



The ORGANIZER

300 protest police brutality



On July 8th, 300 members of the Puerto Rican community, supported by both Black and white progressive forces from around the city, staged a militant march to City Hall calling for an independent investigation of the murder of Jose Reyes and for an end to police brutality.

The growing wave of police brutality (see July issue of *Organizer*) reached new heights when a Philadelphia policeman murdered Jose Reyes, a 28-year-old Puerto Rican, in the door of his own home over July 4th weekend. According to many witnesses, Reyes, who has been harassed constantly by the police, was unarmed and offered no resistance when accosted by police while working on his car. The police, led by Officer Salerno who shot Reyes, threatened Mrs. Reyes and their neighbors in the street.

Following the murder, the Police Dept. responded to the angry Puerto Rican community by pouring hundreds of cops into the neighborhood. Cops in buses, vans, and on motorcycles and horses occupied every school yard and vacant lot. Sharpshooters with high powered rifle stationed themselves on rooftops.

MILITANT MARCH

But the community was not intimidated. A huge meeting was held and a decision made to stage a march on City Hall to lay the blame for Reyes' murder where it really belongs — on Frank Rizzo's doorstep.

Police brutality in the Puerto Rican community, as in the Black community, is not a matter of isolated incidents but of a deliberate racist policy. Only last month the *Inquirer* publicized the case of Alfredo Ortiz who was mercilessly beaten in full view of his neighbors by the police. Ortiz had committed no crime and offered no resistance. Following the Reyes murder, Raul Santiago, another North Philadelphia man, was shot by police. Police claimed Santiago tried to shoot a police officer, but five witnesses said Santiago had no gun.

On July 8th, 300 members of the Puerto Rican community, supported by both Black and white progressive forces from around the city, staged a militant march down Broad St. calling for:

- 1) An independent and open investigation should be made into the murder of Jose Reyes.
- 2) The immediate suspension of Officer Salerno, and legal action against him.
- 3) All people arrested (during the disturbances) be released, and any medical expenses paid.

4) The city administration be held responsible for any future related incidents.

5) Captain Kelley be suspended from his post in the 24th-25th district.

6) A Community Review Board be convened to monitor the actions of the police.

At City Hall, while demonstrators picketed outside, a delegation sought a meeting with Mayor Rizzo. When Police Commissioner O'Neill and other city officials told them the Mayor could not meet with them, the delegation sat down and refused to budge. All of a sudden, Frank Rizzo found room in his schedule for a meeting.

Rizzo made the usual vague and inconclusive pledges that any policeman found guilty of wrongdoing would be dismissed, prosecuted, etc. But Rizzo refused to budge on any of the demonstrators' concrete demands. The demonstration broke up with its leaders calling for further action to get justice in the Reyes case.

FURTHER ACTION PLANNED.

Since then, a series of community meetings have occurred and a plan for a larger demonstration sometime in August has been formulated. There are divisions in the Puerto Rican community between those who see a solution to the problem coming out of the various investigations of police abuse and those who see mass action as the critical element in bringing the police to bay.

The more conservative elements in the community, particularly the organized small businessmen, also appear to be cool to the idea of building the demonstration as a city wide action that mobilizes all the forces opposed to police brutality. The projected character of the action at this point remains unclear.

What is clear is that if any gains are to be made, it is going to take the building of a broad movement that can unite around a clear program that speaks to curtailing police terror throughout Philadelphia.

DEMONSTRATE AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY
Wednesday, August 17, 12 Noon
Assemble at 6th and Jefferson Sts.
March Past City Hall to the Roundhouse (8th and Race)

supreme court blocks justice
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rape- the facts
p. 8

the mineworkers today p. 8



Letters To The Editor...

Comment on Gay Rights

Unemployed Worker Sustains Organizer

Dear Organizer,

I really like what the PWOC is doing. Even though I live in San Francisco, I would like to help you in your efforts. Therefore, include me in your sustainer program. I am unemployed now, maybe I can afford more when I find a job.

J. C.
San Francisco

The Guardian & Party Building

The following letter was originally sent to the Guardian in response to the exchange between Irwin Silber of that newspaper and Clay Newlin of the PWOC. Since the Guardian chose not to print the letter and because we think it makes some important points, we are printing it with the author's permission.

Irwin Silber, in his response to Clay Newlin's article on party building, spells out certain differences between the Russian situation and our own. Of course, it is true that there are many differences. But Silber fails to even suggest why these differences validate his apparent conclusion that a certain degree of fusion of scientific socialism with the working class movement was a precondition for party formation in Russia but isn't for us. The simple statement that there are differences between Lenin's situation and our own could be (and has been) used in attempts to discredit Lenin altogether.

Silber also badly misrepresents reality in simply stating that the Russian Marxists already "had a party". The founding of the RSDLP in 1898, as he must know, was a founding in name only. In 1903 Lenin said "...this first attempt was not crowned with success: the elements necessary for building up a united and strong Social Democratic Party... did not yet exist... the very forms of the practical activity of the Russian Social Democrats were only just beginning to take shape." (Collected Works, Vol. 6 pg. 305)

Silber criticizes the PWOC for imposing preconditions on party building, insinuating that the very idea of preconditions smacks of stageism and economism. In the above quotation, Lenin was saying precisely that the first party building attempt failed because a precondition had not been met. In 1899 he made it very explicit that there were preconditions: "The conditions essential to such a step (refounding the party - J. F.) already exist: local Party work is being carried on and has obviously struck deep roots..." (Collected Works, Vol. 4, pg. 221, emphasis J. F.)

Any concrete plan for party building must involve preconditions. They are the concrete specification of the steps needed to get from here to there. Without specifying preconditions, we can't concretely plan our activity. The fact that the Guardian "imposes no preconditions" speaks to the vagueness and abstractness of its party building line rather than its freedom from economism.

In comradely struggle,
J. F., Boston

We hope our readers will study the PWOC's reply to the Guardian in this issue of the Organizer and send us their views on this debate.

To the Organizer,

I'm glad you had an article on Gay rights but it had no analysis of how homophobia is related to division of labor by gender under capitalism and failed to show that poor and working class lesbians are the real victims of anti-gay prejudice.

There is no question that the capitalist class uses anti-gay sentiment to strengthen reaction and divert the masses from the real sources of social decay (See article on Anita Bryant campaign in this issue of the Organizer). However, we do not see the oppression of gays as being analogous to the oppression of women or

national minorities. Both women and oppressed nationalities within the working class form part of a reserve army of labor and are super-exploited by capital. This is the material basis for racism and sexism and is central to why we see the struggle for sexual, racial and national equality as revolutionary in nature.

While gays unquestionably suffer discrimination in capitalist society, it does not take on this material character. The fight against the oppression of gays is part of the overall struggle for democracy and must be taken up by communists. But the tendency to see it as analogous to racism and sexism as a means of maintaining monopoly capitalism and spawning divisions in the working class can only mislead us in our effort to forge revolutionary strategy.



"It's an emergency, Doc... They need the drill right away..."

Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

Who We Are



The PWOC is a Communist organization, basing itself on Marxism-Leninism, the principles of scientific socialism. We are an activist organization of Black and white, men and women workers who see the root causes of the day-to-day problems of working people as the capitalist system itself. We are committed to building a revolutionary working class movement that will overthrow the profit system and replace it with socialism.

We seek to replace the anarchy of capitalist production with a planned economy based on the needs of working people. We want to end the oppression of national minorities and women, and make equality a reality instead of the hypocritical slogan it has become in the mouths of the capitalist politicians. We work toward the replacement of the rule of the few -- the

handful of monopolists -- by the rule of the many -- the working people.

The masses of people in the US have always fought back against their exploitation and today the movement in opposition to the monopolists are rapidly growing both in numbers and intensity. What is lacking is the kind of political leadership that can bring these movements together, deepen the consciousness of the masses, and build today's struggles into a decisive and victorious revolutionary assault against Capital.

To answer this need we must have a vanguard party of the working class, based on its most conscious and committed partisans, rooted in the mass movements of all sectors of American people and equipped with the political understanding capable of solving the strategic and tactical problems that present themselves on the difficult road to revolution.

The PWOC seeks, in conjunction with like-minded organizations and individuals throughout the US, to build such a party -- a genuine Communist Party. The formation of such a party will be an important step forward in the struggle of the working class and all oppressed people to build a new world on the ashes of the old.

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Labor Round-up



Strike at Temple

The following article was submitted by an RN who was active in support of the Temple strike.

On July 11 Temple Hospital and University workers overwhelmingly ratified their contract offer after a militant five day strike. The 2200 clerical, service, and professional and technical workers are represented by Local 1199C. The union had previously settled with nine other area hospitals and nursing homes without having to strike.

1199C granted several extensions from the June 30th deadline in an effort to reach an agreement. By the afternoon of July 6th, it became clear that Temple would not budge past its 9 1/2% wage offer and a strike was called.

Less than 12 hours later, an injunction was issued limiting pickets to four per gate. In spite of this intimidation, there was spirited mass picketing. A total of 60 arrests were made, 17 of whom were merely reprimanded. The remaining 43 were charged with contempt of court. Two university professors were charged with assault.

Prior to and during the strike, the hospital put out a steady stream of propaganda accusing the workers of endangering the lives of the patients. Historically the union has always been concerned with patient care. Most of the work can be covered by supervisory staff but where necessary emergency personnel have been allowed to cross. In this strike, an LPN went to the emergency room to assist with a case, but was forced to leave by the administration.

Hostility on the hospital line was mainly directed at registered nurses who most of the workers viewed as scabs. RN's, who recently organized into the Pennsylvania Nurses Association, settled their contract this spring. The PNA leadership refused to have the RN's contract expire at the same time as the other hospital workers, thereby reinforcing their tendency to see themselves as different from and better than the other workers.

Most RN's did not honor the picket lines which compromised the strength of the strike. In fact, joint bargaining would probably have prevented a strike in the first place and would certainly have resulted in better contracts for both groups.

A progressive group of RN's from various hospitals in the city, known as *Nurses Unite!* was present on the picket line. They sought to convince RN's that by crossing the picket lines they were prolonging the strike and ultimately damaging their own interests by dividing themselves from other hospital workers.

Gains in the contract were minimal. The union was asking for a wage increase of 13% or \$30, whichever was greater, terms which were nearly achieved at the other nine hospitals. They settled for a straight

12%, 6% as of July 1st and 6% July 1st 1978.

There has never been any cost-of-living adjustment clause, nor was one gained with this contract. Current inflation rates will just about consume the wage increase. They received a 1 1/2% increase in benefits, an increase which is vital for the maintenance of the union's excellent health and welfare plan. All workers are now entitled to tuition benefits. LPN's retained their three week vacation after one year, which the administration wanted to reduce to two weeks.

Militant Steward Blacklisted

Former steward of the Amalgamated Food Employees Union Local 196 AMCBWNA Mike Todorow is now having to file charges with the NLRB for the union's attempt to blacklist him.

Todorow was harassed and then fired from Holiday Markets for rank and file activities and because he was a militant steward. He lost his case in arbitration and asked the union several times to help him find work. The union sent him to a plant that was laying off workers, and a new supermarket a week before it opened and after it had already done all its hiring.

After 14 months Todorow finally found a job on his own at a Thriftway store. After a week one owner told Todorow that he would probably be given more hours. Soon after, the Vice President of Local 196 came to the store, saw Todorow, and met in the back office with two owners. One week later Todorow was laid off. The owners said they couldn't afford to keep him.

In January, Todorow found another job at Spruce Hill Market. Again, Vice President Sanders came into the store and met with one of the owners. Later they owner admitted that the union official had called Todorow a troublemaker, a communist, and someone who was blacklisted. A few days later Sanders came back and told the owner to "get rid of him by the end of the week or else."

Todorow first filed charges against Sanders within the union, but the seven person committee elected to try Sanders, including four executive board members and two district stewards, who are appointed by the President, dismissed the charge. The NLRB has also dismissed Todorow's charge because the owner of Spruce Hill Market testified that "he couldn't recall" what Vice President Sanders said to him. As soon as Todorow can collect more evidence, he will be re-opening the charge.

Court Jams Catholic Teachers

Bending over backwards to please the Archdiocese, Judge van Artsdalen turned a labor relations case into a first amendment case and ruled that *respecting the rights of its lay teachers as workers violates the religious freedom of the Catholic Church.*

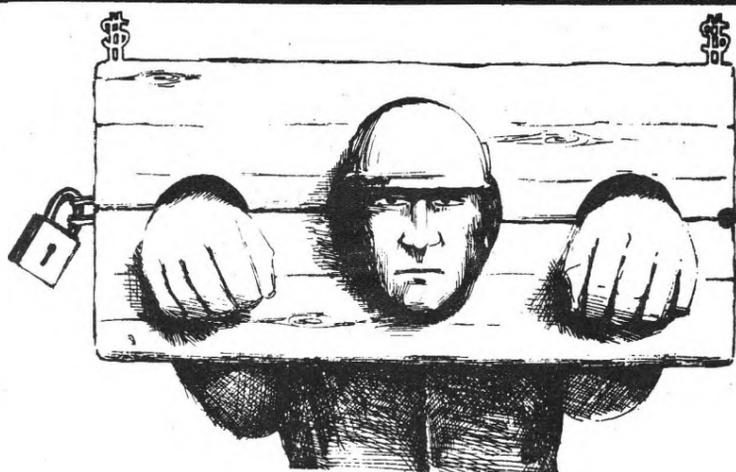
In fact, the First Amendment has nothing to do with this issue, since a teacher's contract is not about to dictate what can or can't be taught. What is at stake is the right of workers to organize to gain better conditions and wages, and to protect themselves from abuse by their employer. Who the employer is should be irrelevant. (The National Labor Relations Act, however, has always exempted certain groups of employers from recognizing their workers — farmworkers are the largest group which has not had NLRB protection.)

Can workers form unions without the approval of the NLRB? The farmworkers have. So did all the thousands of workers in many industries who organized before

1935, when unions were first legally recognized. Before 1935, and in many cases after, unions won recognition only on the basis of strength and solidarity which the companies couldn't ignore.

The strength of a union in relation to an employer, its ability to win gains for its members depends on its organization and strength among the rank and file, not its legal recognition. If the Catholic teachers had the unity and organization to compel the Archdiocese to recognize them, Judge van Artsdalen's anti-labor ruling would be irrelevant.

The Organizer recognizes that legal guarantees of trade union rights represent victories for the working people who pushed Congress to pass them, and supports using them to the best advantage. But when workers see these laws, rather than our own strength, as setting the limits to our ability to organize, we are relying too much on a legal and court system which, overall, is designed to serve the corporations, not the people.



Labor Law Project Underway

Members of rank and file caucuses and lawyers met on June 12 to discuss the formation of a Rank and File Labor Law Project. The purpose of the project is to provide rank and file caucuses with inexpensive legal assistance on an ongoing basis.

It was decided that a committee composed of one representative from each rank and file caucus would meet with the project's lawyers. The committee will be referring cases to the lawyers and also doing educational work and fundraising.

Other Rank and File Labor Law Projects exist in New York City, Chicago, Milwaukee, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and other

major cities. They are part of a National Labor Law Project initiated by the National Lawyers Guild to provide legal defense for rank and file movements such as Teamsters for a Democratic Union and the Sadlowski campaign. Among other things, the national project will be putting together a manual covering elections, health and safety, and discharge, to be used by rank and file organizations.

The next meeting of the local project will be August 11 at 1427 Walnut St. at 8:00 P.M. Among other things, lawyers and representatives from caucuses will be discussing compiling a library of contracts, constitutions, and by-laws, and planning a fundraising drive.



Supreme Court Turns Back the Clock

decisions cut democratic gains

by JIM GRIFFIN

"No state shall deny to any person the equal protection of the law."
from the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the US

"We say to those who think we are demanding too much that it is idle to point to the amendments and ask us to be satisfied with them and wait until the nation is educated up to giving us something more. The amendments are excellent but they need to be enforced."

Frederick Douglass

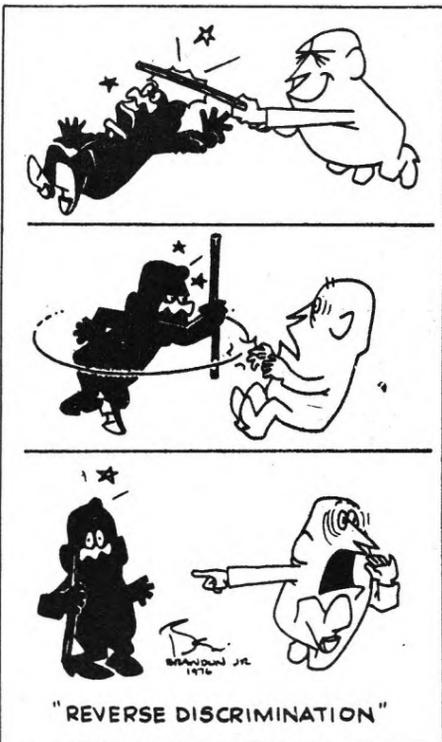
In a whole series of rulings, the Supreme Court has erected a legal barrier to the further extension of democratic rights to the oppressed nationalities and women. It has created a body of precedent that now can be utilized by the bourgeoisie to turn back the advances made by the civil rights movement in the 1960's.

BLOWS TO DESEGREGATION

The Court's main blow has been directed against the Black people's fight for equality. The principle arena has been the battle over school desegregation. In the 1950's and 60's, in response to the offensive launched by the civil rights movement, the Warren Court outlawed *de jure* segregation and compelled the integration of southern school systems.

The court, in a series of rulings, also attacked the *de facto* segregation prevalent in northern urban school systems. But with the waning of the civil rights movement and the packing of the court with a series of reactionary appointments under Richard Nixon, the whole direction of the court's interpretation has profoundly changed.

In 1974, the Court struck down a lower court plan in Detroit that would have involved the creation of a "multi-district" involving both the city and the suburbs. The court set stringent limits on such metropolitan busing plans. Since then, the court has struck down busing plans in a number of cities. And now, in taking up the Dayton, Ohio case, the board may be on the verge of creating a precedent that will effectively scuttle any serious court-ordered desegregation plan.



DOCTRINE OF INTENT

The court has developed a new doctrine to justify its restriction of desegregation. Briefly put, it is that the plaintiffs (those bringing the charges) have to prove that there was an *intent* to discriminate or segregate the school system. Previously, the court had tended to rule that the *fact* of segregation was sufficient to warrant legal remedy, regardless of the motives of the authorities. Intent, of course, is very difficult to prove, since no school board or lawyer is going to acknowledge the existence of an actual policy of segregation. And given the segregation in housing and neighborhoods, a deliberate policy of exclusion is not necessary to bring about segregation of the schools.

In the Detroit case, the Court ruled that the fact that inner city schools were largely Black and suburban schools white did not prove any intent to discriminate and thus the plan was invalid. Now in the Dayton case, the school board is arguing that the segregation of that city's schools was not intentional since there had never been a dual system of schools in Dayton as in the South. The schools merely reflect the geography of the city, according to the board. They are thus asking the Court to strike down a plan that calls for racial balance throughout Dayton's school system. The Court's capitulation to racism has encouraged a whole wave of appeals by school boards and anti-busing forces.

HOUSING DECISION

The court is not only bolstering desegregation in the schools. It has also dealt a major blow to the effort to desegregate housing. In the Arlington Heights case, a Chicago suburb, the court upheld discriminatory zoning rules that have served to keep the neighborhood lily-white. The court went beyond its usual "intent" argument and in this case, said that even if there was an intent to discriminate, the laws were not necessarily unconstitutional if it could be shown there were *other overriding reasons* for why they were needed. In other words, if a community can show that an open housing policy would put a strain on the sewer system or result in higher taxes, for example, those inconveniences could be used to justify segregation.

By simultaneously limiting the scope for busing to achieve desegregation and reinforcing segregation in housing, the Court is in effect committing itself to maintaining the status quo on school integration.

The same direction is evident in the Court's approach to discrimination in relation to employment. Last year, in the Washington vs. Davis case, the Court ruled that discriminatory patterns in hiring are constitutional unless an "intent" to discriminate can be proven. In May of

this year, it applied the same doctrine to uphold discriminatory seniority systems.

WOMEN VICTIMS OF COURT

Women as well as national minorities have been victimized by these rulings. In addition, the Court's judgement that women do not have to be compensated for disability due to pregnancy and the decision that states do not have to cover the costs of abortion in their medical assistance programs, are direct blows to the struggle for equality for women, blows that fall heaviest on working class and nationally oppressed women.

These decisions threaten the whole idea of affirmative action, the idea that definite compensatory measures have to be taken by employers to insure that minorities and women are hired in adequate numbers and those already employed are upgraded in numbers that reverse patterns of discrimination. If every victim of discrimination has to prove "intent to discriminate" on the part of the employers, effective affirmative action becomes impossible.

In the past, the courts have tended to rule that it is not enough for the employer to simply agree to be "fair" in relation to hiring practices and upgrading. The employer must take active steps to eliminate the effects of past discrimination. For example, if a particular firm employed 1000 workers all of whom were white men, it would not be enough to simply hire a token number of Blacks and women to show that the company no longer discriminated. The company would have to hire minorities and women in numbers that would bring the composition of the workforce into some semblance of racial and sexual balance in relatively rapid order. This of course, is where the whole question of quotas associated with affirmative action programs arises.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION THREATENED

An aggressive approach to affirmative action is necessary if any dent is to be made in the effects of generations of discrimination. But the Supreme Court is clearly moving in just the opposite direction. And now with the Bakke case, the stage is set for the court to completely hamstring affirmative action programs.

This case involves a white student who is claiming "reverse discrimination" because his application for admission to graduate school was rejected. Bakke is claiming that he and other qualified white students are victims of affirmative action programs aimed at strengthening minority admissions. If the court rules in his favor, the implications are enormous. Not only would it deal a death blow to affirmative action in higher education, but by implication it would negate the concept of affirmative action in hiring and upgrading as well.

The Supreme Court, of all the central institutions of the US government, is the most insulated from "public opinion", the least accountable to the people. Its members are appointed rather than elected and serve life terms. The reasoning for this, we all learn in our civics courses, is to insure that the Court is "rational" and "impartial", above and beyond "interest groups." But in fact this is nonsense and always has been.

COURT REPRESENTS MONOPOLY

The Court is appointed by presidents who represent one or the other wing of the monopoly capitalist class. It is selected from legal figures who have a tried and true loyalty to the interests of that same class. In this sense its independence is wholly fictitious.

What is true is that because the Court has a certain autonomy, it is in a position to represent the long range and fundamental interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole and can to a certain extent ignore the immediate pressures that elected politicians are subject to.

This is why the Court is such a reliable barometer of the direction of ruling class policy. And in the present period, it is marching in concert with the executive and legislative branches and the leading circles of the monopoly capitalist class — all of whom are more or less united on a policy of austerity for the working class and a rollback of the gains made by oppressed nationalities and women.

Those who are looking to Smilin' Jimmy to remedy matters had better look again. At best, they will have a long wait, since it is the Court's liberals who are the old members, the ones most likely to retire or die. The Nixon appointees are mostly young and vigorous. But, more importantly, Carter shows few signs of wishing to challenge the conservative drift of the Court. His Attorney General, Griffin Bell, who opposed school desegregation in Georgia and supported the white supremacist Harold Carswell for the Supreme Court, has gone on record as favoring the Court's decisions.

WHAT TO DO?

Does this mean that the situation is hopeless? That we must reconcile ourselves to the erosion of democratic rights? Of course not. It was the militant mass actions of the Black people and their allies in the '50's and '60's that forced the Court into taking the 14th Amendment seriously in the first place. The transformation of Chief Justice Earl Warren, a Republican politician, into a "flaming liberal", reflected the policy of concession and accommodation that the dominant wing of the capitalist class was forced to adopt. A strong mass movement in defense of the democratic gains of minorities and women is the best weapon we have to combat the reaction of the Court.

PEOPLE FIGHT SCHOOL CUTS

by JACK OWENS

It is now over two months since the Philadelphia School Board (SB) surrendered without a shot to John Bunting's (First Penna. Bank) "no cuts — no schools" ultimatum.

To the majority of parents and students, the disaster will not be felt until September, but to those depending on eliminated summer program's and to the 10,000 laid off school employees, the crisis is *now* with no miraculous bail-out in sight.

LEGISLATURE: THUMBS DOWN

The SB, Rizzo, City Council, the banks and the PFT continue to put the responsibility for ending the crisis on the state legislature; however, that body so far has balked at passing the two school subsidy bills being vigorously lobbied for. Rural and suburban legislators especially are accusing Philadelphia of not paying its "fair share", ignoring the fact that Philadelphia already has the heaviest tax burden of any city in the country.

It is the racism of the legislature, however, that is the most important, although unspoken fact. Non-Philadelphia legislators with mostly white constituencies are not about to ask for a tax hike to support Philadelphia's two-thirds Black school population. As Dave Richardson, state

representative from Philadelphia puts it: "Ten or fifteen years ago there would have been no question of closing the schools. Then the schools were 70% white."

COMMUNITY RESPONDS — PFT AND CCPEP

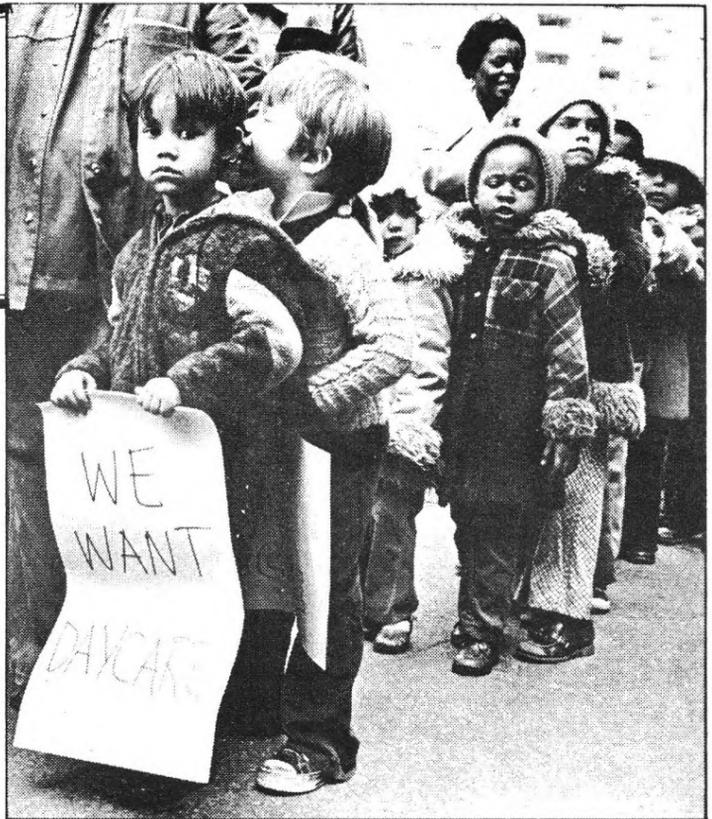
Because the full impact of the crisis will not be felt until September, community response so far has been slow in developing.

The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers leadership has done little but low-level lobbying. While a group of rank and file teachers are trying to fight the cuts, they are hampered by the do-nothing posture of their leadership and the summer scattering of teachers.

Some groups, like the Citizens Committee on Public Education in Philadelphia (CCPEP), are actually playing into the hands of the banks, the city and the state by calling for "limited" cuts of \$79 million in the school budget; increased state taxes; and cuts in other vital city services like trash collection and street cleaning.

SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

The best organized effort to date has been mounted by the Save Our Schools Task Force of the Home and School



Council (SOS), which led 8000 people to Harrisburg on June 7 to demonstrate and lobby for more state aid.

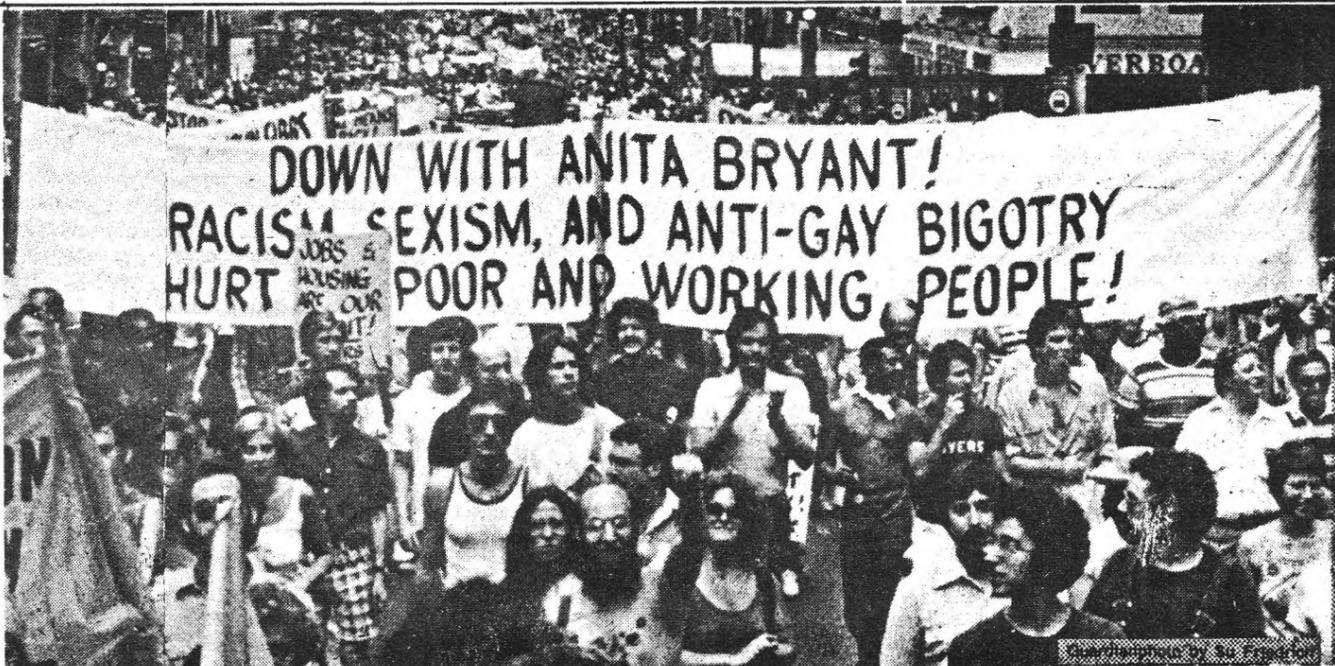
While SOS has participants in many schools, they have so far shown no inclination to go beyond lobbying. Moreover, the support given to and accepted by SOS from the Rizzo administration and local bankers indicate their serious political weaknesses. To Rizzo, especially, SOS has lent a progressive cover to his long-standing racism and disregard for *all minority and working-class people of Philadelphia, children included.*

WALNUT CENTER FIGHTS BACK

Walnut Center, at 37th and Lancaster, is an early childhood education center which serves over 200 children with a year-round pre-school program, and a daycare program which takes kids up to 11 years old during lunch and after school and full-time during the summer.

Despite assurances from School Superintendent Michael Marcuse that the Center would stay open at least until fall, the school was closed June 30 on 24 hours notice! Moreover, SB sources informed

continued on page 13



100,000 activists demonstrated in New York City last month for democratic rights for homosexuals.

Anita Bryant- Who Does She Serve?

Anita Bryant believes she has saved the children of Dade County, Florida. In fact, her successful campaign to repeal the gay civil rights bill -- to make it clearly legal to discriminate in employment and housing because of sexual orientation -- may in the long run affect far more than the gay community of Miami, where some people have already been fired from their jobs simply for supporting the gay civil rights legislation during the referendum campaign.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT GAYS

The campaign launched by Anita Bryant and her supporters played on ignorance about homosexuality and appealed to narrow-minded religious fanaticism. The idea that homosexuals pose a danger to children, that they will molest them or "recruit" them into the practice of homosexuality has no basis in fact.

Homosexuals are no more likely to molest children than heterosexuals -- in fact, the available evidence suggests that they are less likely. Gays, along with virtually everyone else, see child molestation as an anti-social, criminal act. As for the danger of "recruitment", all the scientific evidence points to the fact that sexual orientation is determined early in life and it is not something one is consciously "recruited" into. The origins of homosexuality are not very well understood but it clearly has little to do with the bigoted stereotype of gay men luring or otherwise persuading young children to take up homosexual practices.

The other selling point of the Save Our Children Campaign was that homosexuality is "sinful" and an "act of abomination against God." Christians and organized religion generally are certainly not of a single mind about this. It is the Chris-

tian fundamentalists, who take certain passages in the Bible at their face value, who are most zealous in this belief. Many of these same forces also find Biblical justification for racism and segregation.

Religion is a private affair and under the constitution these individuals are entitled to their reactionary beliefs. But the same constitution calls for the separation of church and state. The interests of democracy demand that no religious group be able to impose its doctrine on the people as a whole. By seeking to deny fundamental democratic rights to gays and legislate discrimination against them on the grounds that their behavior is "sinful" Anita Bryant and Co. are violating this democratic principle.

But Anita Bryant is not just a woman carried away with her religious convictions on this issue. The people rallying to her cause also support a variety of other attacks on the democratic rights of the

American people. For example, Bryant is opposed to abortion, and to the Equal Rights Amendment. She was an enthusiastic supporter of President Nixon's Vietnam strategy. She has accused gay people and their supporters of being communists, playing on the favorite scare tactic of reactionary politicians which has been used to attack every progressive movement of working people from the trade unions to the civil rights movement.

ANTI-GAY CAMPAIGN A DIVERSION

The roots of the crisis of our society don't lie in a lack of religion. When 500 corporations which control 90% of America's economy insist that having 7 million people out of work is necessary to protect their profits; when banks and city governments can't provide money to finance housing construction, decent school systems or public transportation; when racism is used by these corporations and governments to keep Black people in the worst jobs and deny them basic social services, and when women workers are penalized for having children by the loss of seniority or even their job; and when American working people are taxed to provide the latest military hardware to fascist dictators all over the world, we can see that the problems of our society have very real roots in our daily lives and in the power of big business over us.

Anita Bryant and all the "reformers" of her style are in fact only putting up a smokescreen. The fight of the working class, the oppressed nationalities and the masses of people in the US has to be aimed at the Boardrooms of the monopoly corporations not the bedrooms of ordinary citizens.

Our interests are in fighting the anti-gay coalition and in urging the extension of laws protecting the civil rights of gays and calling for the repeal of all laws that further discrimination. The anti-gay forces are a constituent part of organized reaction -- they include the same forces who back right-to-work laws, who fought the civil rights movement tooth and nail and who are working diligently to defeat the ERA. Anti-gays bigotry is only another form of diversion to mask our real enemies and create another convenient scapegoat.

miners face uphill battle

right to strike and safety still key issues

by ANNA GOLD

"As long as you have mining your going to have deaths." That's how Lee Roy Patterson, candidate for president in the recent UMW election answered a reporter who observed that mining fatalities in Patterson's district had greatly increased in the recent period. As Patterson spoke, however, thousands of miners answered the problem by walking off the job. The rank and file miners have had enough of tragedy and they have had enough of the blatant indifference of the mine owners.

The rank and file has made safety and the right to strike over local grievances the central focus of the recent union election and they plan a staunch fight for these same rights in their next contract, due to be negotiated by December 6th. The miners have backed up their demands with wave after wave of wildcat strikes.

MILLER THE WINNER

Patterson was one of three candidates running for the top position in the UMW on June 14th, and as the campaign developed he became more and more clearly identified as the mine operators' man.

Patterson was challenging the incumbent, Arnold Miller, famous for his victory over the Boyle machine. In 1972 Miller was put in office largely thanks to the enthusiastic rank and file reform organization, Miners for Democracy. This time, however, MFD was itself split.

Harry Patrick, part of the Miller slate in 1972 was serving as Secretary Treasurer of the union, and also ran for the top union slot. Patrick claimed that Miller had not lived up to his original campaign promises and as the race developed he gained the support of most of the former Miners for Democracy membership.

Miller won the election, receiving about 40% of the vote, while Patterson and Patrick received 35% and 25% respectively.

The actual voting on June 14th tells us a lot about the situation in the UMW. Significantly, Patterson was roundly defeated by the combined forces of the reform candidates, Miller and Patrick.

Patterson was part of the old Boyle machine, which has been repeatedly exposed for its class collaborationist, sell-out line. Patterson received the enthusiastic support of Abel and president-elect McBride of the Steelworkers Union. In fact, Abel and McBride raised \$5,000 from the International Executive Board of the Steelworkers Union, and this sum represented over 20% of Patterson's campaign funds. The endorsement made perfect sense. Patterson, Abel, and McBride are united in their opposition to the right to strike as well as in their determination to strictly limit internal democracy.

ELECTION FAILED TO MOBILIZE RANKS

No doubt there was a clear difference between Patterson and his two opponents. The defeat of Patterson was essential to the survival of the UMW as an effective representative of the miners. While the right was soundly defeated, there was certainly not much enthusiasm for the alternatives. Neither Miller nor Patrick were able or willing to speak to the desperate needs of the majority of the rank and file miners, and as a result less than half of the eligible voters voted in the elections.

In fact, the lack of interest in the election stemmed primarily from the essential similarity between Miller and Patrick. Both

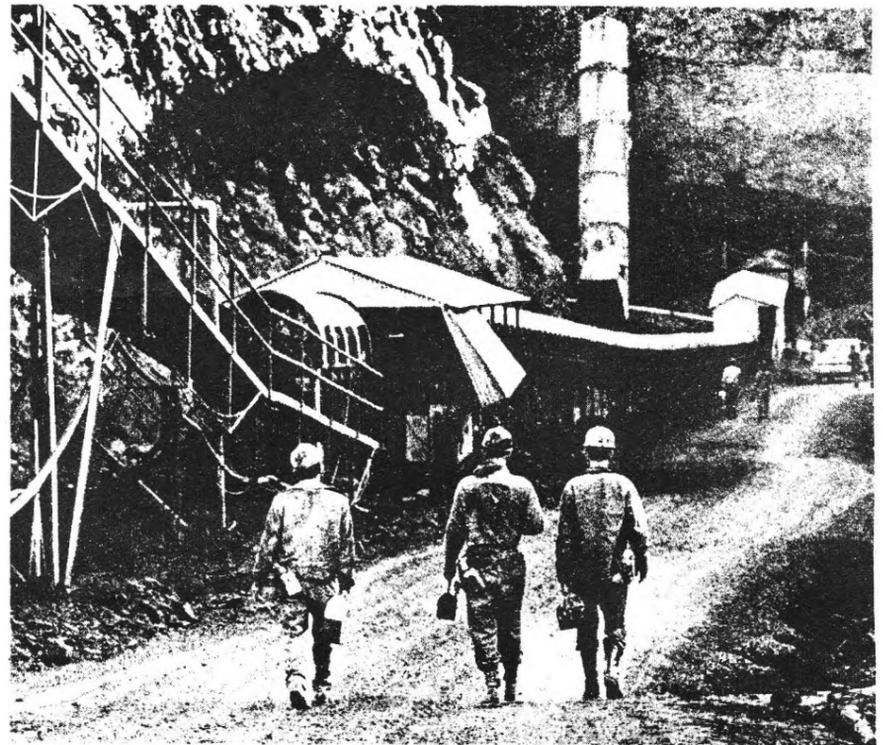
gave verbal support to the safety demands, and pledged their continued support for membership ratification of the contract and election of all UMW officers. Patrick did support the right to strike over local issues by secret ballot majority vote. However, neither Miller nor his challenger Patrick have a very impressive record with respect to the wildcat strikes.

Both have agreed to discipline miners who violate company rules and neither has put forward a clear program to solve the deadlock between the owners and the miners. Neither candidate had a strong rank and file organization, but rather relied on Madison Ave. type campaigns to win.

In the face of weak-kneed leadership the rank and file has been forced to make its demands heard by walking off the job. Indeed, wildcat strikes have been constant and just since 1976 have increased by 68%. Miller has said that "the rash of work stoppages has been a problem. This isn't good for either the companies or the union." He blamed the situation on "a noisy minority of miners", and added, "I want to bring this thing under control."

THE WILDCAT MOVEMENT

There is not doubt that this constant rash of wildcats is an indication of a union weakened by a lack of unity between the leadership and the rank and file. A union leadership that cannot maintain discipline among the membership is in a weak position to negotiate with the companies. The



companies willingness to seriously negotiate is based on the assumption that the union has the strength to assure compliance with the terms of the contract. Secondly, the companies will exploit the division within the union to force a bad contract on the miners.

Is the situation really the fault of an unruly bunch of radicals? That is the position of the mine owners, but what has caused these strikes? Can Miller really bring the situation under control by following his present course?

In fact, the miners are wildcatting because the reform union leadership has shown itself to be unresponsive to the ur-

gent needs of the miners. "We have America's most dangerous job," explained one West Virginia miner to a reporter. "We are told to work in dangerous places. We file grievances and nothing happens. Then you hear about four or ten or twenty more of your buddies killed in an explosion or cave-in. Our grievance gets nowhere and we go on strike. We have no other weapon."

Time and again grievances have been allowed to go all the way to arbitration, where biased arbitrators rule against the union. A good example occurred recently when one of three union safety commit-

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WORKERS' VOICES



WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

Two sides are clearly drawn in this photo of confrontation between militant miners and troops during union struggles of the 1930's.

Songs of the Miners

The militant traditions of the rank and file coal miners have been captured in hundreds of songs, most of them written by miners themselves. The songs of the Appalachian miners are not folk relics or museum pieces. They are still sung by the miners and still inspire them in their continuing struggle.

One of the most moving moments in the Academy Award winning film "Harlan County" is when Florence Reese, a woman now in her 80's, leads the miners in singing "Which Side Are You On?" at a union meeting.

Mrs. Reese wrote the song in 1931 when Harlan county was known as "bloody

Harlan" — where, as one song summed it up:

*"You didn't have to be a drunk to get
thrown in the can.
The only thing you needed be was
just a union man."*

The miners were on strike. Their union was the NMU (National Miners Union) a militant industrial union organized by the Communist Party and other advocates of class struggle unionism. Armed company thugs roamed the countryside, deputized by the sheriff, to terrorize the mining community and find union men

to jail, beat, or kill. The miners fought back and did not hesitate to meet force with force and trade bullets with the gun thugs.

Florence Reese wrote her song from bitter personal experience. Her husband Sam was a union leader. Sheriff J. H. Blair came to her house looking for Sam when she was alone with her seven children. The company lynch mob ransacked the house and surrounded it, ready to shoot Sam down. Florence Reese tore a sheet from a wall calendar and wrote this song:

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

Come all of you good workers,
Good news to you I'll tell
Of how the good old union
Did come in here to dwell

My Daddy was a miner,
And I'm a miner's son.
And I'll stick to the union
Till every battle's won.

They say in Harlan County
There are no neutrals there
You'll either be a union man
Or a thug for J. H. Blair.

Oh workers, can you stand it?
Oh tell me how you can.
Will you be a lousy scab
Or will you be a man?

Don't scab for the bosses.
Don't listen to their lies.
Us poor folks haven't got a chance
Unless we organize.

Chorus:

Which side are you on?
Which side are you on?
Which side are you on?
Which side are you on?

Phone workers "Mad as hell" with Bell offer

by MEGAN O'MALLEY

August promises to bring as much heat as July for Bell System management. Contracts expire August 6, 1977. The union negotiators and rank and file members have not liked what's been offered so far. In fact, it's been downright embarrassing coming from the richest company in the world.

On July 21st Bell System negotiators made an offer the union found easy to refuse. There were no provisions for job security, considered top priority by the unions. No pension improvements were offered. No improvements in upgrading were offered. No increase in short-term sickness benefits was offered. Bell also seeks to lower the present cost of living allowance by setting a limit on the maximum amount to be given.

WAGE PROPOSALS

Commenting on the wage increase proposals, AT&T Labor Relations Vice President Rex Reed said, "Our proposals would enable Bell employees to maintain their relatively favorable position on wages and benefits." Rank and file workers strongly disagree.

The wage increase offer, for those workers making top salary is 5% now, and 2½% on the first and second anniversaries of the contract. There is no wage increase offered at the starting level. Top pay operators now earn \$5.56 an hour; this wage offer would amount to a total increase of 56 cents an hour spread over three years.

Even SEPTA workers, employees of a bankrupt transportation system won 60 cents over two years. Bell workers are seeking to bring their low wages up. This offer could not even maintain the current standard. It is clear that rank and file Bell workers would reject such an unrealistic offer.

Bell System negotiators have told union officials that Bell employees earn a good salary and do not need more money. In Philadelphia, some Federation of Telephone Workers members have circulated a leaflet reprinting a news article with a comment of their own. The article reports a wage increase of \$40,000 given recently to John DeButts, Chairman of the Board of AT&T. The comment: "If this makes you madder than hell. . . fight for a decent contract."

"AT&T's proxy statement reveals that top management takes good care of itself.

For example, AT&T's chairman, John deButts got himself a small raise of \$40,000 last year, up from \$443,900 to \$483,819. Mr. deButts 9% increase gave him some small protection against the ravages of inflation.

Percentagewise, John Lindholm, AT&T President, did even better, winning a pay hike of 14%. His pay went up from \$357,050 to \$405,583. Mr. Lindholm will retire at age 62 which may explain his big increase. His pension will be a mere \$171,791.

Mr. DeButts will also be able to keep the wolf from his door after retiring. If he continues to work to age 65, he will have to get by on a retirement stipend of \$269,639 — if he doesn't get any more pay increases."

—from a leaflet of the Rank and File Committee of Local 1944 IBEW

Glen Watts, President of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) had some investigating done for this contract. In examining the productivity increases nationwide, it was found that non-farm workers gained 0.9%, in manufacturing there was a gain of 1.9%, and in the Bell System productivity increased 6.6%! How is this accomplished? First, **speed-up**. Second, **automation**. Between 1973 and 1976, 100,000 jobs in the Bell System were lost to automation.

This tremendous job loss figure is the reason for the unions' position that job security is most important this year. In Pennsylvania, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, (IBEW), re-

presenting mostly operators, projects that its membership will be cut in half in the next three years.

It is clear why the Bell System contract negotiators have made no offer with a provision for job security. The profits they have made from eliminating workers' jobs are enormous.

Bell workers are in a better position than ever this year in the event of a strike. Two outside agencies commissioned by the CWA have concluded that AT&T would without question be hurt by a strike. In the past, union contracts had different expiration dates. Bell could rely on its management and non-striking wor-

kers to cover for those on strike. With the national deadline of August 6 for everyone, this problem has been solved by the unions.

So, if on August 7 you find that there are no operators to answer your calls, no service representatives to resolve your bills, no repair workers to fix your phones no clerks to manage the mounds of paperwork, and no installers to put in your new phone — don't blame the phone workers who are fighting the richest corporation in the world in order to get a decent standard of living. Remember who it is that's trying to raise phone rates in spite of record profits. *Stand in solidarity with the phone workers!*



When Janet Sloan, a welder at Sun Shipbuilding, fell to her death on June 17th, it was not a freak accident but just the most recent result of the deplorable working conditions the company forces Sun Ship workers to face every day, conditions that caused two wild-cat strikes in the past year.

While those walkouts forced the company to make specific limited concessions, no major gains were made on health and safety issues, largely due to a lack of organization and real leadership. The recently defeated leadership of Boilermakers local 802 severely weakened the walkouts and failed to take up the fight for health and safety. In May, a new leadership was elected by the great majority of workers, due to their campaign based on promises of increased militancy and union democracy. Conspicuously lacking in their campaign was any mention of health and safety.

RANK AND FILE ORGANIZING

Immediately after Janet's death the company tried to cover up the safety violations and conditions that caused her death. The newly-elected leadership remained silent. It became clear to several Sun Ship workers who formed an ad hoc rank and file committee that the rank and file could not simply sit back and rely on the union leadership to take up the struggle; that the rank and file was going to have to unite and organize for health and safety if working conditions were going to improve in the yard.

Sun Ship Workers Fight for Safety

These workers, calling themselves the Janet Sloan Committee/Sun Ship Workers for Health and Safety, put together demands around health and safety to bring to the next union meeting and put out a leaflet in the yard asking the rank and file to come to the union meeting and support the demands.

Shortly after this leaflet was circulated, the union leadership responded with a leaflet that tried to isolate the rank and file committee. The leaflet ignored the committee's demands and instead talked about how "subversive groups such as the Communist Party" were trying to divide and destroy the union.

But in fact, the rank and file committee's demands did speak to the real needs of workers at Sun Ship and because of that the leadership was forced to at least verbally take a strong stand on health and safety at the end of a rally that they held at the main gate. At this time, the leadership took up the rank and file committee's demand to defend the right of workers to refuse an unsafe job. They stated that they intended to use OSHA to carry this out.

At the second shift union meeting the membership was able to force the leadership to recommit itself verbally to defending the workers' right to refuse an unsafe job. Several members pointed out the weakness of relying on OSHA, a government agency with a "do-nothing" reputation, raising that the union should commit itself to fighting for the right of a steward to shut down an unsafe job in the next contract.

Other members raised immediate issues such as the need for a doctor on second and third shifts. Another member raised

the need for all-shift union meetings to help unite the rank and file. The first-shift union meeting later that day was adjourned before the issue of health and safety could be raised.

THE NEXT STEPS

So what are the next steps for the rank and file committee in order for it to grow and gain more victories? First, the committee must take the spoken gains and make them really happen. They must begin to organize workers to refuse unsafe jobs and to make sure that stewards, the new union safety committee that will soon be set up, and the leadership militantly defend the workers' right to refuse an unsafe job.

The leadership cannot be let off the hook on its promises to take action, nor can it be allowed to divert the movement away from the real issues with slanders and red-baiting.

Finally, the committee needs to speak to the question of racism. Historically, Sun Ship has used racism to stick Black workers with the worst and most dangerous jobs and to divide the white from the Black workers. Some years ago, the shop jobs were almost all white while Blacks were assigned to the more dangerous ship work.

While the situation is no longer so extreme, the pattern still survives in that a disproportionate number of whites hold jobs on the ground, while a disproportionate number of Blacks work up on the ships. To forge the unity to win better health and safety conditions for all workers, Black and white, men and women, its going to be necessary to deal with discrimination.

RAPE... separating fact from myth

by SARA MURPHY

In a recent rape case in Madison, Wisconsin, Judge Archie Simonson gave the opinion that a young rapist should be freed because "rape is a natural response" for a young man to make when he sees an attractive woman. Outrage from women's groups and organizations on the left has prompted a recall campaign that may well prove successful.

This incident is one which shows clearly that the sexist myth about rapists and rape victims which have been prevalent in our society are no longer going unchallenged. In recent years, rape, most likely the most frequently committed violent crime in this country, is no longer a taboo subject, confined to the pages of crime magazines. With the rise of the women's movement of the past ten years, the subject has been brought out in to the open -- radio, newspaper and magazine features, even television movies and soap operas -- and many myths surrounding it exploded.

SEXIST MYTHS SURROUND RAPE ISSUE

The central myth about rape is the one reflected by Judge Simonson's opinion, that it is a "natural response to provocation." This is also known as "she asked for it" or "women love it." Underlying these attitudes is the sexual double standard -- that women are chaste and men are promiscuous -- and its complement -- that there are "two kinds of women." For how can men be promiscuous if women are chaste? Only if there are other women who are *not* chaste, who are "fair game."

This has led to the understanding that if a woman is "good" -- that is, if she is married, stays home, dresses and behaves demurely, and minds her own business, she won't have to worry about such things as rape. But if she violates the double standard, if she has sex outside marriage, if she goes out at night without the company of a man, if she walks about alone, if she wears short shorts or tight pants, she is "asking for it," and the man who rapes her is only making a "natural response."

Following on this sexist logic, it has traditionally been the woman victim who goes on trial at a rape case, not the male suspect. The object is to find out if the woman deserved it or not -- thus the grueling and humiliating questions about the woman's past sex life, the manner of her dress, etc. Thus, an unmarried woman who takes birth control pills and does not wear a bra is convicted of having "asked for it" and the suspect acquitted.

But is rape a "natural response" by a man to a woman who stimulates him? The answer is decidedly "no." First of all, rape has become understood as a crime of violence, not a crime of passion. It expresses contempt and brutality, not desire. Oddly enough, a large sector of the feminist movement does, in essence, agree with Judge Simonson -- not that rapists should go unpunished, but that it is "natural" for men to rape. These feminists see the origin of rape in the very nature of male-female relationships, which in their biological origin are expressed as domination of men over women through physical force and strength.

However, there is no evidence that animals, even our closest monkey relatives, ever engage in acts of sex by force. Nor is there evidence that rape existed in early classless societies. Famed anthropologist Margaret Mead tells of primitive societies where there was no concept of men or of male-female relationships that could support the idea of rape.

BASIS OF RAPE: CLASS SOCIETY

Rather, rape came into being when the primitive classless societies broke up into class societies -- when private property and private wealth were accumulated by a few families. It was at this time in human history that war and slavery came into being, as well as the subjugation of women in the male-dominated family. The woman, who had been an equal participant in the old societies, became nothing more than the man's property, to produce heirs to his wealth.

Looking back at ancient history we can see evidence of this new family code. In Rome, a man had the power of life and death over his wife, children and slaves. He slept with his female slaves at will, and his wife was little more than head slave. In war and the capture of slaves in foreign lands, the rape of conquered women signified their enslavement -- we can see this depicted in ancient art.

Going on through the ages, we can see in feudalism the carryover of these practices. The famous "right of first night" -- where the lord of an estate slept with a bride of one of his serfs the first night of their marriage -- signified that the women of the estate, even if they were wives of other serfs, were essentially the property of the patriarch or lord of the manor. While "right of first night" is not rape in the sense of street rape we think of today -- in a dark alley with knife at throat -- it is nevertheless rape, for it is sex with a woman against her will and choice.



White men have always had "free access to Black women. Rooted in slavery, where Black women's lives and bodies were literally the property of their masters, the rape of Black women is part and parcel of U. S. history. Above, a slave woman is subjected to torture and sexual abuse. Even today, the Black rape victim is ignored and forgotten.

And so up to the modern era. The ancient subjugation of women lives on today, with the concept that women are the property of men, and are there to do what men want with them. This sexism, along with the violence of our culture, combine to make rape the most frequently committed violent crime in the US. It is no accident that "sex and violence" in the media go together -- and rape is the combination of the two.

racism and rape go hand in hand, and cannot for a moment be separated. While the myths depict "savage Indians" ravaging white pioneer women stolen from wagon trains, and Black men stalking the streets and fields in search of a white woman to "take by force", quite the opposite is true. The myths, in fact, have been created to cover up the sexual brutality against Native American and Black women.

For example, there is no evidence that Native American men ever raped white women until well into the 1800's, in fact quite the opposite. Chronicles from the 1600's and 1700's are quite explicit in saying that white women captives were *not* abused sexually; a society which did not "naturally" treat women in this way was hard for whites to understand. It even gave rise to myths of impotence of Native American men.

But actually, the Native American societies were still close enough to the primitive communal stage that women were



Rape -- sexual intercourse without consent -- has its origin in the ancient subjugation of women in class society. Women, as property of men, had no legitimate say in their destiny, and, as the myths say, "got what they deserved".

RAPE IN THE US: CULTURE OF VIOLENCE

The culture of violence increases the incidence and brutality of rape in our society. Studies have shown that group rape is far more violent than individual rape. Testimony from Vietnam shows that in group rape there, unwilling GI's were forced by peers to participate until it became a matter-of-fact act of war for them. Similarly, the South Vietnamese Army, which did not participate in rape at the beginning of the war, was notorious for it by the end. Violence perpetuates itself, and creates a culture where violence is more accepted, thus more frequent and rampant. And rape is a special form of violence against women.

Another indication of the way rape and violence go together in our society is the fact that rape accompanies other violent acts. We have already mentioned war. It also accompanies beatings, armed robberies, even murder.

In discussing rape in our society, it is necessary to look not only at our modern-day culture of crime and violence, so prettily popularized by TV and movies, but at our history as a nation. It is necessary to remember that the USA was built on racist violence -- the seizing of the land of this continent from the Native American people, and the gleaning of its wealth through the exploitation of African slaves.

RAPE AND RACISM: BASIC TO US HISTORY

As an expression of ownership and domination since ancient times, rape found its ugly place in US history. In our history,

still respected members of the society, and often strong participants in the affairs of tribal government. It was only after a century or two of brutality at the hands of the white US army and "settlers" that retaliation in kind was learned.

In the movie "Soldier Blue" which quickly came and went about seven years ago, these myths were graphically exposed by depicting the Sand Creek massacre in Colorado. In actual chronicles of that massacre, not only was rape commonplace, but also such practices as cutting out the genitals of Native American women and carrying them as saddle decorations.

In the case of the plantation South, the TV movie "Roots" helped to make popular knowledge what has been hidden from white Americans -- that rape of slave women by white masters and overseers was part of day-to-day life under slavery. As in slavery of ancient times, the master of the plantation owned his slaves in every sense of the word, and their lives and bodies were legally at his disposal. The light-skinned complexions of Afro-Americans as compared to Black Africans by itself testifies to the widespread rape of Black slave women by white masters and overseers.

The brutality against the women of Vietnam during the imperialist war there is still a hidden chapter of that shameful history. We have become familiar with the word "atrocities" which is, in essence, a synonym for rape and murder of women and children. Widespread practices of gang rape followed by murder were part and parcel of seek and destroy missions. It was not uncommon for a group of GI's going into the countryside



Rape and Racism, as part of the history of the U. S., cannot be separated. While the racist myths depict white pioneer women being "ravished" by Native Americans, the truth is that white soldiers and settlers raped and plundered for generations before Native Americans began to retaliate in kind.

to take a Vietnamese woman for "pleasure" and then shoot her as a Vietcong when they were through. There is testimony of ugly rape and murder crimes in which women were raped with such weapons as flare guns or grease guns which were then exploded inside them.

MEN AND WOMEN UNITE TO FIGHT IMPERIALISM

Peter Arnett, AP reporter in Vietnam for eight years, is quoted by Susan Brownmiller as saying that the communist and national liberation forces, "were prohibited from looting, stealing food or raping. We heard very little of VC rape." Arnett goes on to speculate that the absence of rape may have rested on the fact that women were an equal part of the military operations and such practices would have damaged that equality, thus the military operation itself.

We would agree: in a society where women are treated as equals, rape or sexism in any overt form is a serious crime. In a revolutionary situation, the unity of men and women as equals is essential to the cause, and victory could depend on it. This was true not only in the case of the Vietnamese people, but in the Chinese revolution, and in the liberation movements in Africa. And it holds true for the struggles of all working and oppressed peoples of the world.

In spite of the fact that many feminists hold that rape benefits all men, by helping to terrorize all women and secure male domination, this is not true. Rape benefits only the men of the ruling classes who want to perpetuate the oppression of women, the division between men and women, and their own domination. But it harms the men who must struggle against these men of property, for they require the unity, respect and equality of women in order to win their common struggle.

MYTH OF BLACK RAPIST -- INSTRUMENT OF REPRESSION

Despite the history of sexual attacks by white men on Black and other oppressed nationality women, the longstanding myths say the opposite: one of the most vicious and destructive of all the racist myths is that Black men want -- and take -- white women.

In the Reconstruction South and on into this century, lynching and execution of Black men for charges of rape against

white women has been rampant. While the white man has historically had "free access" to the Black woman, the Black man who is intimate with a white woman in any way was threatened with his life.

It is well known that in the 19th century South, "insults" to a white woman by a Black man resulting in violence to that man often consisted of as little as touching a bare arm or brushing up against a woman. The fear of Black men "violating white womanhood" bolstered white supremacy. White women who slept with Black men were considered so low, that if such an affair were discovered, charges of rape would likely follow from the woman.

The myth of the Black rapist and the white victim has long been used as an instrument of racist repression. 28% of Blacks lynched in the South from 1889 to 1918 were accused of rape. In a study made in Baltimore from 1945 to 1965, Black men convicted of raping white women were sentenced an average of 15.4 years, while those men convicted of Black-on-Black or white-on-white rape were sentenced an average of only three years. Most telling is the brutal fact that of 455 men executed for rape since 1930, over 90% have been Black!

By saying that myths of rape by Black men have been an instrument of repression of the Black people, and a tool for dividing whites from Blacks, are we saying that Black men never commit rape? Not at all. In fact, the brutality and violence of poverty and ghetto life breeds street crime, of which rape is just one example. In fact, the Black rape victim is one of the most ignored people in this society. Black-on-Black rape is rarely discussed, and the racism and sexism of this society combine to make the Black rape

victim clearly one of those women who "deserve it" in the eyes of the powers that be.

An example of this attitude is typical of a white Philadelphia policeman who was standing on a stake-out during the search for a rapist in the University of Pennsylvania area early this year. A Black student, after inquiring about the purpose for the stake-out was told, "Don't worry, he only wants white girls," and was left to walk on home alone in the dark.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT MUST OPPOSE RACISM IN RAPE CASES

In fact, the famous Philadelphia study done by Amir shows that only 4% of rapes are interracial, the other 96% being Black-on-Black or white-on-white. Consi-

dering these cold facts, the women's movement must be particularly careful in dealing with rape, to avoid playing into old racist stereotypes of the Black rapist and the white victim.

Too often this is not the case: for example, the popular feminist newspaper out of New York City, *Majority Report*, used to have a column called "Know Your Lo-Local Rapist" and following would be descriptions of Black and Latino men for the white readership to "beware of". Similarly, the walls of the hallway at the U. of P. women's center are still plastered with newspaper accounts of the hunt for a Black rapist several months after the fact.

The incident at the U. of P. this past winter is a good example of whipping up racist fear. In some ways, it is a good example, because the rapist was Black and *did* rape several white women around the campus area. But the facts of the case did not justify front page hysteria for weeks on end. As was pointed out by a group of women students, during that same time, a white woman was group-raped by some Villanova students, and not a single witness came to her aid, because the men "looked like students" -- in other words, being white, they did not look like rapists. In fact charges in this group rape were later dropped, while a massive dragnet set up to ensnare the Black rapist culminated in the man being shot to death by police on Walnut St. before a clapping crowd of white students.

Clearly, in both these cases, rapes which were committed are not excusable. It is the way in which the rape by the Black man was used to intensify racism in the West Philadelphia community that is of

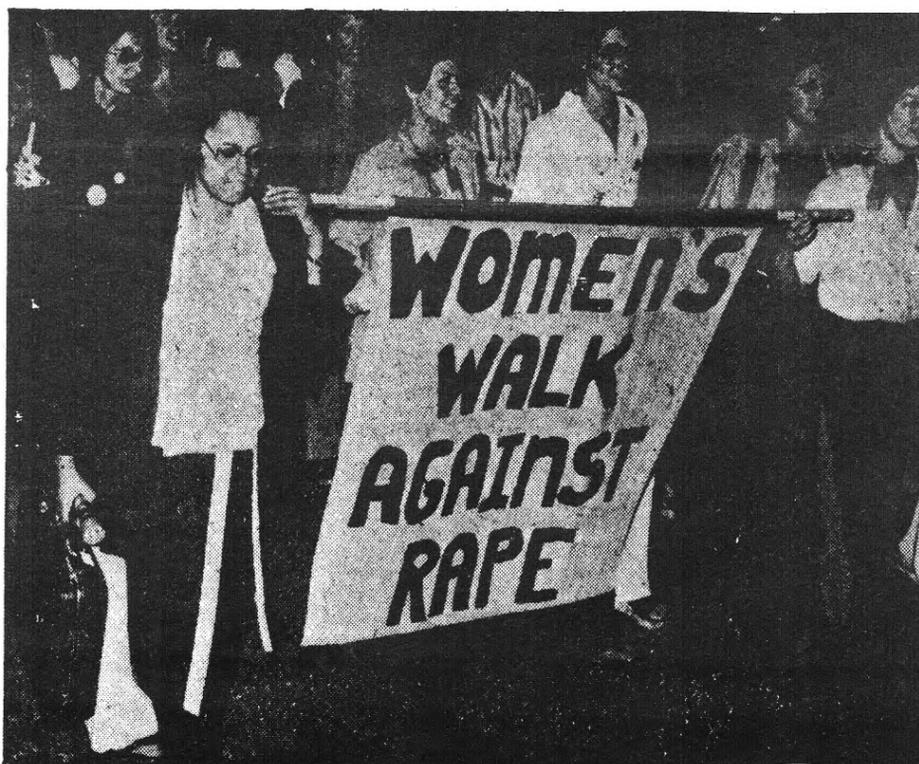
through medical examination, filing of charges, trial -- however far the case goes. Trained counsellors are available to help heal the scars from a rape experience.

Such organizations have pressured to begin to change police policy; some departments have trained women to interview rape victims with some degree of sensitivity, rather than the paternalistic or jeering "recounting of all the details" which some victims have described as worse than the rape itself.

Reforms in the laws have a long way to go. In some places, a woman's past sex life cannot be used as evidence in a rape case. Other places such evidence is still the basis for a defense. It remains difficult for a woman to prove rape if her rapist is a man she went on a date with, or voluntarily kissed, or went to his apartment -- as if to say, "What else did you expect if you went out with the man?" And there is still no state which recognizes such a thing as the rape of a woman by her husband. This stems from the ancient marriage codes -- if you own a woman, how can you violate her in any way?

Laws on women's right to self-defense against a rapist are also being challenged, as in the case of Inez Garcia. While retaliatory killing is hardly the advocated punishment for a rapist, a woman's right to defend herself from physical abuse -- rape or beating -- must be upheld.

Another recent court decision was the Supreme Court's rejection of the death penalty being reinstated for rapists. Although the present Court is hardly a progressive one, it was of benefit to all women and to Black and other oppressed nationality people as well that this racist appeal was denied.



In recent years, mass action, organization, and lobbying by the women's movement have brought the issue of rape into the open and exposed many myths surrounding it. Reforms in law and policy have resulted, but we still have a long way to go.

concern. In order to be truly anti-sexist, the women's movement must be clearly anti-racist. It must strongly oppose such racist hysteria, and take care not to play into it with an overemphasis on rape which generates racist paranoia among women, particularly among white women. Slogans such as "Castrate Rapists" are an example of such overreaction and playing into racism.

The women's movement has been instrumental in pressing for reforms in policy surrounding rape cases and for reforms in the laws themselves. Organizations in many cities, such as "Women Organized Against Rape" here in Philadelphia, have set up direct counselling for rape victims. A trained woman accompanies the victim

MEN AND WOMEN: END SEXISM; END RAPE!

But what is the solution to this widespread crime of sexist violence? Karate classes for women, increased convictions for rapists, are not the answer. Even progressive reform of existing laws will not do away with the problem. Rape is a symptom of the sexism and brutality of this society, and only a society free of sexism and brutality, of exploitation in any form, can do away with rape altogether. In a communist society, where exploitation of one class by the other is abolished where racism and sexism in all their aspects become relics of a past barbaric age, where men and women relate to one another as equal members of a free society, then rape will disappear.

A Response to The Guardian's Irwin Silber Praise Lenin Less, Study Him More Diligently

In the face of the organizational consolidation of dogmatism in the form of a number of different "vanguard" parties, Marxist-Leninist forces continue to grow and mature. While the RCP and the newly formed CP-ML reassure themselves that the period of collectives, circles, and local organizations has passed, the continued proliferation of these forms show that this assessment is false. The failure of the major pre-party organizations to attract more than token participation of these forces in their rush to form the party is an indication of the bankruptcy of dogmatism. It is a damning expose of the pretensions of these organizations. . . their self-congratulatory posture of having succeeded in "uniting the Marxist-Leninists" when in fact they have done nothing more than change the letterhead on their stationery.

DEBATE ON PARTY-BUILDING NEEDED

But at the same time the continuation of circles and local organization stands as an indictment of the state of our movement. The fragmented and primitive character of Marxist-Leninist organization is a reflection of the low level of ideological development and the tenuous character of our practical work. The challenge posed now is to develop a coherent Marxist-Leninist trend that stands in opposition to both revisionism and dogmatism. We believe that such a trend presently exists in embryo. It must now take on greater political definition.

Over the last period the Organizer has focused on drawing and deepening the lines of demarcation between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism and dogmatism. While this process obviously needs to continue, we now intend to shift our focus to the critical differences that exist within the Marxist-Leninist trend over the question of party building. A principled debate over this question is a key element in forging the political understanding and unity that will allow us to take concrete organizational steps toward the formation of a party.

FUSION QUESTION AND THE GUARDIAN

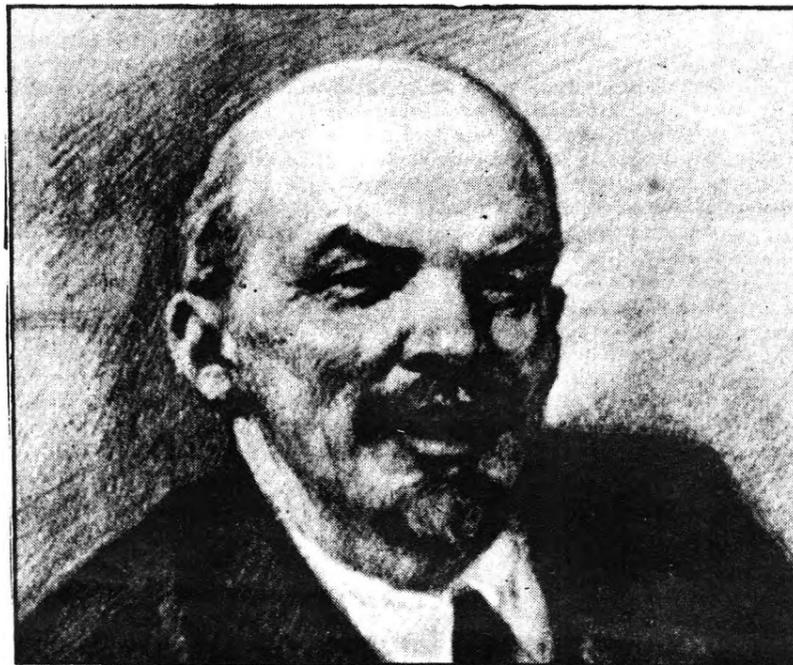
Central to this debate is the question of the role of fusing Marxism-Leninism to the class struggle of the proletariat. The PWOC holds that this is at the heart of the party building process, while other forces counterpose to it the unification of the existing Marxist-Leninists.

We have sought to sharpen this debate through an exchange of polemics with Irwin Silber of the Guardian utilizing the Radical Forum page. Clay Newlin, representing the Executive Committee of the PWOC, wrote a response to Silber's Fan the Flames column in which Silber put forth the argument that the task of fusion can only be taken up after the formation of the party. Our response prompted a reply from Silber which we thought deserved a further response from ourselves.

Unfortunately, the Guardian rejected publication of our polemic on the grounds that it made no "new significant points", that it "would escalate direct polemics . . . to a point that would have unintended overtones", that the "argumentation was rather thin", and that it carried "acerbic overtones. . . which compromise the spirit of high level principled debate."

GUARDIAN RUNS FROM DEBATE

We think that the Guardian's actions are a disservice to the party building movement given the importance of open debate on this question. Thus we are publishing the polemic ourselves. We will let our readers judge as to whether our article raised "any new significant points" and whether its "argumentation was rather thin." As to "unintended overtones", that its publication might carry, we will make our position clear. We continue to regard the Guardian as an important element in the party building movement.



V. I. LENIN

We continue to share major areas of agreement in terms of political line with the Guardian. We continue to think that the newspaper plays an invaluable role in the anti-imperialist movement and urge its support.

At the same time our differences with the Guardian, most centrally over party building, are quite real and have the most serious implications for the future of the Marxist-Leninist trend. We do not think a sharp struggle over these differences will blind us or anyone else to the real strengths of the Guardian or in any way prevent

unity where a political basis exists. Finally, as for our "acerbic tone" and use of sarcasm, we can't help but be reminded of Lenin's rejoinder to Martov when the latter complained about the great harm done by a sarcastic remark of Plekhanov's. "I cannot, of course see anything particularly mild, accomodating, tactful or flexible about this witticism, but I find it strange that Martov, who admitted that the dispute became a matter of principle . . . confined himself to talking about the "harmfulness" of witticisms."

by CLAY NEWLIN

The Guardian editors proved to have more foresight that we thought. In printing our article (Radical Forum, April 13) they rejected our suggested title, "The Fusion Confusion" in favor of "On Combating 'Straw Men'", an unfortunate but seemingly cosmetic change. We now see that they anticipated Silber's reply (Fan the Flames, May 4) which was largely an effort in combatting straw men.

In our article we developed the following points:

Silber is incorrect to counterpose the task of party-building to the task of fusing communism with the class struggle of the proletariat.

The essence of party building is the struggle to fuse an independent elaboration of Marxism-Leninism with a significant section of the advanced workers.

Silber's party building view provides a cover for 1) the downgrading of our theoretical tasks, 2) amateurism in our movement, and 3) the disorganized state of Marxist-Leninists.

Silber's view can only gain adherents to the extent that it adapts itself to the petty-bourgeois intellectual.

Both Silber's view and economism must be combated if we are to succeed in developing a national pre-party organization.

Silber does not address himself to a single one of these points. Not one!

Rather, his reply contains numerous attempts to evade the issue, several distortions of the PWOC's position, several obfuscations of our differences and a significant error in fact as well. We could write an entire article on these but it would be both of little interest and largely diversionary. A frank discussion of our real disagreements is clearly preferable. However, it is first essential to remove some obstacles that Silber has erected to obscure the vision of the careless reader.

Silber begins his article by arguing that he was not the first to raise the question of whether 'party building or fusion comes first'. In addition he comments that "the Guardian can hardly be 'combatting straw men' by raising it" given that others have raised it as well. From Silber's comments, one would be likely to conclude that the PWOC had criticized him for "raising" the

question and for "combatting straw men" by discussing it.

But a careful reading of our article will reveal that we did neither. What we criticized was, first, the way he posed the question, i.e., as if there were a contradiction between party building and fusion, and second, that by doing so he got himself into a muddle. Silber ought to address the real questions at issue.

Silber also tries to tar the PWOC with what he terms the Potomac Socialist Organization's "economism". He asserts that the PSO "says that its own ideas have grown out of their study and agreement with the views of the PWOC." On this basis he argues that the PWOC "cannot shun all responsibility for " the PSO's "localism".

Now this is a feeble argument. If Silber wants to make his tar stick, he will have to demonstrate that our line on party building accomodates economism and localism. But Silber does not (and cannot) demonstrate any such accomodation. Therefore, raising the PSO can only be a dishonest attempt to obfuscate our real disagreements.

Silber tries a third ruse in his discussion of the differences between the U. S. in 1977 and Russia between 1898 and 1900. In addition to his absurd contention that the PWOC maintains that Marxist-Leninists in the U. S. must repeat the party building process followed in Russia "in all of its particulars", Silber argues that there are significant differences between the "objective and subjective" conditions of Lenin's time and our conditions today.

Silber points out that in Russia "a bourgeois democratic revolution was on the agenda" and that "the trade unions were illegal." But while Silber tantalizes his readers with these facts, he provides absolutely no insight into their implications. For all he discusses them, he might just as well have said: Nicholas II was Czar.

If Silber thinks Lenin's views on fusion are not applicable to the U. S. he should have the courage to say so. Otherwise, to raise the questions of differences in the

continued on next page

"objective and subjective conditions" is both an idle display of historical knowledge and a diversion.

However, Silber's knowledge of Russian history fails him on a rather essential point. He maintains that in Russia, between 1898 and 1900, "the Russian Marxists already had a party — the Russian Social-Democratic Party," and that "all of the significant Marxist political trends operated within the Russian Social-Democratic Party." This is strange, indeed!

Apparently Silber has heard that the First Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party was held in March, 1898. But it is sheer idealism to think that a congress is equivalent to a party. According to the *History of the CPSU (Bolshevik)* the real significance of the First Congress was formal:

"But although the First Congress had been held, in reality no Marxist Social-Democratic Party was as yet formed in Russia. The Congress did not succeed in uniting the separate Marxist circles and organizations and welding them together organizationally. There was still no common line of action in the work of local organizations, nor was there a party program, party rules or a single leading center." (p. 22)

Is this the kind of party Silber wants to build?

INVERSION OF PWOC ON IMPORTANCE OF THEORY

And finally Silber writes, "the PWOC rests much of its conclusions on the notion that the Marxist-Leninists of 1977 in the U.S. while somewhat versed in theory, are singularly lacking in practice." This is pure fabrication; the PWOC has no such "notions". While we do think the practice of Marxist-Leninists (ours included) leaves a great deal to be desired, it is our position that this practice is, nevertheless, in advance of our theory. That is, the questions raised by our practice have yet to find theoretical solutions. Thus it is *theory* which is "singularly lacking" not practice.

These examples of Silber's tactics make his verbal endorsement of "facing the questions posed seriously" a bit hollow, to say the least. Undoubtedly, Silber should "have no compunctions about joining in the discussion", but he ought to "decline the honor" of such evasions, distortions and obfuscations. He should also be more certain of his facts.

Silber does, however, raise two questions that are worth serious discussion. The first is the question of the communist current. We wrote in our article "Dogmatism and the Struggle for the Party" (*The Organizer*, Oct.-Nov. 1976) that "the fusion of communism with the advanced workers assumes the development of a communist current in the working class movement." Silber interprets our remark to mean that "in essence, the PWOC argues that it is not only possible to develop 'a communist current in the working class movement' without having a party to do it, they say it is essential to do it before you can form the party." Thus, Silber exclaims, the PWOC, itself, has "given an answer to the 'which comes first' question."

PARTY BUILDING VS. FUSION?

Here again Silber's counterposing of 'party building' to 'fusion' gets him into a muddle. His fixation on the "Which comes first" question causes him to try to press the PWOC's views into his mechanistic mold. He cannot bring himself to understand how party building and fusion can proceed in tandem because he is incapable of grasping the fact that party building is *in essence* a question of fusion.

In fact, the PWOC argues neither that a full-blown communist current can be developed without a party nor that it must be developed before we can form the party.

"Here again Silber's counterposing of 'party-building' to 'fusion' gets him into a muddle."

".... He cannot bring himself to understand how party-building and fusion can proceed in tandem because he is incapable of grasping the fact that party-building is in essence a question of fusion."

"Dialectics teaches us that a party, like any other object, must be taken in the context of its development. A party develops as a result of a series of quantitative changes which eventually yield a qualitative transformation. That is, Marxist-Leninists strive to develop revolutionary theory, to mold communist cadre, and to win the advanced workers to communism throughout the entire process of party-building."

But it is only when this process matures to a sufficient extent that it attains the qualities necessary to be transformed into a real party through a party congress. Up until that congress, that movement is, in reality, only a communist movement in embryo. Should we then argue, as Silber implicitly does, that party-building can be reduced to the organization of a party congress?"

Silber is quite *correct* that the "very concept of a communist current" implies "the need for a party". Unfortunately, he is unable to go beyond such truisms.

Dialectics teaches us that a party, like any other object, must be taken in the context of its development. A party develops as a result of a series of quantitative changes which eventually yield a qualitative transformation. That is, Marxist-Leninists strive to develop revolutionary theory, to mold communist cadre, and to win the advanced workers to communism throughout the entire process of party building. But it is only when the process matures to a significant extent that it attains the qualities necessary to be transformed into a real party through a party congress. Up until that congress, that movement is, in reality, only a communist movement in embryo. Should we then argue, as Silber implicitly does, that party building can be reduced to the organization of a party congress?

Returning to the question of a communist current it should be clear that such a current can mature to a significant degree prior to the first congress of our party. While a full-blown communist current assumes the existence of a party, a communist current *in embryo* does not.

But not only *can* we develop such a current in embryo prior to the first congress, we *must*. In fact, only someone totally divorced from the living dialectics of the class struggle can fail to see that the development of a communist current is inseparably bound up with the question of winning the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism.

This is true for two reasons. First, the process of winning the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism will inevitably tend to create such a current. The advanced workers are not an isolated phenomenon. They are 'advanced' owing to their leading role in the working class movement; they form a part of that movement. Thus their transformation into Marxist-Leninists will inevitably tend to produce a section of the working class movement which is made up of communists and their followers — a communist current.

Secondly, creating the conditions for the development of such a current is an indispensable part of the process of winning the advanced workers to communism. What holds back the advanced workers from embracing scientific socialism more rapidly is their fear that an open espousal of Marxism-Leninism will lead to an irrevocable isolation in the working class movement. Only progress towards the development of a communist current can demonstrate that any 'isolation' they suffer will be temporary and not permanent.

It should be clear then, that Silber's counterposing of 'party building' to the development of a communist current inevitably leads to liquidating the question of the advanced workers. And moreover, by denying the importance of winning the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism, Silber separates party building from the class struggle and, therefore, does indeed advocate the building of a party for a class other than the proletariat.

VOLUNTARISM OR HISTORICAL MATERIALISM?

The second point that Silber raises which is worthy of discussion is the question of voluntarism. Silber argues

that by criticizing voluntarism on party building, the "PWOC reveals the fundamental flaw in its thesis. 'What is this "fundamental flaw"? The fact that the PWOC does not recognize that "a party is by its very nature a 'voluntaristic' organization!"

Now Silber is quite right that we do not recognize this profound "truth". And if he chooses to stand by his thoughtless endorsement of a voluntaristic party, he will be equally correct that our differences will be *fundamental*.

Silber argues that "a party is, by its very nature, a 'voluntaristic' organization" because it introduces a conscious element into the class struggle that does not flow spontaneously from that struggle. If this were all that is meant by the word voluntaristic we would have no quarrel with Silber's use of it.

For a Marxist, however, the term voluntaristic is inseparable from the doctrine of voluntarism. Voluntarism is an idealist trend which holds that the human will is the essential basis on the development of society. It denies that social progress is determined by objective laws which operate independently of human consciousness. Marxism belongs to the exact opposite school.

What has this to do with the party? While the party must certainly introduce a conscious element into the class struggle, it must not do so in a voluntaristic manner. It must base its intervention on a strictly scientific assessment of the correlation of class forces, the relative consciousness of the masses and the objective content of the class struggle. It must focus its energies on those actions which would bring about the most rapid political advancement possible in the given conditions.

Voluntaristic intervention would follow a different line. Since voluntarism sees human ideals as the motive force of societal progress, it would be likely to set about molding perfect communist human beings oblivious to the fact that objective conditions make such a development impossible. Thus, no Marxist-Leninist party can be, "by its very nature, a voluntaristic organization".

Silber is not the first to praise Marx and yet advocate a voluntaristic party. Voluntarism was also the standpoint of the Narodnik movement in Russia. N. Mikhailovsky, a leading Narodnik ideologist, advocated a theory of revolutionary struggle in which the masses, as Plekhanov put it, were viewed as nothing more than an infinite number of zeros that could become positive only through the intervention of a critically thinking intellectual. And based on this view, the Narodniks called for a party which was, indeed, "by its very nature, a voluntaristic organization."

Lenin summed up this trend's views as a "theory of utopian, petty bourgeois socialism, i.e. the *dream* of petty bourgeois intellectuals" (Wks., Vo. 20, p. 106, italics in original). Silber's advocacy of a "voluntaristic" party just serves to prove the correctness of our assertion that his party building views can only gain adherents by adapting themselves to the pipe dreams of the petty bourgeois intellectuals.

In closing, Silber ought to reflect on Lenin's remark to the Narodnik voluntarist: "Mr. Mikhailovsky should praise Marx less and read him more diligently." (Wks., Vol. 1, p. 135).

NUTS & BOLTS

Nuts and Bolts will be a regular feature in the Organizer. Its purpose will be to arm rank and file organizers with information and analysis that can be of practical value in the struggle on the shop floor and in the unions. Basic labor law, parliamentary procedure, and health and safety information are some of the technical areas we will cover

in future columns. Also, we want to deal with problems in building rank and file caucuses, starting an organizing drive and other practical concerns that face workers in their struggles with the employers. If you have a problem or a question that we can help answer, write Nuts and Bolts, c/o The Organizer.

Organizing a Union

by MARY AULL

Jackie works as a nurses aide in a non-union nursing home in Philadelphia. It is owned by a profit-making corporation, which owns several other nursing homes in Philadelphia and many others throughout the Northeast part of the country.

There are 100 employees (not including registered nurses, supervisors, and clerical employees). These employees are housekeeping and dietary workers, licensed practical nurses, and nurses aides. As an aide, Jackie's duties include feeding, bathing, and walking patients, and changing dirty linen. Some patients are very heavy and they must be turned, and if they fall, the aide who is there must catch them, which often results in back injuries. Jackie works on a floor with a large number of patients. There are two aides, one licensed practical nurse, and one registered nurse, who is the supervisor on the floor.

Jackie has worked in the nursing home for two years. She is paid \$2.30 an hour. She must rotate shifts, work three out of four weekends, and gets a half-hour for lunch (which is unpaid). She must work on most holidays and is only compensated with another day off (there is no holiday pay). After two years, she only gets one week paid vacation per year.

Jackie cannot live on her salary and feels that working at the home could be greatly improved. She has been thinking about trying to organize a union at the home.

WHAT WE NEED IS A UNION!

Over lunch one day a number of Jackie's co-workers are talking about the fact that one of the women in the home just came back to work after having been sick for three days. She was only paid for one day, because the workers in the home are only given one-half day of sick leave for each month they work in the home and this was all the sick time she had accrued. There is a consensus of the workers who are talking, that this is a terrible policy and needs to be changed. Jackie suggests that they need a union and lays out that the workers would be able to get more sick days and other important changes with the power of union organization.

The idea of organizing into a union is very scary to some of the workers in the home — they know that there is a real shortage of jobs and they are sure that their boss, Mr. Horton, would fire them if he found out that they were talking about a union.

However, Jackie and some of the other workers know that there is a nursing home in the neighborhood which is unionized. One of Jackie's co-workers, Ann, asked a neighbor of hers who works in the union home for the name and address of their union. Jackie and Ann have the same day off this week. They arrange to meet at the union hall on that day.

At the union headquarters, Ann and Jackie speak with an organizer, Sandra, who tells them of the increases in wages and benefits workers in other nursing homes have been able to obtain by organizing. She also tells them how to go about beginning to organize and gives them some literature about the union. Sandra tells Jackie and Ann to call her whenever they want to have a meeting of their co-workers.

Jackie and Ann begin to spread the word about what they learned at the union hall to the people who they feel are the most trustworthy and will be most receptive to the idea. They have about 10 people committed to come to a meeting by the end of that week. They call Sandra and schedule a meeting for the following week.

WORKERS BEGIN TO ORGANIZE

At the meeting, Sandra tells all the workers who have come about the benefits many other nursing home employees in the city have been able to achieve through unionization. In addition to higher wages, unionized workers have medical coverage for themselves and their families which is totally paid for by management. They have 12 days of paid sick leave per year, a good pension plan, the right to file grievances and to strike if their employer refuses to make any concessions. (Not all union contracts give workers the right to strike over grievances and many use arbitration as a way of settling grievances "peacefully".) They also have seniority, which gives the people who have worked at the home the longest, protection in case of a layoff.

She informs the nursing home workers that they have the legal right to organize under the National Labor Relations Act (known as the Taft-Hartley Law, passed in 1947) and that when they have 30% of the workers signed up on union organizing cards (unions use these cards as a vehicle for workers to indicate their interest in being organized), they can have an election. No one can be fired for signing a union card (this is a worker's right guaranteed under Taft-Hartley). However, when the boss finds out that people are talking union, he will "crack down".



Therefore, people have to be very careful about absenteeism, lateness, and getting their work done. The boss may try and fire people using other things as an excuse, if he thinks they are serious about a union. He may try and make an example of someone to scare the other workers.

(It is an unfair labor practice if it can be proven if a boss fires a worker for union activity, and he will have to take that person back at no loss of pay. Workers can

protect themselves by being careful about absenteeism, lateness, etc., as mentioned above. It is also important to keep written documentation of any "incidents" that may occur and to try and have witnesses who would be willing to speak up, if that became necessary.)

Sandra tells the nursing home workers to try and get all their co-workers interested in the union. She explains that in spite of the law, which says that you only need 30% of the workers to file for an election, the union will not do so without at least 55%. If the boss wages a strong anti-union drive, the workers might lose the election, unless they are sure that a clear majority of the workers want the union and are committed to working toward that goal.

Another meeting is set for the following week and the workers are asked to try to bring as many of their co-workers as possible to the next meeting.

During the next week, Jackie and Ann and the other people who had attended the union meeting, talk to as many people as they can about the union. They try to explain the basic idea of a union.

THE BOSS REACTS

The day before the second meeting, Jackie's supervisor calls her into her office and tells Jackie that she has heard a rumor about a union. She praises Jackie's work and tells her that she may be able to do "something special" for her some day. However, she warns, a union would get in the way of "friendly little talks like this" and that Jackie should remember that.

There are 30 workers at the second meeting. Jackie tells them of her experience with the head nurse. Some of the workers and Sandra are quick to point out the fact that if one union meeting can make management that defensive, the workers joining together to demand more money and better working conditions (which is what a union is) can have a very powerful effect.

Another meeting is set for the following week and the union organizer and a group of seven workers from the home who have volunteered to be the union organizing committee, write a leaflet explaining the union and the benefits of organizing. The leaflet points out some of the injustices that are known to the organizing committee, as common problems among the workers. Sandra distributes the leaflet at shift change a few days later.

45 workers attend the third union meeting. Two more people volunteer for the organizing committee. The day after the third meeting is pay day. With every workers pay check is a letter from Mr. Horton, stating that all the employees will receive a wage increase of ten cents an hour and additional Blue Cross coverage.

Sandra and the organizing committee write and distribute a second leaflet in response to the boss's letter. The leaflet says, "THANK YOU FOR THE DOWN PAYMENT. WHEN WE WIN THE UNION ELECTION, WE'LL COLLECT THE REST!"

A total of 60 workers attend the fourth meeting. Some of the workers at this

meeting express a feeling that unions are corrupt, and that unions may be alright for people who work in factories, but not for people who provide human services. Sandra and the organizing committee members answer that some unions are corrupt, but that this one has a very democratic constitution, which gives the workers the right to have a say in every aspect of the union (electing officers, deciding what the contract demands will be, accepting or rejecting contract offers, striking and calling off a strike, etc.) They point out that even unions with serious shortcomings are better than no union at all. And finally, that where corruption or sell out union leadership is a problem, the answer is not to throw out the union but to organize the rank and file to take back control and set things right.

Also, they say, workers in human services are still workers, and that they have a right to decent pay and benefits and to be treated with the same decency and respect, which they are expected to give to the people they serve. After a long discussion, all of the people at this meeting

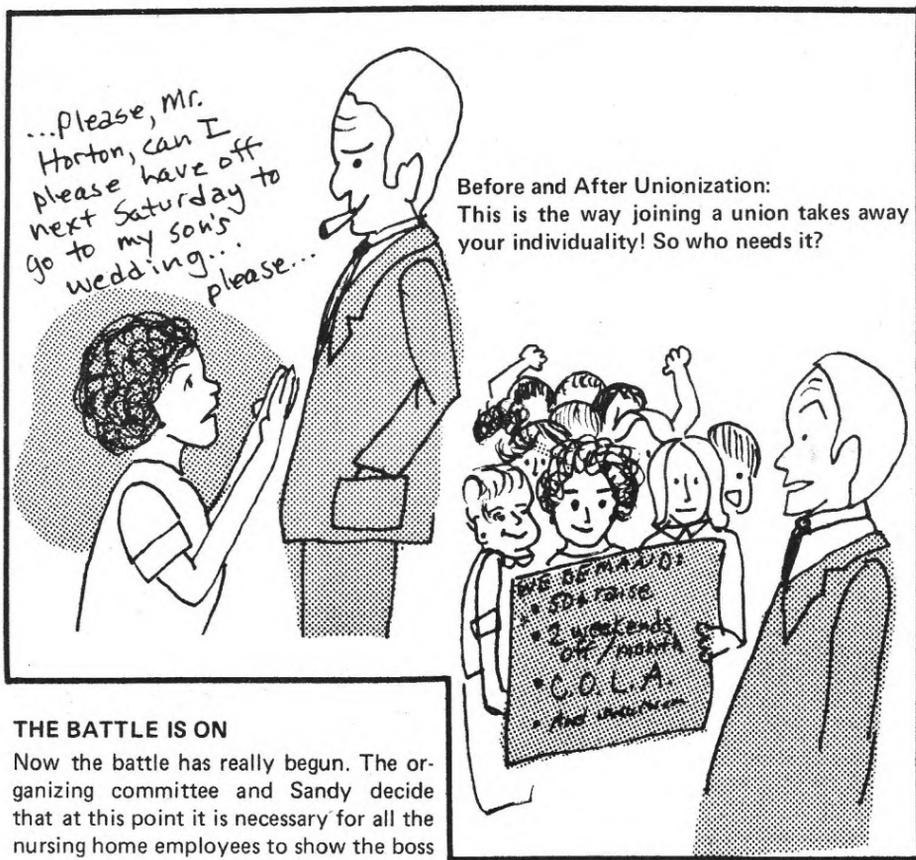


sign organizing cards and take cards for the workers who could not come. Sandra suggests that the petition for an election be filed at the beginning of the following week. This involves turning the original copies of the organizing cards over to the National Labor Relations Board, the federal agency set up to administer the Taft-Hartley Law.

Two days later, Mr. Horton calls a meeting for all the workers. He tells the workers that the nursing home is "ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY" and that they do not need a union. He has been and will continue to be a "GOOD FATHER".

Some of the workers who have signed union cards say things in agreement with what Mr. Horton has said. Jackie, Ann, and some of the other members of the organizing committee stand up to Mr. Horton and tell him that they need a union and that they are no longer willing to be at the mercy of management hand-outs. Mr. Horton ends the meeting by telling the workers that they will be sorry if they join a union, because the union will take away their individuality.

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THE BATTLE IS ON

Now the battle has really begun. The organizing committee and Sandy decide that at this point it is necessary for all the nursing home employees to show the boss their solidarity. (The argument about individuality is a false issue. Workers are totally at the mercy of their boss unless they have a union. It is important that the union be democratic and that the workers truly have a say in what happens to them) Sandy is at the shift change the next day passing out union buttons. Wearing the buttons is a show of strength

Before and After Unionization:
This is the way joining a union takes away your individuality! So who needs it?

for the union supporters and helps bolster anyone who might be getting cold feet. Jackie and Ann and the rest of the organizing committee spend their lunch hour passing out literature and talking to their co-workers. (According to federal law, workers have the right to organize on the job as long as it is on their own time in a non-work area.)

Soon 50% of the workers are wearing their union buttons (which is also a worker's right guaranteed by federal law.) At 10 A. M. one day, led by the organizing committee, almost half the workers march into Mr. Horton's office to demand that he recognize the union and begin to negotiate with them. He refuses to do so. After half an hour of debate, the workers have made their point, and return to work.

The union has filed a petition for the election, and a hearing is scheduled. (When a union files a petition for an election the NLRB holds a hearing to determine the bargaining unit, the group of employees who will be covered by the union and to set the date for the election. If the boss had agreed to the election or to recognize the union, this hearing would not be necessary.)

The election date is set for two weeks after the hearing. Jackie and Ann hear of more and more under the table promises made by supervisors to some of the workers who are still unsure as to whether a union is a good idea. The organizing committee makes a list of the workers who are being swayed by these promises, and committee members make a special effort to sit down and talk with these workers. However, the organizing committee is still growing and now a total of 18 workers are actively campaigning with Sandy before and after work and on their breaks.

As the boss steps up his campaign to discredit the union (he sends a letter which contains a bunch of lies about the union

being a militant, bomb-throwing organization which never comes through with its promises. He also says that the home may lose money and have to close or lay off people if the union wins.) Supervisors start a whispering campaign telling the white workers that the union is a "Black Power" outfit that discriminates against whites. They tell the Black workers that the union leaders are white racists.

The organizing committee responds by putting out a leaflet exposing the slanders and the divide and conquer racist tactics of the boss. They show through the facts that all workers, white and Black, have benefitted from unionization. They show that the union has actively fought discrimination and racism on the job and in the community.

The workers step up their campaign to show how hard the boss is fighting not in their best interests, but in the interest of his pocketbook. They do some research and find out that Mr. Horton is paid \$30,000 per year and that the corporation which runs the home made a profit of several million dollars the year before. (See past issues of the *Organizer* on how to research your company.)

The election is held on a pay day. The polls are open from 6 to 8 A. M. and from 2 to 4 P.M. so that all the workers can vote easily. It is a secret ballot election, conducted by agents of the National Labor Relations Board. **THE UNION WINS, 74-15!!!!**

Mine Workers Struggle

continued from page 6

teemen demanded that an unsafe job be shut down at Eastern Associated Coal's Federal No. 2 mine, located 20 miles from the site of the 1968 Farmington mine disaster which killed 78 miners. The case was brought to arbitration and the committeeman was suspended by arbitrator Tharp. Shortly afterwards, a second committeeman was suspended following a similar incident. Tharp, the "impartial" arbitrator, is a former lawyer for a coal machinery supply firm.

In response to such events the miners have been forced to walk off the job to protect their right to safe working conditions. The companies are doing everything they can to punish the miners for these wildcats. Shortly after the union elections the miners' health benefits were cut in half, because the operators claimed that due to the wildcats the plan, which is funded by the companies on the basis of the number of hours workers, had run dry because of the number of wildcat strikes. Instead of dipping into the huge surplus in the pension plan the owners have chosen to punish the miners for the rash of wildcats -- and in so doing they hope to demoralize and weaken the miners prior to the contract negotiations which begin this month.

The coal operators are among the most powerful monopolists in the country: Continental Oil, U. S. Steel, Kennecott Copper -- it is the Rockefellers, the Morgans and the Mellons who are gearing up to face the union on December 6th. And there is widespread speculation that these magnates have stockpiled so much coal that they would in fact welcome a long strike which would break the strength of the union.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Miller leadership forfeited the confidence of broad sections of the rank and file when it capitulated on the right to strike issue in the last contract struggle. This capitulation made the spread of wild-cattling virtually inevitable. Miller's

opposition to the wildcats has only deepened the distrust between the ranks and the leadership. The only way to restore unity and gain the strength to face down the companies is for the leadership to aggressively take up the fight for the right to strike and this time not back down.

At the last UMW convention the delegates adopted three contract demands which could provide the basis for solving the current crisis in the coal fields. The convention vowed to fight for the right of union safety committeemen to shut down unsafe jobs. They voted for the 30 hour week, in an effort to speak simultaneously to the problem of unemployment of miners and of work overload for those still working. Finally, they resolved to negotiate for triple time for weekend work and double time for overtime. This last demand could be instrumental in discouraging the operators from forcing miners to work dangerously long hours.

Miller and his administration have already shown that they will not act without strong pressure from the rank and file. It will therefore be crucial for the rank and file to organize itself to insure that the UMW officials remain true to the program adopted by the convention.

THE ROLE OF THE LEFT

The orientation of the left to the crisis in

the UMW illustrates the bankruptcy of both revisionism and dogmatism. The CPUSA's policy emphasizes the danger from the right in the form of the Boyle forces and thus the need to unite behind Miller. While offering token criticisms of Miller's performance, the revisionists downplay the need for rank and file initiative and organization. They fail to face the fact that without a movement that can force Miller to take up the needs of the membership, most urgently the right to strike, erosion of his support and further decline of the union's strength are inevitable.

The RCP, which has been a factor in the wildcat movement through the Right to Strike Committee, has followed an ultra-left policy. In anarcho-syndicalist style the RCP glorifies the wildcat movement's spontaneous character. They gloss over the problems inherent in a situation where workers must rely on the wildcat as their primary weapon. Wildcattling miners have often spread their strike by setting up picket lines at mines unaffected by the particular grievance that led to the wildcat. An excessive reliance on this tactic has produced a backlash of sorts among miners who feel that they have lost too many paydays without being offered the opportunity to decide democratically whether or not they should strike in support of their fellow miners. The RCP's attitude is crystallized in their op-

position to making the right to strike over local grievances subject to a democratic vote in the local. They prefer the spontaneous action of a militant minority to the disciplined and well conceived action of the majority. With typical anarchist impatience they forego the task of winning over and consolidating the majority behind a course of strike action.

Furthermore, in the name of "relying on ourselves", the RCP has refused to take the steps to transform the wildcat movement into a base for a consistent class struggle unionism that could affect the leadership of the union. The RCP's line of "It doesn't matter who wins the UMW presidency, we'll rely on ourselves" is a childish "left" and irresponsible position. The miners obviously reject this logic as they gave the right winger Patterson only one third of the vote. The correct tactic for Marxist-Leninists in the recent election would have been to mobilize the rank and file to push for a united left center candidacy around a class struggle program. Minimally such a policy would have pushed both Miller and Patrick to the left and strengthened the hand of the rank and file in its attempt to hold the leadership to its program. It would have further isolated the right and strengthened the unity and bargaining posture of the union going into negotiations with the coal operators. Clearly such a policy is beyond the reach of the RCP with its infatuation with spontaneous militancy.

School Cuts

continued from page 5

angry Walnut Center parents and teachers that plans for closing were finalized as early as May 15!

The parents and teachers of Walnut Center are fighting back, however, and since June 30 have taken over the building - vowing to keep it open and run it on their own if need be.

While such determination and militancy is important and encouraging, without a city-wide movement it is ultimately ineffective. If Walnut Center is successfully run on a volunteer basis the SB will be off the hook, and if the SB is pressured into providing funds they can simply close down another center in its place. Only a well-organized, broad-based citywide movement can link up, support and coordinate such actions and prevent communities from being divided and picked off one by one.

UNITED FOR SCHOOLS

A more encouraging development is the formation, in early June, of United for Schools (US - K16-7354). US grew out of a spontaneous movement in the Powelton-Mantua area of West Philly, but it is moving towards building a city-wide organization. Unlike other groups it publicly talks of the roles of all branches of government and also the banks in precipitating the school crisis, and has refused to settle for partial cuts. Its demands are:

1. Full funding for the schools.
2. No cutbacks in the school budget.
3. No layoffs of school employees.
4. An elected school board.

While US is still small, it has already organized one demonstration of 100 people at the SB on June 21, and has consistently sent people to testify at SB meetings. It is currently working on a strategy to broaden its membership, especially in the Black and Spanish communities, and is starting to plan for actions over the summer and in September.

WHAT NEXT?

The Fightback movement, to succeed in broadening its base and building multi-national unity, must go beyond these immediate demands. The racist character of the cutbacks must be addressed -- the fact that the burden of the school closings will fall on the Black and Spanish speaking community as will the elimination of special remedial and bi-lingual programs. The fight against the cutbacks must be linked to the struggle to desegregate the schools and improve the overall quality of education.

The movement also needs to expose the anti-popular means of financing the school system -- its dependence on the banks and taxation of working people. As September approaches and the message sinks in that Harrisburg is not going to bail out the schools, the need for the anti-cutback forces to pull together, reach out to new forces, and unite around a common program that can serve the needs of the struggle, is becoming more urgent.

Repression Spurs Debate in PRSC

by JIM GRIFFIN

The second national conference of the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee earlier this year marked a major step forward for the solidarity movement. A broad majority of the delegates rejected an ultra-left analysis of the movement's character and tasks and united around a generally sound anti-imperialist perspective.

The ultra-left line was reflected in a denial of the leading strategic role of the working class and in the notion that the mass of white workers were bribed by imperialism, a conception of imperialism that sees only its superstructure and ignores its economic essence, and finally, an uncritical endorsement of armed struggle that would commit the solidarity movement to supporting adventurism and small group terrorism.

The rejection of this line by a two to one majority at the conference, however, did not end the influence of ultra-leftism within the PRSC. Centered in the San Francisco and Brooklyn chapters, where the remnants of the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC) continue to have influence, and in Chicago in the form of the March 1st Bloc, an alliance of the Sojourner Truth Organization with some nationalist elements, the ultra-leftists continue to impede the development of the PRSC.

ULTRA-LEFT INFLUENCE AFFECTS PRSC WORK

The struggle between the majority line and ultra-leftism has surfaced most sharply around the approach to take to the grand juries which, in the name of investigating the FALN and terrorism, are harassing the whole independence movement and the Puerto Rican community. It has also been a factor in the campaign to free the five nationalist prisoners and in the efforts of the PRSC to consolidate internally around a common perspective and program.

In the case of the campaign around the grand juries, coalitions have formed both in New York and Chicago with slogans and demands that differ in significant respects from the program of the PRSC. The Chicago and Brooklyn PRSC chapters have been active participants in these coalitions.

The PRSC interim committee sees *stopping the grand jury and its harassment of the independence movement and the Puerto Rican community* as the basis of building the campaign. The Chicago group goes well beyond this calling for "Independence for Puerto Rico, Self-determination for the Puerto Rican Movement, and Freedom for the Five Nationalist Prisoners." The New York Coalition goes even one better raising the slogan of "The right of the Puerto Rican people to Bear Arms."

ULTRA-LEFT ISOLATES SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

The argument of the PRSC majority is that a broad based movement capable of checking the grand jury is not served by requiring unity around these additional demands. Such an approach effectively narrows the base of the anti-repression movement to those who are already fully committed to the independence struggle.

It closes off the ability of the movement to mobilize those who, while they may not agree with all the objectives of the in-



FREE THE FIVE!
A PRSC campaign has spurred debate in the group. These five have been in prison since their 1954 attack on Congress to protest the colonial status of Puerto Rico.

dependence movement, are ready to defend its democratic rights. In so doing, it limits the ability of the solidarity movement to educate these forces and in the process of struggle around partial demands, win sections of them over to support for the full goals of the PRSC.

The critics of this position argue that the PRSC, by not advancing the slogans for independence and armed struggle, is turning its back on their own program and failing to build the solidarity movement in an anti-imperialist direction. The second argument of the proponents of this line is that the PRSC should take up these slogans because they are supported by the Puerto Ricans who have been subpoenaed and are most directly under attack.

This corresponds to the line taken by these same forces in the National Coordinating Committee to Free the Five, which argues that the campaign to free the five must simultaneously "not compromise their principles. . ." In other words, the solidarity movement must not only defend the Independence Movement, but it must also endorse the politics of whatever section of the movement is under attack in the given situation.

USING A PROGRAM

The first argument rests on the silly assumption that to fail to make the PRSC's maximum program the basis for all coalition or united front work is to in practice abandon that program. Within coalitions like the ones around the grand jury, the PRSC must work to win people to support for independence. Simply because independence is not a point of unity of the coalition, it does not follow that the PRSC cannot put forward its perspective.

The situation parallels that of the anti-war movement where ultra-leftists argued that anti-imperialists could only participate in coalitions that made full support for the National Liberation Front a point of unity. This policy retarded the ability to win ever broader sections of the peace movement to an anti-imperialist understanding.

The second argument rests on a mechanical view of the relationship between the solidarity movement and the Puerto Rican people. The ultra-leftists argue "the Puerto Rican people in particular, and other third world forces within this country, play the primary role in providing political leadership and direction. . ."

ROLE OF SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

Obviously, the independence movement's needs are of the greatest concern

to the solidarity movement. The solidarity movement is in no position to dictate to the independence forces what those needs are. It also recognizes that the sphere of determining the strategy, tactics and program for national liberation is that of the Independentistas alone.

On the other hand, the solidarity movement is in the best position to determine how to actively win over and mobilize the North American people. As a part of a broader movement aimed at building opposition to U. S. imperialism in all its manifestations, it has its own set of needs. The independence movement is not going to tell North Americans how to build our movement any more than we are going to tell the Puerto Rican people how to gain independence.

The solidarity movement, to succeed, must balance both these sets of concerns.

In practice, the principle that we must simply and uncritically "take leadership" from "oppressed peoples" can only lead

to chauvinism and paternalism. For one thing, take leadership from exactly whom? The independence movement is not of one mind on every question. If we simply endorse the politics of whoever happens to be under attack, our politics rapidly lose any coherence or credibility since we end up espousing contradictory positions.

It also means that in the name of taking leadership from the independence movement, we end up interfering in the internal affairs of that movement, endorsing the policies of one group and thus alienating those who oppose these same policies. To take an extreme example, the March 1st Bloc argues that we must defend "armed struggle. . . in the forms in which it is actually occurring, small and episodic actions rather than mass assaults." In the context of the grand jury campaign, this means defending the politics of the FALN, a group whose politics have been repudiated by the broad independence movement, which does not even recognize its formal existence.

The only compass that can guide us in building the solidarity movement is our own analysis of its tasks, collectively determined by all anti-imperialists, regardless of their nationality. Respect for the independence movement and recognition of the leading role that oppressed people within the U. S. are playing in support of national liberation are in no way inconsistent with this, but neither are they a substitute for it. Political lines must be judged on their merits, not on the basis of who is putting them forward.



Six months negotiations at Budd Hunting Park

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

by DUANE CALHOUN

On July 19th the bargaining committee of UAW Local 813 wrapped up local contract negotiations with the management of Budd's Hunting Park Plant. Unlike most union contracts, this one was signed over six months *before* agreement was reached.

At the contract ratification meeting on January 30th, Chairman Palumbo explained that while most of the new items the union wanted hadn't been agreed to by the company, Budd management had promised to discuss these items with the union. Chairman Palumbo and President Henry Gryn then recommended that the members ratify the promise of a contract, sight unseen.

UAW area Director Joe Ferrara chimed in to help sell this blank paper, mainly by telling the Local 813 membership they'd better take what Budd offered or the

company would close the plant. At nearly every union meeting since then, both Palumbo and Gryn told the membership how hard-nosed the company was being, how they refused to budge in the negotiations.

March, April, May, and June went by, with only one minor point (the challenge bumping procedure for machinists on lay-off) being settled. Finally, on July 1st, the Local union executive board passed a resolution that if the contract was not settled by the 15th, some form of "pressure" would be used on the company. Management, tired of playing cat and mouse, and possibly worried about an overtime refusal, settled the remaining minor points on the 19th.

SIX MONTHS TOO LATE

If the union leadership was really serious



by RON WHITEHORNE

*"Take me out to the ball game,
Take me out with the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and crackerjacks
I don't care if I never get back."*

Joe Garagiola, the plodding catcher turned All-Star announcer, put it simply enough: "people go to ball games to forget about their troubles." All spectator sports serve this function, but baseball, with its rich traditions and ritual, maybe does it best.

Baseball represents a self-contained world where things are simpler than in real life. The rules are set and nobody changes them on you. There is the clean and uncomplicated justice of "three strikes and you're out at the old ball game." You don't need a scorecard to tell the good guys from the bad guys. Maybe you don't know who to root for in a contest between Gerry Ford and Jimmy Carter but if you live in Philadelphia and you go to the Vet you know which side you're on.

about forcing the Budd Co. to grant the union's demands, President Gryn waited six months too long to act. In January, Budd was running full tilt, including plenty of overtime, trying to catch up on a backlog of orders. Its biggest customer, Ford, was also running seven days a week to make up for a two month strike. Other Budd locals were striking for decent local agreements. In that situation, a short strike would easily have won a better local contract than the union finally got.

By signing a blank piece of paper, the union ended up with six more months of the old contract and very little improvement in the new contract to show for it. A minor gain was made in down time rules that apply only to the first hour of the day, with any downtime paid during the other seven hours still paid at \$1.53 per hour.

The company must also post all job openings for three days, before accepting any upgrades. Three laid off tool makers may now bump into the tryout each month. And the company must now grant shift changes to 5% of those who put in for them each week, without waiting for a recall from layoff as before.

RANK AND FILE PRESSURE

Those four items are the only gains in the local contract, in a year when Budd set an all-time record for profits. Both the job

The issues are clear and the choices are simple. Or at least that's how it used to be.

Baseball, like entertainment generally, has never really been free of politics, but in ordinary periods, the illusion that the national pastime was not a business, but simply a game where the virtues of fair play reigned supreme, has somehow been maintained. But in times of social crisis, reality has a way of breaking through.

ILLUSION AND REALITY

This year's All Star game was full of tension between illusion and reality. In most sports the All Star contest is no big deal, just another meaningless exhibition game. Who but the most diehard fanatic knows who won the All Star games in the NFL or NBA last year? But in baseball its different. There is a great tradition in this contest and a lively interest on the part of the fans who vote for the starting line-ups.

posting provision and the change in downtime rules were the result of pressure during the fall and winter by the *Concerned Members of Local 813*, a rank and file caucus at the plant. The *Concerned Members* had demanded full average wages for all downtime, as well as job postings with on-the-job training for all upgrades, to be awarded by seniority. The job posting and downtime sections of the new contract were watered down versions of those demands.

This year's Budd contract, particularly the local agreement, is an object lesson on the results of "labor-management cooperation" for the working class. How much more cooperative could the union be than to sign first and negotiate later? By being neighborly enough to buy a pig-in-a-poke from the company, President Gryn apparently hoped that the Budd Company would be neighborly in return. In fact, by giving up even the threat of a strike before agreement was reached, Gryn gave the company the green light to stall for six months and, in the end, to give up only a little small change.

Any worker with their eyes open expects a corporation to be motivated only by greed and to understand only force. Apparently, that ABC of unionism is a lesson Brother Gryn and his teachers in the International Union don't want to learn.

But in recent years the sports writers and pundits, who are the guardians of all that is sacred, have sounded the alarm that the All Star game is in danger. As usual, it is the players who are blamed. A number of ball players have not been answering the call and have blemished the great tradition by sitting out the three day All Star break.

Vida Blue was out with a swollen elbow, so he stayed home, a sensible enough decision. But the writers don't like it. They fume that Blue should be in the dugout, bad arm or no. Then Nolan Ryan, the fireballer for the California Angels, told Billy Martin, the AL manager, to stick it. Martin overlooked Ryan when selecting his pitching staff, but called him up when he came up short. Ryan apparently had other plans. Martin called for a suspension and fine for Ryan, and was loudly applauded by the chorus of writers.

THE SPORTS WRITERS' REFRAIN

The writers have a refrain that runs something like this. In the good old days the players went out and played. Now they are spoiled brats. They want millions of dollars to play. They disobey managers. They don't have proper respect for the game (which is a form of un-Americanism). Baseball is going down the drain (and the nation with it) because of these greedy, disrespectful attitudes. Its even spreading to a nice, clean-cut low-paid bunch of world champions like the Cincinnati Reds where that symbol of boyish All American ruthlessness, Pete Rose, is threatening to jump ship to get more money.

What the writers overlook in their righteous anger is that for years the owners underpaid the players, journeyman and superstar alike, imposed a Mickey Mouse form of discipline on grown adults, and could buy and sell players at whim. A ball player who didn't like his contract was stuck.

Now, as the result of organization by the players and a series of court and arbitration rulings, the players have gained the leverage to change this situation and they have taken advantage of it. Sure some of the contracts that the first wave of free agents managed to get were outrageous. But we shouldn't overlook that the new dignity and power that all professional athletes have won is a change for the better.

And when it comes to greed, the owners continue to out do the players. It is their ruthless ambitions that prompt them to outbid each other in offering a handful of

superstars multi-million dollar contracts. The spectacle of George Steinbrenner, owner of the Yankees, ripping off the citizens of New York to refurbish Yankee Stadium while spending millions to buy a pennant is a dramatic example.

BASEBALL: A BUSINESS

Sure, ballplayers today have a different attitude. For years the owners maintained baseball was not a business while they raked up huge fortunes. Now the players are acting like baseball is a business too. Why break a leg for George Steinbrenner? Why be gung-ho for Ruly Carpenter? If its dollars and cents for the owners, is it reasonable to expect that the players are going to act like kids in the Little League?

This year's All Star game was held at Yankee Stadium, which is to baseball what Mecca is to Islam. The baseball brass pulled out all the stops to stir up pride in the national pastime and the nation itself. Pearl Bailey sang "America the Beautiful" followed by an operatic rendition of the national anthem. Joe Dimaggio, the Yankee Clipper, and Willie Mays were on hand, along with other greats of the past. Pete Rose interviewed his kid on how great it was to be where the Babe roamed the far reaches of center field.

But all this could not conceal that New York is a city deep in crisis. Terrence Cardinal Cooke, in a lengthy invocation, dwelled more on the meaning of New York's recent blackout than he did on the blessings of baseball. And when Tom Seaver was introduced and doffed his cap, the crowd was moved to near frenzy. It was much more than a tribute to a great athlete who also happened to be a man of some human feeling and compassion. When the Mets sent Tom Seaver to Cincinnati for a couple of guys no one has ever heard of it was yet another body blow to the people of this city.

The bankers, businessmen, and politicians have squeezed New Yorkers hard. Tom Seaver represented a bit of class that the money lenders had not yet foreclosed on. But the Mets' owners didn't care and Seaver bid a tearful farewell to New York. The lights are back on in New York now, but there is still darkness in the souls of its citizens. It was clear that Tom Seaver is missed in a way that goes beyond the transient loyalties of baseball's fandom. And Seaver, emotional man that he is, clearly missed New York as he stood waving his cap before the crowd.

RACIST HYPOCRISY DISPLAYED

The baseball establishment was also able to manage a remarkable demonstration of hypocrisy in this action packed pre-game show. This All Star event was dedicated to Jackie Robinson as the first Black player to make the major leagues.

From the ceremony and speeches, you would never have known exactly why it was that there were no Black players in the majors prior to Robinson. You would never know that there were segregated Negro leagues peopled with the likes of Josh Gibson who many say was better than Babe Ruth. You would never know that it took a mass campaign to break open Jim Crow in baseball. You would never know that Robinson was spit upon, threatened, and called the most vicious of names.

This ugly chapter of the national game was simply glossed over by the representatives of the baseball owners. And naturally, no one had the bad taste to call attention to the fact that baseball management remains lily white (the one and only Black manager, Frank Robinson, was fired last month) and that racism remains in baseball just as it does in society at large.

And this is really what's going on in baseball — the contradictions in American society are too sharp to keep themselves out of the clubhouse and the dugout, or even off the diamond itself. Meanwhile, the National League creamed 'em -7 to 5.