on many struggles to help in the family life with their husbands. The struggle for their rights are sometimes with men as a whole in every side, the men against their bosses because of the oppression of women and especially Negro women. We are forced to fight harder for our right to jobs, our right as women of freedom.

Harriet Tubman fought for the right of men as well as the right of women. When she joined the Northern Army she was fighting to help build a free America for all humanity.

Note:

Ethel Dunbar's Column was read by a friend before publication. She had a

Disagreement

There's something that doesn't sound quite right to me in "We Are Somebody." It's the part about "they have learned to go to school and get their college degrees and make something out of themselves."

We didn't have to learn that. We've always had the ability and the wanting to. Negroes just never had the opportunity.

Take the ball players. A Negro can be somebody in baseball today. But we've always had good players. The Homestead Grays were playing a long time ago. Maybe not too many heard of them, but they had the best of players. They just couldn't get into the major leagues. Not until Jackie Robinson came along. And there were plenty of towns he couldn't play in until the commissioner finally passed the law that if he wasn't allowed, nobody

It Matters How You Feel Where You Live

West Virginia — We have the same battles here that they have in Russia. Would any American call up a person and tell them what they should do, or tell them not to do something? What's that—that's Communism, isn't it? But they do it. They did it to us.

We have to move. The coal company is buying our property. We looked at a nice home that was for sale. The white lady who owns it told us that after she showed it to us she got three calls from people who wouldn't give her their names. They told her not to sell it to colored.

She told us that she wanted to sell it to us. She said she didn't care who called her, she could sell it to whoever she pleased. But I told her I didn't know.

She said it wouldn't amount to a hill of beans. In a few days it would all blow over.

But that's not my idea. My idea is this. I only have a little while to stay in this hard world. And I'm not going to spend my hard-earned money to stay where my neighbor doesn't want to see me. And I don't want to see him. That's a miserable life.

It matters. To feel hatred where you live every day. My wife said she'd be scared to even stay there until they "got used to us." People like that could throw rocks or even blow the house up. She has to be there all day, while I'm away at work.

That doesn't scare me. I figure they'll talk, but I don't think they'll actually do anything. But that's not the point.

What matters is how you feel where you live.

—Negro Miner

would play.

It's not a matter of "learning to go to school." From slavery times right up to my times. I remember in my childhood when my brother got to be 14, my dad put them in the mines. They had the ability, and they wanted to learn. They just couldn't.

My son got his the hard way. He used to talk about some of the rich kids who would go five and six years to get through, just throwing away their parents' money. He had to work his way through, and he made everything count. He couldn't waste any years.

Now that he has his education you know what it's got him? A term in the Army, overseas. He got his diploma the hard way, and that's what he's got — a diploma, hanging on my wall.

Miner's Wife
Pursglove, W. Va.

West Virginia — A white man was talking about how the kids got along after the desegregation in the schools started here. He said that he asked his kids how the colored kids acted, and they said fine.

did you all get along, but he wanted to know how the Negroes acted? Like we know how his people acted when we wanted to buy a house in a white neighborhood.

—Housewife

MORGANTOWN, W. Va.— Anybody's better than an American Negro.

During the last war I was stationed in Seattle. They had a lot of Japanese prisoners, and they put them up in the hotels. We had to stay in the barracks out in the woods. We couldn't even buy cigarettes in the hotels. They were supposed to be prisoners. We were in uniform. But they were better than we were.

Even if you have a colored face, as long as you speak a different language than the American Negro, you can stay almost any place. A colored man with a foreign accent can stay at the William Penn in Pittsburgh or the Hotel Morgan here. But if you're colored and talk American, you won't get in.

—American Negro

NJERI - - LEADER OF AFRICAN WOMEN

Njeri is an African woman. Her home is in Kenya, a country in East Africa which has been in the grip of civil war for almost three years. The civil war was started by the British authorities when they declared an Emergency in October, 1952, because the people of Kenya were trying to help themselves. They want their rights as human beings which the minority of white settlers had taken from them.

Njeri is a woman of about 53 or 54. Like Harriet Tubman during our own Civil War, she cannot read or write legibly. She is in a prison camp with about 9000 other African women. She has been very badly treated and everybody thought she was going to die.

This remarkable woman founded the first independent women's movement in East Africa. She started her work in 1940 when, independently of any men, she organized African women to establish, at the Kenya Teachers College, facilities for girls to equal those enjoyed by the boys. But there is more behind the African women's movement than this. Much more. It is not simply for equality with African men. It is for equality as Africans in relation to anyone else in the world.

Njeri's story, and the story of the people of Kenya, is told by Mbiyu Koinange, in **THE PEOPLE OF KENYA**



SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES, which is dedicated to her.

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Desegregation

After the recent Supreme Court decision, a Negro news reporter in Alabama stated simply that this is the biggest let-down to Negroes by the Supreme Court since the end of Reconstruction. The Southern white school system rightly feel that they have won a victory.

The latest decision has not lessened the Negroes' determination but intensified it.

An Auto Worker Writes A Book

(EDITOR'S NOTE: A Southern white worker, who has lived in Detroit for several years, wrote to his father back home about a book he had read. We print it below, with his permission, as a review of that book: **INDIGNANT HEART**, by Matthew Ward.)
Dear Dad,

There was a book I read recently that I would like to have you read. It is called, **INDIGNANT HEART**, and is written by an American working man, Matthew Ward. In this case the working man is a Negro. You will enjoy it. You will learn something too. Because you have had to work all your life, there are parts of the book in which your life and his come close together.

Matthew Ward has had many reasons to be indignant. That is true of all working people, but where we have had a hundred reasons to be indignant he has had two hundred. He has had many problems to face in his life, but the important thing is that he has not run away from them. There was no place to run to. His wife, Christine, writes two chapters of the book. She makes it clear that she is going the same way as he. Sometimes you get the feeling she might get there even faster.

In the first chapter, which

deals with his childhood, Matthew tells his father he was scared when he first saw a man of his race hit a white man and make him bleed. His father tells him he won't own him for a son if he ever says that again. I remember when I was about eight and I came home from school beaten up because I was scared. I remember that I got another whipping from you for running away.

In the next chapter, he leaves the farm and comes to Detroit.

Then, because he can't find work during the depression he has to go back to the South, the place he never thought he would return to.

Then in 1943, he comes back to Detroit to work in the auto shops. In one respect there was a big difference in the shops. The CIO had been organized by then. There is one very moving part of the book where he talks of the union and what it represented to him.

But today the union is far away from what it first was. The speech of John L. Lewis at the tenth anniversary of one of the Ford locals, that Ward relates, is a very powerful speech because it represented what millions of

workers really feel down deep inside. Lewis told the workers at the meeting that they were responsible for the CIO. That it wasn't a few labor leaders and intellectuals running around with brief cases who accomplished that great feat. Today, these labor leaders would like you to leave everything in their hands, but this old speech of Lewis' was the real truth of the matter.

But Ward, as a Negro, still was confronted by the fact that he wasn't accepted as an equal. It is something that never allows him to have any peace. One of the most powerful chapters in the book deals with the Detroit race riot of 1943. It is a story that has been printed no place else.

Parts of his life are similar to ours, but there are parts that are almost in a different world. The peculiar thing is that it is a world we helped make.

I think the reading of this book will help us understand more not only about men like Matthew Ward, but also it will help us to understand ourselves.

With love from your son.

Read **INDIGNANT HEART**, by Matthew Ward. Beginning in **NEWS & LETTERS**, July 1.

YOUTH

G.I. VIEW OF JUNE 17

New York — I think people became a lot more conscious of June 17, after the revolt ended. The American soldiers I knew in Germany became sympathetic. They identified themselves with the underdogs and grappled with some of their problems. Several of the old tankers discussed the Germans' attempts to disable Russian tanks. They tried jamming rocks and broom sticks in the sprocket that moves the tank track in order to stop it. They also flung rocks and pavement stones at the tanks.

Many, looking at these incidents, have since seized upon them to demonstrate the futility of the revolt; attacking a Russian tank with anything less than a bazooka has been called a token demonstration for freedom.

The veterans of armored warfare were more realistic. They were of the opinion that the people who threw rocks were really trying to cause trouble. They pointed out that a well directed old fashioned stone could still damage a Russian soldier's head. That knowledge alone would keep the Russian tanks buttoned up, (all pictures were had seen had the hatches down) limiting the tanks crews' vision tremendously and leaving plenty of blind spots—like having your head

in a letter box and looking out the slot.

Tanks throw their tracks frequently. With a little luck, stones and sticks in the sprocket could have dislodged the Russian tank tracks. Thousands of times, tankers who've thrown their tracks have run them back on, solely with the aid of rocks placed strategically in the sprocket. The tracks could be pried off as easily.

According to the findings of the GI bull sessions, the heroes of June 17th were practical men.

Teacher Right or Wrong

Los Angeles — There are two classes in the gym field, Mr. Allen's class and Mr. Jackson's class. We have to take a lap around the gym field, and I was one of the last ones around. I saw Mr. Allen waving with one hand and pointing with the other hand. I thought he meant for his class to go into the gym field where Mr. Jackson's class, which is the class I'm in, was supposed to go.

I went past Mr. Allen and he pulled me to the side and hit me on the ear. I could have fried an egg on my ear it was so hot. He told me that I was supposed to take another lap. I didn't know that

when he was waving and pointing toward the field that he meant for the slow ones to take another lap around the field.

After he hit me I went to the principal to complain. The principal called in Mr. Allen and sent me into the vice-principal, who told me that if I wasn't one of the last ones I wouldn't have been hit.

My father sent the principal a letter, but the principal sent one back saying that Mr. Allen is a good man. His girls are in the Girl Scouts and he's a prominent man in the community. What do I care if he's a good man? He didn't have a right to hit me. If he was President of the United States he wouldn't have a right to hit me.

Anyway the principal is just a front for the vice-principal. The vice-principal is there solely for the purpose of outwitting the kids, he's been trained for that. He tries to cover up for the teachers any way he can, even if they're wrong, like in this situation. He's such a sly guy we call him "greasy" because he can slip out of anything.

Mr. Allen met me later and told me he didn't want to have anything to do with me any more. If I ever get into his class I know I'll get a D.

Working For Independence

BY ANGELA TERRANO

I finally went to see "The Wild One." I was holding off seeing it but I am glad I went, it sort of gave me an insight, into one youth who used to be with us. He thought the picture was the greatest and saw it as representing youth. I can't say honestly that I know what he meant but just what I understood him to mean. It is not just what he said but it is knowing him for four or five years and jamming the two together.

I liked the picture but I don't think it was a picture about youth. Somehow Hollywood always is in touch with what people are thinking about and worrying about, like "On the Waterfront," "From Here to Eternity," "The Blackboard Jungle" and "The Wild One." They start out O.K. but then they put their twist on it and it becomes something different.

THE WILD ONE

I know that a lot of youth liked that picture and I think Marlon Brando is building himself a fan club from the picture. In the show, girls were swooning over him like they did with Frank Sinatra and it was a lot of fun. But I don't think we can say it was good because of that.

"My friend" was excited because the two motorcycle clubs in the picture almost took over the town. And he

liked the faces on the "youths." Well, I am not looking to take over authority and I don't think the average youth or anyone thinks like that. When people fight back at society I don't think it is for the sheer enjoyment of fighting but because you are forced to. And as to the faces of the youths in the picture, the only one that came close to portraying a youth was Brando, and the girl, too. The others were a bunch of bohemians, tramps and all sorts of things.

After leaving the show I thought of the Fascists and their youth movements and I thought that "my friend" could have been in a Fascist youth movement as easily as join a labor movement. He is a person with tremendous intellectual talents and a fervor and passion for doing things. It is not because of the way he lives but because of ideas, that he believes in something.

The ideas can change, especially when they interfere with your personal life, so you can go from one thing to another. His ideas changed when he left us. He says now that it isn't just workers that are important but everybody is important. Sure everybody is, but how important is a factory worker, a Puerto Rican worker or a youth in a group of advertising executives or anything like that?

WOMEN

Just A Housewife

By Mrs. Martha Hunt

I don't feel like calling myself anything glamorous, like a "kitchen engineer" or anything fancy; I'm just a housewife. I haven't gone out to work for many years because I have two children I have to stay home and take care of. Some people may think that because a housewife is sheltered in her home, she doesn't know what's going on and doesn't know how to cope with the outside world. But a housewife learns too.

Sometimes the lessons can be very hard. Learning to be concerned about other people's feelings has been hard for me. This is one lesson I learned.

A LESSON LEARNED

I once lived in an apartment house across the hall from a woman who had three children. We became friends and I casually invited her to a party. But then I forgot I had invited her and we didn't speak of it for over a week. On the night of the party I went over and made the terrible mistake of asking her to baby-sit for me. She refused and said nothing more.

The following day, I suddenly found that she was not speaking to me. At first I laughed because I thought she was crazy. I had no idea

why she wasn't speaking to me.

Finally, another neighbor told me what I had done and how badly I had treated her. I felt very badly about it and went to apologize to her. But when I found her and apologized, she was very cool. She said, "You can apologize if you want to, but you'll never be my friend again." And she meant it. She never spoke to me again and we lived side by side for eight long months.

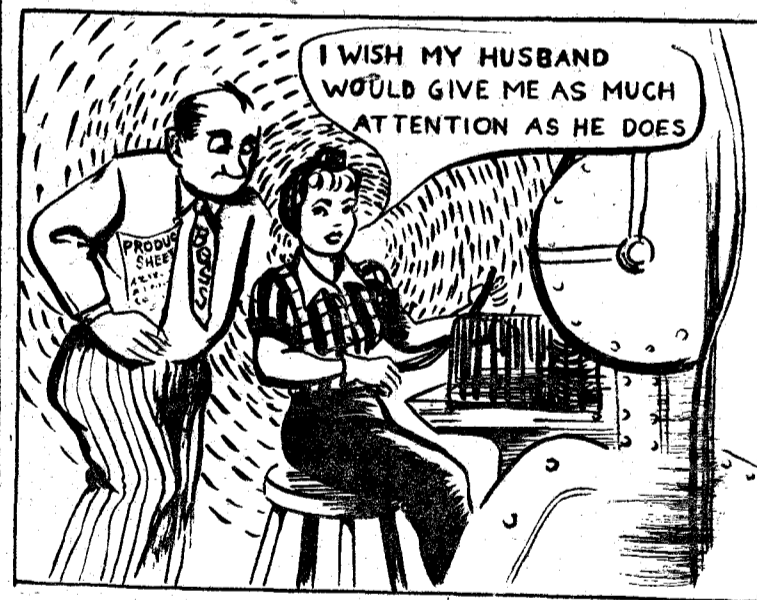
That taught me that the way you treat people is more important than anything else. People want to be considered. People have dignity. If you remember these two things, they can forgive you the little things.

Everybody's Friend

Bureaucracy can go to some pretty funny lengths.

A bachelor in Detroit who protested that he always eats out, was ordered by the city to get a garbage can in compliance with the sanitation law.

He hung it in his front window along with a sign. "I like everybody to be happy."



WOMEN TALK ON WAR

Fairmont, W. Va. — Mywar. I'd rather have a de-husband is a miner. He was working three days. Now he's working five. It's like it was just before Hitler invaded Poland. Just before the last war.

We figure that's why they are working so good now, too. they called a lot back in Grantown. One man had eighteen years seniority and had been laid off for a year. They just called him back. They've called a lot back at Carolina and Grantown, just recently.

Everybody has their own thoughts—but I figure we're getting ready for another

depression than see another war. One thing's sure—something's going to happen or they'd never work like that.

Los Angeles — I wouldn't want to do anything for civil defense because I just don't see any point in it.

I'm not interested in working for a life after an atomic bomb has been dropped. If the human race reaches the point where it is going to blast itself off the face of the earth, I'd rather not be around to see what's left.

—Registered Nurse hard to live with.

Woman's Viewpoint

I believe the Women's page should be a page for the women to express themselves . . . their day-to-day lives as housewives, mothers, working women, in their relation to men and children, and the jobs that their family is involved in.

To the many problems that families face, the only way a woman can try to solve them in this society today is by fighting against her husband or men and standing her grounds or her rights. In this way her problems seem solved temporarily, but it does not change basically the man's attitude that he is better than women. He still does not regard women as an equal.

I speak about jobs, because today if you figure out the why of human behavior, you can bet the place where you spend most of your life can do much to influence and shape a person. The kind of work whether physical or mental, the pressure of the line or supervision that create tensions, the constant drive of supervision for more work, etc., these are the things that you bring home. The problem is to change the way people work, which makes them so hard to live with.

Experiences and Expectations

The recent strike of the Bell Telephone Workers in the south reminded me of the early days when I was an organizer in the C.I.O.

I recall an occasion when the leather workers were out on strike up in New England. Things looked pretty black for the workers. The strike had been a long one, scabs were beginning to find ways of getting into the plant every day.

The plant was quite isolated from normal means of approach, and heavily guarded at the regular plant gates. The men kept talking about how to get into the place and shutting it up tight. No one seemed to have any effective plan. Finally one night a

worker crossed the river by walking along the top of a dam over which water was flowing. He entered the plant from the unguarded river side, cut a section out of the main drive belt that supplied power to all the machines and then left by the same means.

The plant was effectively closed for several weeks while a repair belt was made for the job. The result was that the strike which was failing was finally won. He arose out of the ranks to do the job that everyone wanted to do, then submerged himself back into it. No one knew who did it, yet what he did was necessary at the moment it was done.

McD.

A DOCTOR SPEAKS

BY M.D.

MENOPAUSE

Menopause is the period in a woman's life, marked by the natural cessation of menstruation, and indicates usually an end to child-bearing. Menstruation is the monthly throwing off of the inner lining of the uterus or womb—a layer which has been swelling in preparation for a possible pregnancy and which must be eliminated if pregnancy does not take place.

Menstruation is a complex process which recurs periodically. (It has been said that this is related to the 28-day journey of the moon around the earth.) The cycle is initiated by ovulation. Ovulation is the ripening of a special tiny cell or ovum, of which there are hundreds in every woman's sex gland—the ovary. Each month, at a time which roughly corresponds to the mid-point between two menstrual flows, ovulation takes place and the ovum breaks out of the ovary to enter the uterus, made ready to receive it.

"CHANGE OF LIFE"

After a variable number of years, the cells in the ovary may be used up, or the stimulus for their ripening ceases. Then ovulation no longer takes place and menstruation ends. Unfortunately, this period has come to be called "the change of life." There is a finality in this expression that is false and misleading.

A reader told me that in his shop he has heard men discuss with one another how difficult it is to get along with their wives at this particular time of life, and how often women then are irritable and short-tempered, unstable and unhappy. He wonders whether that is as it should be.

The average physician in his office sees more women patients who have entered this period of life than any other group. I would say, from my observation, that the majority of those who reach the time when menstruation finally ceases have no need to experience new or unusual signs of emotional instability. Certainly, most of the symptoms do not indicate any serious disease.

For most women, the time when the ovary ceases to put out the tiny cells or ova—which when united with a male sperm cell forms a new human life—is between 45 and 46 years of age. The ovary, however, also has another function. It gives off important chemicals to the blood stream and this does not necessarily cease at the same time. Furthermore, there are other and even more important glands of internal secretion that continue to function beyond this age in forming the inner being of a person. As a matter of fact, women beyond middle-life, have less illness than men and they generally live on to an older age.

IT NEED NOT BE A PROBLEM

I do not believe that the final cessation of menstruation should bring about any basic change in the physical health of a woman. It is also well established that the more stable and satisfying her life has been, the fewer are the emotional symptoms at menopause. The so-called "change of life" is a state of the mind. That, however, may not make it any less real. Most of us fear the approach of the end and are constantly pushing it away from our thoughts. This is particularly true if we feel that we have not fulfilled ourselves — realized our hopes and aims. Under these conditions, the end of menstruation is like a warning alarm. A type of crisis may then develop in a woman's life and the fear and uncertainty will make her feel weak, helpless and inadequate.

Life In The Committees

WEST VIRGINIA RUMMAGE SALE

Rummage sales are a very common way of raising money down here. There is generally one going on at some store in town and most of the stores are "booked" months in advance. But it was a new experience for me.

It was run jointly with a friend who wanted to help us raise money for NEWS & LETTERS, and to raise funds for one of her own numerous projects as well.

We got the store on a last minute cancellation. It left us only two days to get ready. Because we had so little time, the two of us had to do most of the work ourselves.

It was plenty of work, but worth it. After all expenses, including store-rent, we still had \$40 to split between us. We split another \$25, with what was left, at a professional auction later.

The prices were marked very low: 5c, 10c, 15c, 25c. Everything sold, from clothes to gadgets, even an old pair of shoes I forgot when I changed, and a broken pair of scissors I brought down to cut paper.

* * *

'INTERNATIONAL LUNCHEON' IN L.A.

A friend of mine offered to help arrange an "International Luncheon" as a way of raising some money for NEWS & LETTERS. The work was carried out with the help of friends inside and outside the committee.

A Mexican-American working mother of eight children made a platterful of enchilladas. Another friend cooked a pot of beans with cheese. Another friend contributed her specialty, a pot of Swedish meat balls. Still another made a wonderful, large potato salad. A fifth baked a special cheese cake which we used as a prize for Mother's Day. All the food was contributed. We sold 280 tickets and offered a rotisserie as a door prize.

The object of the luncheon was not money, but socializing and giving friends the opportunity to help support the paper. That is what helped everyone have a good time.

In a few minutes speech to the luncheon, I said something like the following: I have known the 25 guests who were present, from 10 to 20 years. Six of them are working people, 13 are middle-class people. They all know that I give my time and energy to a "cause." Whatever the name of the social group I followed in the last 20 years, its cause was always the strivings of the workingmen for a better life. It was a short speech but it set the tone for the luncheon.

After all expenses were paid, we cleared \$78 for the paper.

WORLD COMMENT

A DAY TO REMEMBER

Today is June 17th. It is the second anniversary of the revolt of the East German workers against their Communist government. The Communists are also celebrating this day. They have brought up military reserves and have declared martial law for five days in an effort to intimidate the workers lest they revolt again on this, their second anniversary.

"WE WILL NOT BE SLAVES"

Two years ago, on June 17, 1953, East German workers struck against the brutal production schedules ordered by the Communist government. All over East Germany, strikes and demonstrations broke out. Men, women and youth came together shouting, "We will not be slaves."

Russian troops and tanks were called out. A number of Germans were killed by rifle and machine-gun fire. Others were crushed to death beneath the tracks of Russian tanks. In spite of this, the demonstrations spread up one street and down another. In East Berlin, a young man, under fire, climbed the famous Brandenburg Gate and tore down the Communist flag. Elsewhere, demonstrators broke into police stations, disarmed the "People's Police" and freed political prisoners. In the end, the government gave way and withdrew the production schedules.

In the years since, the Communists purged their ranks and tried to encourage more "reliable" elements. They strengthened their military forces both in Russian occupation garrisons and in the so-called East German "People's Police," mostly with former Nazi Storm Troopers. Now they are conscripting young men for military duty. Thousands are fleeing every month. They have reinforced the borders so that Germans cannot visit each other from East and West. They say these measures are directed against "profiteers, spies and smugglers." In spite of that they have to declare martial law today. This is a sure sign that the German workers continue their resistance.

HELP OR PROPAGANDA?

The UN has recently announced that it will investigate accusations of slave labor conditions in East Germany. They have information that the free labor force outside the slave labor camps is not much better off than those inside the camps. What

is this investigation supposed to accomplish? Is it aimed to help the German workers? Or is it aimed at making propaganda in the cold war between America and Russia?

If the UN do not already know, we will give them one "fact." There is a Dautzsch prison east of Dresden, Germany. Until early 1950 it was under Russian political police administration. It is now under East German police administration. Except for the fact that there are no mass execution chambers, conditions differ little from Nazi prison camps. But even without the execution chambers thousands upon thousands have died there of illness and starvation.

The prisoners come from all parts of Germany—one out of five is from the West. One out of four is 25 years old or younger. Their sentences run as high as 25 years for "political offenses." Yet in March of 1950 they staged a demonstration for better food and medical care. Though they were beaten and hosed they were not broken and they won concessions a year later—after the June 17th events.

THE SAME COIN

How did the politicians and leaders of the West, who claim to be opposed to Communist tyranny, respond to the German workers on June 17th? They urged them to keep order. To win a few propaganda points, Eisenhower offered food to the East German authorities to ease the tension. Of course it was refused as he knew it would be. And for the East Germans? Expert advice that what they were doing was impossible. That they could do nothing without reunification with the West under Adenauer and his new army whose cadres were formerly Hitler's elite troops. Now the Russians are holding out the bait of reunification to Adenauer on their terms. Two sides of the same coin.

STRUGGLING TO BE BORN

The German workers, on the other hand, the men, women and youth, showed the world the only way to fight communism. They did not choose between the Communism of the East or the anti-Communism of the West. They said, "We will not be slaves." And they struck.

Their action has changed the face of Europe. It toppled Beria in Russia and exposed the West in its sabotage of this popular uprising. Everywhere working people caught a glimpse of a new society struggling to be born.

This June 17th, the second anniversary of the German events. NEWS & LETTERS goes to press for the first time.