



Workers' Action

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While Bosses Attack Workers...



NIXON crushes strikes and calls for more "productivity" as unemployment soars.



LBJ widened war which accelerated inflation while he rigorously put down strikes.

Union "Leaders" Betray Struggle



LABOR BUREAUCRATS MAKE DEAL WITH "LESSER EVIL". Left to right: Secretary of the Treasury Lane Kirkland, Hubert Humphrey, AFL-CIO President George Meany, Steelworkers' I.W. Abel.

FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT WITH A LABOR OFFENSIVE!

A general economic crisis is now recognized even by "respected" business, government and labor bureaucrats. Most serious in this crisis is the drop in industrial production--real industrial output (taking inflation into account) has been declining for over nine months and many plants are operating at much less than full capacity. Giant corporations, while still making large profits, are now complaining more and more of a drop in returns and a shortage of ready cash. This is the so-called "liquidity crisis", which brought the Penn Central to declare bankruptcy and has recently threatened at least two other giants-- Chrysler Corporation and Investors Overseas Corporation (a large investment house)--both of which were saved only through last-minute loans involving hundreds of millions of dollars from a handful of banks.

WORSENING UNEMPLOYMENT

All of this is clearly having a devastating effect on American workers. Unemployment soared to 5% of the labor force in May, dipped only slightly to 4.8% in June and returned to 5% in July--meaning that about 3.9 million persons are out of work, and this

does not include the many people, especially women and Blacks, who are not included in the figures because they have given up hope of finding work and have stopped looking. Needless to say, the unemployment figures for black workers are almost double the national average, while unemployment for black teenagers is topping 30% generally and is probably higher in numerous urban areas like Los Angeles and Detroit.

The growing joblessness reflects a general social crisis rather than the "natural" march of technology and science, for the unemployment rolls are now growing to include many skilled and experienced workers, including even white-collar and professional people. College graduates with BA's and PhD's are walking the pavement because industries have cut back on recruiting, and many governmental agencies have cut back even on vital services like hospitals and schools to "cut costs", while these same governmental agencies "get tough" with public employee unions, and raise taxes on working people.

Caught in this crush of inflation and unemployment, many workers cannot meet their bills and face a sharp drop in living

standards. Years of credit buying to provide a decent living now turn the economic crush into a horrible nightmare for many workers.

CAPITALIST CYCLE

What we are witnessing is the classic "boom-and-bust" cycle of the capitalist economy. Even Nixon's weakly optimistic promises of an "upturn" in late 1970 are reminiscent of Herbert Hoover's famous promise of "prosperity around the corner" on the eve of the Great Depression of the 1930's. While millions are being driven into poverty, the industrial plants are becoming idle so that the ruling capitalist class can retrench and increase "efficiency". Such is the logical conclusion of an economic system which produces for maximum profit rather than human need.

OPPOSE VIETNAM WAR

The war in Vietnam has been central in triggering the crisis at this time. The war began as an attempt on the part of the U.S. government to prop up a corrupt dictatorship in Saigon and expand American business interests-- and in the beginning it had the backing of all major political figures, in-

Continued on p. 3

'RANK-AND-FILE' CONFERENCE HOAX

The "Rank-and-File" Action Conference was anything but what the name implied. It was not by or for the rank-and-file workers and it had very little to do with any "action", unless by that is meant the "action" of union bureaucrats sitting on their rear-ends.

Workers' Action members and supporters from the Bay Area, New York and Boston attended the conference, which was called by Labor Today magazine and held in Chicago over the weekend of June 27-28. It was backed mainly by the Daily World, which "traces its journalistic lineage" to the Daily Worker, the old CP paper. The conference revealed that "popular front" politics are still alive today in the labor movement and are being used, just as before, to mislead workers into supporting their enemies. In the 30's and 40's it was FDR and the imperialist world war that we were supposed to support. This time it is mainly the so-called "progressive" union leaders, as well as their liberal Democratic friends. Prominent among the delegates were officials of the UAW; the friends of "Jock" Yablonski (who was a typical bureaucrat for many years) of the United Mine Workers; leaders of District 65 in New York City; friends of I.W. Abel, the opportunist bureaucrat who replaced MacDonald in the Steelworkers; and so forth.

BUREAUCRATS FEEL PRESSURE

The union bureaucrats know the ranks are in a militant mood; they've been presiding over those union meetings in which the workers have been turning down rotten contracts in record numbers, and they've been watching (from the sidelines) the militant strikes, wildcats and "job actions". Some of the bureaucrats, usually the more liberal among them, have been feeling this pressure more than others, and have felt the need to do something to contain it. They want to guide rank-and-file militancy in a "safe" direction, a direction which will insure that the bureaucrats keep their jobs and that nothing basic will change. That's why the ALA was formed by Walter Reuther as a rival to the AFL-CIO, and that's why this conference was called in Chicago.

The purpose of the conference was to create the illusion of a movement for trade union militancy, democracy, and independent political action, but in reality, it was not much different than the rest of the official labor "movement" on any of these points. One of the keynote speakers, the secretary-treasurer of the Western Association of Pulp and Paper Workers, denounced any criticism of the GE strike settlement, which was a sell-out from beginning to end (see article in Workers' Action, Spring 1970), as "company propaganda". He also denounced "dual unionism", which was sort of strange coming from a leader who gave up the fight against the bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO in order to become a bureaucrat in a break-away union! The conference leaders also endorsed Kennedy and called for government enforcement of "democracy" in the unions! This can only mean, government attempts to weaken and destroy the unions, as Kennedy's attack on Hoffa and countless other examples show. The conference leaders called for government intervention at the same time as they pretended to

mount a big campaign to "defend" the unions against attacks by the Nixon administration, as if Kennedy, LBJ, Humphrey and all the other Democrats weren't just as bad for working people as Nixon.

Al Evanoff, of District 65 in New York, chaired a panel discussion on the war and political action that was less democratic than a typical District 65 union meeting! In order to prevent a resolution calling the US war in Asia "imperialist" from reaching the floor of the conference, Evanoff purposefully voted in order to make a tie! The whole conference was a case for the books on how not to implement union democracy. Workers' Action people were deliberately not called on in the workshops, because of their known disagreement with the leadership. There was very little time for floor discussion at the conference itself, and no real discussion was allowed. A special committee was set up to which anything controversial could be referred, never to be heard about again. Workers' Action speakers who tried to raise the idea of a working class political party and other issues were simply cut off the mike, as were many others who had anything to say that the leaders hadn't already planned for.

The conference position of political "independence" was no different from the formula arrived at by that early betrayer of the workers, Samuel Gompers, or from the policies of his present-day mimic, George Meany. The conference leaders tried saying two different things at the same time, proposing that labor should be "independent" of all parties, but should support individual "friends" from either of the bosses' two parties. This is not "independence" at all, but simple subservience to the rotten choices offered us by the bosses' corrupt political machines! It was considered perfectly all right when the newly-elected black liberal mayor of Newark, New Jersey, Kenneth Gibson, showed up to give a short speech (saying nothing). Gibson, who had the overwhelming support of the New York big business "community" (read "bosses"), as a way to keep the black majority of Newark "cool", got a standing ovation at this so-called "labor" conference!

LABOR PARTY

A "labor party" was not wrong "in principle", continued the official conference

STOP MANIPULATION - POWER TO THE RANKS

1. For democratic, militant, rank-and-file control of the unions and no compromises with so-called "progressive" trade union bureaucrats, whose politics, no matter how "left"-sounding, consist of essentially the same reformist accommodation to the capitalist system as the Meany's and heirs of Reuther.
2. For a working class political party based on the growing militant rank-and-file struggle to control the trade unions, and on the struggles against repression by the government and the sharpening exploitation by bosses, on the struggles against the special oppression of black, brown, and all minority workers, on the struggle by wo-
3. For internal democracy in this conference and any organization that issues out of it, including majority rule and minority rights, and proportional representation of all minorities on all leading bodies, to prevent bureaucratic corruption and ensure rank-and-file control.
4. For immediate, independent labor political action, including electoral action, to agitate for a mass-based labor political party and the other points of this program. Fight against union endorsement of Republicans and Democrats.

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resolution, but was "premature at this time". This is the same line the reformist fakers were giving out back in the '30's, and even earlier, to halt strong movements for real independent labor political action! This official "independence" resolution was handed out at the beginning of the conference, but any discussion on the issue was considered out of order. The political decisions of the conference had already been made beforehand, of course, and the reason was that the bureaucratic phonies running this movement want to leave their hands free to make all sorts of deals and compromises with capitalist candidates and pro-Meany bureaucrats. Above all, they don't want to be exposed by a genuine rank-and-file movement, least of all at their own "rank-and-file" conference!

WORKERS' ACTION

This, of course, was exactly what Workers' Action was trying to do. We came to the conference prepared with a leaflet entitled OUST LABOR'S BUREAUCRATS which called for a workers' political party to fight the two parties of the bosses and establish a workers' government; for militant rank-and-file control of the unions; for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Asia and all other foreign commitments; for an end to government control of, and attacks upon the labor movement; and for a sliding scale of wages and hours to combat racism, job trusting and unemployment (copies of this leaflet are available from Workers' Action). At the conference, Workers' Action supporters fought for as broad as possible unity of genuine rank-and-file elements around these points. The statement below, which was signed by supporters from five different rank-and-file union caucuses around the country, came out of these efforts. All attempts to enter these points as motions for discussion before the body were frustrated by the bureaucratic leaders of the conference.

men workers, and on an unconditional fight against U.S. imperialism.

Unemployment from page 1

cluding the liberal John F. Kennedy, who made the first major troop commitments in 1962. Only now, when the U.S. military failure is apparent, are so many "respected" politicians like Clark Clifford, former Secretary of Defense, denouncing the war and calling for withdrawal. It is outrageous that so many capitalist politicians like Senator McGovern and Hatfield who all along have permitted the war to go on and voted funds for the military machine, should now pose as anti-war "leaders"!

Nixon has been trying to "save" the situation for the bosses by withdrawing very slowly while beefing up the local Saigon forces to make sure that the present Saigon dictatorship, with its "tiger-cage" prisons, will survive. Such was the logic for the naked aggression into Cambodia, although

ment ears, and serve only to head off militant action by the rank-and-file.

Essentially, the corporate rulers are attempting to undermine the power of the unions so that American capitalism can become "competitive" with other world capitalist powers, especially Japan, a major competitor. Recent trade talks with Japan, for instance, have collapsed and trade war is apparently imminent-- including the reinstatement of protective tariffs and import quotas to give American firms more control of the American market. Such trade wars broke out in the 1930's and actually deepened the depression by curtailing international trade. Labor bureaucrats like Andrew Biemiller, AFL-CIO Legislative Director, are supporting this drive to "protect" American markets, which will only mean higher prices and a

gress, Democrat or Republican, defended the strike by calling for removing the troops. At the same time, the postal workers' "leaders" like Rademacher denounced the strike and told the workers to go back!

BUREAUCRATS FIGHT RANK-AND-FILE

Throughout these attacks, the labor "leaders" have sought to preach complacency. Where the rank-and-file have risen on their own, as in the postal strike, the bureaucrats functioned openly as goons for the bosses to contain and crush the strike. At all times, the bureaucrats have tried to limit the union struggles to economic gains, which immediately disappear, or channel the political goals of the rank-and-file into the Democratic and Republican "friends of labor", who turn their backs on labor after they're elected.

We need a party of the labor movement, based on the rank-and-file, to fight for a labor program against the bosses' parties and the labor bureaucrats. Such a Labor Party would fight for such vital positions as:

THE MACHINIST, JUNE 18, 1970

EMPLOYMENT OFFICE



How to hunt a job

As layoffs spread, more union members are being forced to hunt new jobs. For many, job hunting is a new experience. For most, it's been a long time since they had to stand in line with hat in hand at employment offices. Here are some suggestions for job hunting. Most of them are based on a recently revised pamphlet, *Merchandising Your Job Talents*, published by the U.S. Labor Department.

The first step in selling your skills is deciding exactly what your qualifications are. You need a detailed inventory of your background and experience so that you will know exactly what assets you have to offer an employer.

Explore the usual channels of job information. They are:

- Your trade union representative or local union officers;
- State employment service;
- Your school placement service;
- Want ads in the newspapers and trade magazines;
- The U.S. Civil Service Commission; the Yellow Pages of your telephone directory, or industrial directories, available at many libraries.

Job interview

of such tests as a part of the application procedure. Don't let tests scare you off. None of the commonly used tests required advance preparation, so you need not feel concerned over not having crammed the night before. Here again, a call or visit to the union office can help fill you in on what's required by the company.

• If the company representative does not definitely offer you a job or indicate when you will hear from him, ask when you may call to learn his decision; thank the company representative for the interview. If he indicates he can't use you, ask him to suggest another employer.

INSTEAD OF STRUGGLE union leaderships accept bosses' attacks. This issue of THE MACHINIST, organ of the IAM, gives "advice" for workers facing layoffs. Workers in IAM especially have suffered heavy layoffs recently because of cutbacks in the aerospace industry.

this may have backfired both militarily and politically. Nixon & Co. cannot comprehend that they are dealing with a popular social revolution, not a tiny conspiracy. Student dissent to the war has been met brutally-- including the literal murder of four students at a mild anti-war protest at Kent State in Ohio.

POLITICAL STRIKES

While the war did at first create numerous jobs through defense contracts, its net effect has been to drag down an economy already in crisis, both through worsened inflation and huge government expenditures in the bottomless pit of military goods which represent no real gain to the economy. Meanwhile the government continues to draft workers to die in this war for American corporations which has been abandoned even by its original backers! Clearly the American working class has a direct interest in forcing an end to this war-- there must be political strikes for immediate and unconditional withdrawal, to join with the just struggle of Vietnamese workers and peasants! Paper anti-war statements by labor bureaucrats, such as Harry Bridges of the ILWU, amount to a big fat zero on govern-

general reorganization for "efficiency"-- meaning unemployment.

Not only does the layoff of workers result in direct "savings" for the companies, but the sudden jump in unemployment puts the labor unions in a much weaker bargaining position. To accept this growing unemployment as "natural" will mean disaster for the union movement. A fight must be begun now in the unions to wage a struggle to expand the labor force so that all can obtain jobs at decent pay. The existence of a large mass of unemployed will drag down the entire union movement.

Central to the attack on the unions is the undermining of the right to strike. The government, especially the Federal government, is stepping in more and more directly to "settle" labor disputes-- actually, to put down labor struggles-- and is revealing itself as the enforcement agency of the bosses. Most blatant is the government handling of the labor disputes on the railroads, where unrest has been quashed by injunctions and special laws for years, with the help of the labor bureaucrats, as just happened on the Southern Pacific. In the postal workers strike, Nixon sent in the Army, and not a single so-called "friend of labor" in Con-

1. END UNEMPLOYMENT -- 30 HOURS WORK FOR 40 HOURS PAY! The real way to make more jobs available is to have everyone work less time (with restrictions on overtime) for no loss in pay.

2. IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA. The Vietnam War is a brutal intervention in Vietnamese affairs to protect the imperialist interests of big American corporations. Workers have their own class interests to defend, with arms if necessary, but they have no interest in fighting the bosses' wars. Let the bosses fight their own wars!!! End the draft! No labor support to this or any other imperialist war!

3. END RACISM IN THE UNIONS. Racism divides workers and supports false feelings of racial superiority, and identity with the bosses, in the minds of white workers. Whites can only maintain their privileged position over Blacks and other minorities at the expense of lowering the wages and conditions throughout the country.

5. OPPOSE GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN THE UNIONS. No matter what they say, the government has only one aim in intervening in union affairs: to weaken and destroy the unions. We must oppose this by opposing any thought of "easy" victory in the courts, and stick to the road of building rank-and-file support for change, and a rank-and-file movement capable of making the changes stick when the bureaucrats resort to trickery.

6. FIGHT SEXISM IN THE UNIONS AND ON THE JOB. We must fight for the rights and respect of women as fellow workers and unionists. We must encourage and support union organizing of the many jobs usually held by women. On all jobs we must fight for full and equal pay for equal work; equal access to all job categories; free cafeterias in factories and other work places; free full-time child-care centers paid for by the companies; and free prenatal, maternity and post-natal care with time off at no loss in pay.

7. FOR RANK-AND-FILE CONTROL OF THE UNIONS! Most unions today are controlled by corrupt bureaucrats who make deals with the bosses and act to defend their own special privileges rather than the interests of the rank-and-file. We should attend our union meetings, and form militant, fighting caucuses aimed at destroying the power of these bureaucrats and replacing them in leadership under a militant and democratic program.

BUILDING A RANK-AND-FILE CAUCUS

Part 2: The Union Contract

The article below, written by a rank-and-file union member active in caucus organizing, is the second in a series of five articles. The series will attempt to outline, on the basis of the experience of past and current rank-and-file struggles, the main problems and considerations which union members should expect as they struggle against the officials for democratic and militant unionism. The first article presented an overall view of the problems and methods involved in organizing and building an opposition caucus. Subsequent articles will deal in detail with each of three main areas: strikes and other methods of struggle; union democracy; and the caucus program, emphasizing social and political issues.

The main function of a union used to be to struggle for material and economic gains for the workers in a particular line of work. This purpose is no longer enough, however, because the system we live under is no longer capable of granting even the minimal demands of the workers, not to mention our real needs. More and more, the bosses are forced, by their own, selfish, profit-based system, to reduce the share of the pie that the workers get, even though it has always been the workers who, by their work, make those profits for the bosses.

Every time we get something from them, such as higher wages, increased benefits, etc., they take it away from us in other ways, such as inflation, speed-up, automating production, and so forth. Furthermore, they are getting more and more anxious to prevent "inflationary" wage settlements, to work hand-in-glove with the government to force the workers to accept their lousy offers, and to "run-away" to the South or overseas or destroy the unions altogether. The unions simply cannot deal with these things in the old ways; new ones must be found.

Only when the workers see their bosses as enemies can they learn how to fight for the things they need. It is not enough for the union leaders or even a number of the members to understand the class struggle. The overwhelming majority of the rank and file must know that the boss is the enemy and how the enemy operates. Without this understanding on the part of the whole membership, a union cannot fight the bosses. The most important task of the rank and file caucus is to make the class struggle clear to the members by showing how this struggle operates in every aspect of the union's work, and by exposing the treacherous union officials as traitors to the membership and to the working class in general.

Labor "Referees"

A rank-and-file union caucus should explain how a battle for a better contract on the job will involve all the elements of the class struggle, the rest of society, and sometimes even the world. Outside intervention is always a problem: judges, politicians, governors, congressmen, government agencies, and even the President will all butt in sooner or later to "mediate" or "arbitrate" a dispute. Usually these parties are called in as "impartial referees", but the plain fact is that they are puppets of the capitalists. Although working stiffs go through the motions of placing their ballots in elections, the candidates they must choose from are put there by somebody else. Candidates become known by pulling strings, running big, expensive campaigns financed by the bosses, and doing the bidding of the bosses in countless ways. Capitalists often have differences among themselves; some back Republicans, others Democrats, some might even back an "independent", but all candidates are put up by capitalists. Appointed officials, like judges and special "mediators" are even more concerned not to "offend" anyone in power, and they know

where the power lies.

Liberals and "friends of labor" are no better than the others, although they make it their business to appear like an improvement. These so-called "friends" of ours are often the ones called in to "mediate" a big strike, so it's important to understand what they are really all about. The "lesser evil" candidate gets his name not by being any less evil but by being a lot more sneaky about it. All of labor's so-called "friends" in office supported Nixon's use of troops against the postal strike in New York City, mostly by saying nothing (some openly endorsed the move). They know when they are supposed to keep quiet. When they do speak up, what they argue for always turns out to be better for the bosses than for the workers. They call for band-aid reforms which do nothing about the basic issues but make the system appear somewhat improved. Even if a "good guy" or "friend of labor" reformist politician wanted to favor labor, the great weight of the rest of the capitalist controlled government machine would crush any gains for workers.

One of the traitorous tricks which union bureaucrats use to get themselves off the hook when things get too hot for them is to claim contract negotiations are in a deadlock and agree (usually with the bosses) to bring in a government official or appointee to act as a go-between. This happened recently during the GE strike when the bureaucrats of the allied unions broke down and encouraged the use of Rep. Senator Javits as a "fact finder"! In this way union officers protect their plush jobs by not getting a "bad name" with the government, or even with the company. At the same time, they are able to put up a front of "trying hard" for the members.

This rotten dishonesty on the part of union bureaucrats comes from the same mistake of the liberals and "friends of labor": commitment to work within the system; to fight for as big a "slice" as the capitalist "pie" will allow, but no more. Some of the most rotten union leaders, such as Joseph Curran of the NMU, Harry Bridges of the ILWU, or Walter Reuther, got their start by honestly trying to represent the members better than their predecessors, but they did so by trying to get a better deal from the bosses. They went to bargain with the boss instead of demand, and this is what corrupted them. In the capitalist system, the bosses always get

the best of any bargain because they hold the power, and the basis of their power comes only from exploiting the workers.

Ultimate Objective

While union members realize the nature of the class struggle and what it involves, they must see what they are struggling for. The workers must replace the bosses, kick them out of power and run the system themselves. The ultimate objective for workers should be equal distribution of all goods and services and workers' control of production, distribution, society and the state. Capitalist propaganda in newspapers, television, history books, etc., says that it is right and proper for someone to make a living simply because he owns things, such as land, buildings, machinery or money. Workers must never fall for this idea. All the property of the capitalists was stolen from the workers. Workers made all the buildings and machinery and cleared the land and performed all the labor which made money for the bankers. The capitalists, who own these things, have the workers over a barrel: "Either you work for me and do it my way or you can go somewhere else," they say. Slick capitalist liars argue, "The process of labor requires two things, capital and labor. We provide the one (buildings, machinery, etc.) and you provide the other. That's fair." We must remember how the capitalist got those buildings and machinery: by exploiting other workers for a profit; if not us, then it may have been our parents or grandparents. How can it be decided what is "fair" pay for property owners to give to those who do the work? We're all being robbed every day, and you can't "bargain" with a thief who has a gun at your head. Either he takes a lot from you or a little less. There is no "fair" deal.

Naturally we can't solve these problems with a contract. It clearly means reorganizing our whole society, and it will take some time before most workers see the need for this. The contract can never represent lasting gains, because the employer can always jack up prices, automate the plant, or move overseas (which more and more are doing), or do whatever he can to get around the contract. This does not mean that we should limit our demands because they will do it anyway! This will be true as long as the capitalists are still

Continued next page

Workers' Action

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power, but still, the contract can contain immediate, material improvements for the workers! While fighting for real gains, even though only temporary, workers can learn what they're up against and what their real goals must be. The caucus must provide leadership to help draw these lessons, explain the underlying problems, and, in the face of periodic defeats, prepare the union membership for future struggles.

Transitional Demands

The union members who organize a rank-and-file caucus must understand the meaning of the capitalist system and strive for the ultimate objective. They must take on the responsibility of educating their union brothers and sisters, in the course of their struggle, to see this need. Part of this process is to raise transitional demands which flow from immediate needs, provide meaningful gains and, at the same time, broaden the fight into one of a class struggle, rather than just a trade union issue, and expose the nature of the capitalists' private property system.

An example of such a transitional demand is the "sliding scale of wages and hours" demand. One of the most serious problems that all unions face, and everyone is aware of, is the problem of unemployment caused by automation and the shrinking job market, and the bad effects this has on those who are still working. A large pool of unemployed labor is just what the bosses need to drive down wages. It helps the bosses by getting us to fight among ourselves over the crumbs, as when white construction workers feel threatened by unemployed Blacks, whom the bosses have organized and set against them. Blacks shouldn't lend themselves to union-busting expeditions such as this, but the white brothers were wrong in the first place for forming a job trust and keeping Blacks out! Eventually the job-trusting unions will be destroyed because of their narrow-minded attitude. The



"If you're interested, Senator, we could begin grooming you as a lesser evil."

only solution is a sliding scale of hours whereby the available work would be evenly distributed among those seeking it with no loss in pay for anybody. Sometimes this is phrased, "30 hours work for 40 hours pay," although by now, 30 hours may not be short enough. Clearly, this is something that many unions will have to get together to fight for; simple "contract unionism" will not do. It was the narrow, "contract unionism" approach that got the construction trades unions where they are today: they make good money for a few, but they face destruction at the hands of the bosses, who are able to pit worker against worker, brother against brother. The whole

Our Program in Brief

We are an independent group of working people and rank-and-file trade union members. We formed the Committee for a Labor Party, and publish Workers' Action, to help in the fight for better unions—militant and democratic unions—and for independent working-class political action. This is our program in brief:

1. END RACISM IN THE UNIONS. SUPPORT BLACK SELF-DEFENSE.
2. FIGHT SEXISM IN THE UNIONS AND ON THE JOB. END THE SOCIAL OPPRESSION OF WOMEN.
3. ORGANIZE THE SOUTH AND ALL THE UNORGANIZED.
4. END UNEMPLOYMENT — 30 HOURS WORK FOR 40 HOURS PAY.
5. HUMANIZE WORKING CONDITIONS.
6. FOR A DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING FOR ALL.
7. FREEDOM FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH.
8. IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM VIETNAM.
9. END ATTACKS ON LABOR AND REPEAL ALL ANTI-LABOR LAWS.
10. OPPOSE GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN THE UNIONS.
11. FOR THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE AND STRIKE BY ALL PUBLIC EMPLOYEES.
12. FOR RANK-AND-FILE CONTROL OF THE UNIONS.
13. ORGANIZE FOR WORKERS' DEFENSE.
14. FOR A FREEDOM-LABOR PARTY.
15. FOR WORKERS' POWER.

For a complete version of the program, and information about regular CLP meetings, write in or call. We need your support and participation!

labor movement will pay a very high price if it continues to ignore the class struggle: it will be destroyed.

The "sliding scale of wages" simply means that wages should be kept exactly in line with the cost of living, like a cost-of-living escalator clause with no limits (except for a limit on wage reductions). This is necessary to combat the bosses' trick of jacking up prices to undercut a raise in pay--causing inflation. At any rate, it is clear that inflation can't be fought simply by getting better contracts either; militant caucuses must call for a united front by the whole labor movement for this demand, as well as for contract clauses which apply this principle to the particular union involved, and combat job trust-

ing. We must not be intimidated by this! Their only reason for complaining is to be allowed to go on robbing us and the "public" as well (and who is the "public" if not the workers themselves). A good fight is all they need to stop their bawling. Twice in a row now Teamster contracts have been signed way above the supposed upper limits that the bosses could "afford" because Chicago-area wildcatters saw through the double talk and stuck to their positions. The true test of whether they are lying or not is if the company is willing to open its books to the workers. In fact, the union spokesmen should demand to see the company's financial records and examine them with the union's economic advisors! Then we'll see where the wailing ends and the truth begins! If the books do show that the demands of the workers would put the company in the red, then the workers should simply demand that they be allowed to take over the company and run it themselves. Much could be saved by cutting out the fat profits and useless management functions of the bosses (like "public relations"), although, of course, worker control of one company under capitalism is no solution unless it leads to the same result in the whole system.

Union Hiring

Another demand the caucus should raise to advance the class struggle is for a union hiring system. This means that anyone seeking work in a plant or industry is hired at the union hall under an open, fair, first-come, first-served basis, kept that way by membership control. This is the only real way to enforce the sliding scale of hours. This system was won in the 1934 general strike in San Francisco and has been used since—with some bureaucratic tampering that should be eliminated—by seamen and West Coast longshoremen. A union hiring system provides protection to union members on the job, because the company can't replace a good union man with a company man. The best way for workers to control what happens on the shop floor is for the union to do the hiring.

Another set of transitional demands include pregnancy leave with pay, company supplied cafeteria meals, and child care centers paid for by the companies and controlled by the workers. These demands would remove the burden and expense of having children, freeing men and especially women workers from tiring chores.

Rank-and-File Control

In these times of inflation, recession and the threat of full-scale depression, the chances for companies to claim bankruptcy are greater. Recently one of the biggest and oldest corporations, the Penn-Central Railroad, went bankrupt. We must expose these financial swindlers and profiteers. Billionaires are saving their billions while public services go to pieces and workers are thrown out of work—all because there's no longer a fat profit in it for the billionaires! Caucus members must show how workers' control is the only answer. We can run it better than they can; we can do so for the use and benefit of all, rather than for the profit of a few!

When the Bosses Say They're Broke

In the course of tough contract negotiations, the company may say, "we can't afford to give this to you; we will go broke." They say this all the time anyway, but if some of the above-mentioned demands are really fought for, they will surely whine and complain very loudly about how "unfair" labor is being, not bargaining "in the public interest", etc., in the press and on television in all their organs of "public opinion" manipula-

The meaning and procedure of contract negotiations should follow from the true nature of the class struggle and the contract. Today, with rare exceptions, trade union-management relations are a sham at best. We have already seen that the boss calls in his stooges--government officials, judges, etc.--whenever he needs them, cranks out false propaganda and openly attempts to give up as little of his booty to the workers who produced it as possible. This is a challenge to war whether or not the boss agrees to "negotiate". And what do the union bur-

Continued next page

BUILDING A CAUCUS

from page 5

eaucrats do? They go to bargain with the bosses instead of to fight. Rather than simply presenting the workers' demands, they go to "wheel and deal" them away! They don't assemble the membership's forces to face the battle which confronts them; more often than not, in order to preserve their own "respectability", they weaken the union and actively aid the boss in getting the workers to knuckle under to "terms" virtually dictated by the bosses!

The caucus must expose the fallacies of "collective bargaining" and, at the same time, present alternatives that will really protect the workers' interests at the negotiation table. The members should be encouraged to take part in formulating the demands, and the caucus should fight for complete membership control of this process from start to finish. Negotiators should be given detailed instructions as to what they are to do, based on membership decision on what it wants to fight for. Economists and lawyers should be consulted as advisors, not directors of these discussions.



The caucus may want to propose a rank-and-file representative system for conducting negotiations, especially if these are conducted at the national level. For instance, members in each local or area could discuss their demands and elect one or more rank-and-filers to present their demands and sit in on the negotiations, so as to keep the negotiators on their toes, make sure the proceedings get reported accurately to the members in notices and news sheets, etc.

If the membership rejects a proposed agreement, or if time runs out on the contract, a strike vote should be taken. If the unions strictly adhered to the "No contract, no work" slogan, many problems could be avoided. Long, drawn-out negotiations after the contract is up are often used by bureaucrats and bosses alike to weaken and demoralize the members' fighting spirit. Workers at the Independent Journal in San Rafael, California worked 15 months over their deadline, "negotiating" with a boss who remained obstinate, and used the time to train scabs disguised as Sunday "janitors"! Now the workers have been on strike for many months with no end in sight, while the live-in scabs run the paper.

If the membership votes to strike, the contract representatives should become a strike committee and coordinate the activities of the elected local or plant strike committees. The negotiating notices should become strike bulletins. Contact with other unions, especially on the rank-and-file level, should be made to mobilize a full support effort.

The key to securing the best possible

contract is that the membership be informed and determined to see to it that the job is done right. "Clever" maneuvering and fancy footwork by a pack of bureaucrats will not make any real gains; in fact, the fancy tactics are more often than not designed to work against the members' real interests rather than for them. Even if a few token hand-outs are gained by the bureaucrats' "collective bargaining", the members, not having had the experience of struggling against the bosses, will not learn how to defend what little they do have. Too often the union is looked upon as simply an agency which is supposed to do something for the members, but which the members have no business participating in themselves. This makes it much easier for bureaucrats and bosses to trick the members with sneaky wordings and "loopholes" in the contract, and it also makes it easier for the bosses to simply ignore the good, protective clauses after it has been signed, all to the detriment of the rank and file. The caucus must fight for a membership-controlled contract, worked out and fought for by the rank and file, and then enforced afterwards. This requires knowledge, and the first task of any caucus worthy of the name, is to know the contract under which the members work backwards and forwards, so that they can always lead the membership in protecting themselves against violations, and in suggesting new improvements, based on the experience of the workers.

Caucus Role

The life of the caucus is based on struggle. Its purpose is to bring the concept of the class struggle to the union so that the workers, instead of being victims of a system of exploitation, can struggle against that system for themselves, and in their own name. Every step of this task will bring the militant workers into conflict not only with the bosses, but also with the false "leaders" of the unions who stand in the way of the struggle. The first task of the militant union caucus in this double fight against the bosses and bureaucrats is to replace the leadership of the union, to kick out the bureaucrats so that the struggle can go forward.

Caucus members must struggle and learn through experience while encouraging and leading the membership on every level of struggle. On the job they must demonstrate that they are willing to work and do a good job so that they can fight for the right of every worker for good conditions and a comfortable life without being labelled "loafers". They should accept union responsibilities, which include tedious, thankless jobs such as meeting secretary, shop steward, picket duty, and so forth. They should show interest and consideration for day-to-day problems as well as the larger issues.

Caucus members must not think of themselves as superior to the less active brothers and sisters in the union; they must constantly struggle to interest all the workers in what they want to do and convince them that they, too, can and should stand up and fight for their rights. One reason the bureaucrats are so bad is because they hold the workers—their own members—in complete contempt. They think the workers are too stupid to solve their own problems, and that leaders should do it for them. They think they are very smart, and if only the workers would listen to them, everything would be fine. Then they wonder

why more workers don't attend their union meetings! The caucus must provide leadership, but the purpose of good leadership is to prepare and lead the workers into the struggle, to set an example to prove to them that it is possible to fight back, not to substitute the maneuverings of the leaders for the action of the rank-and-file. The caucus must help smash this elitism!

The caucus should always paint the whole picture, tying the economic, bread-and-butter issues to the social and political questions. How can the members battle for a good contract if they do not understand the workings of the anti-labor laws, something about the ups and downs of the capitalist economy, the practices of the bosses' courts (injunctions, etc.), and the ways in which black and women workers are particularly oppressed? They cannot. The struggle for the contract can no longer stand alone; the workers must understand their interests and all related social questions.

One of the most important ways a caucus proves its worth to lead is in a strike. Strikes and other sharp struggles with the bosses are also the best times to test the behavior of the union officials, and expose their betrayals. In the next article we shall discuss the role of the caucus during a strike.

TEAMSTERS

Continued from p. 8

and went right back off the first chance the officials could get—the wildcatters managed to nail down a decent national agreement by their independent action.

Some strikers were fired in Los Angeles, but solidarity action mainly by Local 70 East Bay area members who boycotted in the north the outfits that were doing the firing in Los Angeles helped win some amnesty. This took place in spite of attempts to "mediate" by Mayors Yorty and Alioto, two divergent Democrats who could see eye-to-eye on the point of undermining labor's struggles.

During the strike it became clear that the labor movement is up against the same oppressive rulers as the student movement. In Ohio Governor Rhodes and state mayors called out the National Guard to suppress the Teamster struggle, and soon afterward these same troops were sent to Kent State where they shot down anti-war students. In Los Angeles, where injunctions were issued to cut back on the number of union pickets allowed, sympathetic students joined the picket line to bolster the union struggle. This latter example must be expanded to create real solidarity between the struggles of students and workers against the bosses.

Although it's clear that it isn't easy to win significant gains against a combination of enemies like hard-nosed employers, unfriendly local government authorities, an openly anti-labor national government and the sell-out policy of the union's International leadership, it can be done with solidarity in the ranks, militant local leadership, and a helping hand from the ranks of other unions and from radical students. But even what can be won with steely determination of the ranks can be lost in a politically anti-labor environment. When it comes to open conflict between workers and the bosses, the Democratic "friends of labor" and Republican politicians join together to crush the workers' struggle, with the help of the "progressive" union bureaucrats. To wage a political fight against strike-breaking anti-union legislation, regressive taxation, etc. we need a workers' political party, a Labor Party, to advance the interests of working people.

A WORKERS' ACTION group for the greater New York City area was formed at a lively and well-attended public meeting held on May 27, following the distribution of thousands of leaflets entitled, "War and the Workers" to a large anti-war labor rally at City Hall called by over a dozen unions in the New York area on May 21 in protest against the Cambodian invasion and the murders of students at Kent State and Jackson State. The WORKERS' ACTION leaflet addressed itself to union militants and urged a fight against the war and their sellout union leaderships around demands including a united front of labor and students against government intervention in the unions and the anti-war movement; for workers' political strikes against the war; and for a break with the Democratic and Republican parties and the formation of a workers' political party.

The call for the organizing meeting, appropriately entitled, "Oust Labor's Phonies—a discussion by trade union militants on how to oust George Meany and the phonies in your own union", drew a wide response. Among those present were members of District 65-NCSWA; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW); Communication Workers of America (CWA); Social Service Employees Union-Local 371, District Council 37; National Maritime Union (NMU); Building Service Employees Union; International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU); a building trades apprentice, as well as a number of student supporters from local campus Work Stoppage Committees. The meeting was addressed by Jack Heyman of the NMU Militant-Solidarity Caucus and Earl Trusty, a union militant from the Socialist Committee for Correspondence, who spoke on the problems of their respective unions, and Al Spanfelner of the SSEU-371 Members for a Militant Caucus, who presented an analysis of the current strike waves, rank-and-file revolts, and critically examined the various false alternatives facing union militants, ranging from pure and simple "workerism", through several varieties of "left-center" coalitions, to the phony Alliance for Labor Action (ALA). He ended his talk with the necessity of building organized caucuses within unions around the militant trade union program of WORKERS' ACTION as the basic strategy for throwing out union bureaucrats and taking power by the membership. After a lively discussion a vote was taken by all those expressing agreement with the program to form a WORKERS' ACTION group in the New York City area. The motion carried unanimously and the hard work of building WORKERS' ACTION began. At a subsequent meeting a steering committee, local officers, and a Corresponding Editor were elected and a dues structure was established.

NEW YORK WORKERS' ACTION GROUP FORMED

Hotel Bosses Squeeze Black and Chicano Workers

Hotel bosses and sell-out union leaders are ganging up on hotel workers. The bosses want to replace most of the present people in order to destroy the old working conditions and what unionism still exists there, and the union "leaders" are looking the other way—on purpose. The bosses are replacing the present workers with new people whom they can get more work out of and who don't realize that they're getting screwed.

Nine maids have been fired from one of the A-1 hotels in San Francisco in the last two years—all for phony reasons! The union "leaders" merely say, "We will get you another job," but this means the worker loses all her seniority. Who wants to do that just because the rotten union bureaucrats won't fight for them on the jobs they're on now?

Racism

The bosses are using racism to divide the workers. Blacks have always been the last hired and the first to be fired, and the bosses have always used racism to lower the wages and working conditions of all workers. Most of those fired have been black. Blacks are also being harassed and forced to quit. Recently, a black maid who was forced to work overtime by the boss got hurt on her way home and was out for 6 weeks. On her return, the boss used her absence as an excuse to take her section away from her and make her work from floor to floor, as though she were just starting on the job. They hope this kind of rotten treatment will force her to quit.

The hotel bosses are replacing the fired

Since then, the New York group has been meeting every two weeks, discussing various aspects of the WORKERS' ACTION program and hearing reports from members on particular problems they face in their respective industry and union. All union members are being asked to obtain copies of union newspapers, leaflets, constitutions, etc., so that the group as a whole can become familiar with a wide range of union situations.

Following the June 27-28 "Rank-and-File Conference" in Chicago, which was attended by several members of WA from the East Coast, a public meeting was held in New York to hear a report on the conference by West Coast WA spokesman Chris Kinder. He reported that the conference had very little to offer for rank-and-file militants, and instead, as anticipated, was very bureaucratically run by the various "progressive" union bureaucrats like Al Evanoff of District 65, mostly as an attempt to bolster their own tarnished images to their memberships as "liberal" union leaders. (See article on the conference on p. 2).

On August 11, a WORKERS' ACTION leaflet drafted by a District 65 member was distributed at a meeting of the General Council of District 65 on the occasion of an appearance by Leonard Woodcock, the new president of the UAW. District 65 was one of the unions, along with the UAW, that withdrew from the AFL-CIO and joined with the Teamsters to form the ALA (Alliance for Labor Action). District 65 president David Livingston talks a good "liberal" game but does little for his membership's actual working conditions, let alone mobilize them for action, for example, against the war. The leaflet said in part:

"Livingston and the other union leaders who participated in the formation of the ALA present this as a courageous step in fighting Meany. But what is needed to defeat Meany is not organizational separation but a political fight involving not only the ALA unions but also the members of the unions inside the AFL-CIO, and the building of rank-and-file caucuses inside all the unions to fight against sellouts, undemocratic practices, Nixon's war and the entire political perspective which seeks to tie working people to the employers' politicians."

The New York WA group is just getting off the ground, but the response so far has been very encouraging. The general perspective of the group is to expand the already organized caucuses and to combine topical discussions with new organizing work, so that business meetings are not just routine work sessions. A series of public meetings has been projected, to be preceded by leafleting and other organizing in the appropriate unions, to discuss problems of, for instance, maritime workers, public employees, distributive workers, etc. In addition, public talks to campus radicals and groups are anticipated with the opening of school in the fall.

black workers with Chicanas who know little or no English, are unfamiliar with the contract and conditions of work, and are not members of the union at first. The bosses are using these people to worsen the conditions for everybody! In the construction trades, other employers are trying the same trick, only they are trying to use black workers to break the union conditions. The bosses are all the same. They don't care who they have to use or how they have to trick, lie, steal and cheat, as long as they can make more profits! They want us to be fighting among ourselves, race against race, minority against minority. They are getting

away with murder—in the form of higher profits—at the expense of all of us!

Conditions in the San Francisco hotels are desperate because the labor movement no longer represents the rank-and-file workers. Most of "our" so-called union "leaders" have sold out long ago, either to the bosses directly or to the Democratic Party, which is the same thing. We must organize and fight these rats! We must get our unions back from these bureaucrats who take pay-offs and live high off the hog at our expense. We must make our unions what they were intended to be in the first place: controlled by the workers in the interests of the workers!

SEAMEN NEED MORE SHIPS -- NOT MORE WARS!

The leaflet reprinted below was issued in Spanish and English in early June in New York by the N.M.U. MILITANT-SOLIDARITY CAUCUS in response to a resolution passed by the Curran leadership at the May NMU (National Maritime Union) meeting in New York, which gave full support to the Nixon expansion into Cambodia. The scandal-ridden Curran leadership has long given flag-waving support to the U.S. war in Vietnam on the ostensible basis that the war means "more jobs" for seamen. The MILITANT-SOLIDARITY CAUCUS was formed early this year as an independent opposition of rank-and-file seamen in the NMU, following a break from the "Committee for NMU Democracy" led by James Morrissey. The split was the result of the persistent failure of the Morrissey group to go beyond "personality politics", immediate bread-and-butter issues, and attacks on blatant graft in the union to organize on the basis of a program dealing with the whole range of social, economic and political issues that directly effect the working conditions of maritime workers as well as the rest of the labor movement. For example, until recently, the Morrissey group maintained a conspicuous silence on the Vietnam war, waiting to cite the Wall Street Journal (!) as the authority for their first feeble statement opposing the war.

Originating on the West Coast, the supporters of the MILITANT-SOLIDARITY CAUCUS have been publishing their own paper, *The Beacon*, since 1968. The caucus recently expanded to the East Coast, the main base of the NMU, and has developed contact with tugboat workers and river men, as well as some shoreside workers in the NMU. Spokesmen for the caucus recently attended the so-called "Rank-and-File Conference" in Chicago and established contacts with other militants in the maritime industry.

For further information on the program and activities of the NMU MILITANT-SOLIDARITY CAUCUS write to: *The Beacon*, PO Box 2827, San Francisco, California 94126, or PO Box 210, New York, N.Y. 10011.

At the May N. M. U. meeting in New York, a resolution was passed giving total support to President Nixon's intervention into Cambodia. Although Joe Curran was supposedly out of town on important business at the time, he will have to assume the responsibility for the passage of this resolution and for bringing our union to where it is today—in the gutter of the trade union movement. First the book selling scandal, then the million dollar pension swindle, then Curran's call for subsidizing foreign shipbuilders, and now the N. M. U. goes on record as supporting President Nixon 100%, after a rump union meeting.

Wars, Jobs and Dictators

How many times have we been told that war makes more jobs? The only thing wars make are inflation, war taxes, and now, as we can see from the near-empty boards, less and less jobs. Our buying power now is less than it was just three years ago. The growing recession has just about wiped out our last contract.

While Curran is crying about support for these chump military dictators in Cambodia and Vietnam, our jobs are being stolen by runaway scab ships, many owned by American companies, flying the flags of Panama, Liberia and Greece. It is no accident that each of these countries has a vicious dictatorship which controls or has smashed the unions in their country. Most of the seamen on these ships belong to a weak union or no union at all. As if this isn't bad enough, our "friendly" President Nixon is thinking about subsidizing these shipowners too! What an insult to seamen!

The Labor Fakers and Their Sweethearts

Our fight is not in Indochina. It is right here against those big businessmen that started the war and are keeping it going in order to fatten their profits. We must stop this war. We can begin by working to repeal the Cambodia resolution and replace it with one calling for the N. M. U. to join with the U. A. W., Teamsters, and other unions in condemning U. S. intervention in Vietnam and Cambodia and blasting Meany, that notorious labor faker. In solidarity with other unions, we must condemn the repressive measures of the government against the striking postal workers, Teamsters, and students. We must defend

racial minorities, including the Black Panthers, against racist police attacks. We, working people, must be united in our struggle against the bosses.

A militant and progressive N. M. U. can only be achieved by developing militant caucuses in every port to work for the needed changes. Our strength lies in the determination of our brothers and sisters to organize and fight, and not in going to courts, cops (including the F. B. I.), tricky politicians, or

the Coast Guard. As we are organizing our caucuses, we must build ties with other militant rank and file caucuses in other unions like the U. A. W., U. F. T., and T. W. U.

Militant-Solidarity Caucus

We, brothers of the Militant-Solidarity Caucus, refuse to be silenced! Unless we begin to challenge Curran's mis-leadership, our shipping boards will remain empty. ONLY SEAMEN'S ACTION CAN SECURE SEAMEN'S JOBS AND BRING AN END TO THIS WAR! WE DEMAND:

1. No U. S. cargo on scab runaway ships -- support militant union organizing efforts in Greece, Liberia, and Panama.
2. No homesteading -- no backdoor shipping -- relief crew shipping on all N. M. U. ships -- ALL JOBS ON SHIPPING BOARD.
3. Nationalization of all U. S. ships under seamen's control -- no subsidized profit for shipowners, U. S. or foreign.
4. An immediate end to the corporation's war in Indochina.
5. An end to discrimination based on race, age, and sex.
6. The building of a Labor Party. Only a workingman's party can represent a seaman's interests!

Teamster Ranks Defy Bureaucrats,

Win Gains



Cleveland Teamsters during April walkout

The nationwide Teamsters' strike-lockout-wildcat of spring and early summer this year had many lessons for labor. Militant, independent action of the ranks in major locals won some significant gains for the rank and file.

As the contract expiration date of March 31 approached, Teamsters' locals in the Chicago area were already so alienated from their international that they started separate negotiations, as did the Independent Truck Drivers Union covering several thousand Chicago drivers.

After the deadline, although many major cities' locals were ready to go out, the International called for talks to continue and for no strike call although union demands and employer positions were admitted to be quite far apart. Local Teamsters in many areas

walked out in such numbers, without waiting for word from the International, that even the chief employer negotiator described the walkouts as massive. In early April, the Chicago Teamsters' and Independent Truck Drivers' locals began selective strikes against the trucking companies. Some minor outfits settled immediately and others locally locked the other Teamsters out.

Showing again the key nature and power of the transportation workers in general, and the dependence of much of the economy on Teamster-moved freight, steel and other industries were cut back early in the strike.

Very early in the strike, strictly by negotiation rather than trying to make any use of the membership's strike power, Fitzsimmons (Hoffa's handpicked successor as Teamster leader) tried for a quick, cheap settlement—a \$1.10 per hour raise over 39 months. On the other hand, the Independent Truck Drivers' locals, with outstanding solidarity on strike, were able to put over a contract with 50% higher wage gains and twice the amount in fringes as the national proposed Teamster contract.

In spite of efforts of the International to get a quick, sell-out settlement, including visits by Fitzsimmons to Chicago and other dissident area locals, the ranks took the heat and held out for a settlement better than the national one, so that the International had to keep its own contract open for the better terms achieved in Chicago. In spite of national meetings of piecards called to settle for less, and in spite of the reactionary leaderships of some locals like that of 85 in San Francisco—which was nudged out on strike to give support to their Los Angeles brothers,

Continued on p. 6