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L.A. Convention Union Democracy vs. UAW Leaders

by Neal Goldberg

AMID BALLOONS, banners, and organ music nearly 6,000 people—more than 3,000 delegates plus alternates, officers, board members, staff, and visitors—met in Los Angeles from June 2 to 7 for the 24th United Auto Workers (UAW) Constitutional Convention. For five days these delegates, representing almost 1.4 million union members in the U. S. and Canada, listened to speeches by political and trade-union celebrities, reports on union business, and prearranged convention debate.

The ostensible reason they were brought to Southern California was to elect their national and regional officers and to vote on changes in the UAW constitution. They were not to discuss bargaining issues, such as wages, benefits, or conditions in the plants. These items are supposed to be taken up at a different convention in 1976, the year for negotiations on the next contract. Rather, the real purpose of this mammoth gathering was to give the top UAW leaders a chance to tighten their bureaucratic grip on the union, enabling them to further ignore the problems of the rank and file.

RANK-AND-FILE OPPOSITION

On the convention floor, the main opposition to this trend came out of three small but active rank-and-file groups. The first, and largest, was the United National Caucus, originally drawn from the ranks of the skilled tradespeople, but now under the influence of the International Socialists. The second was the independent Brotherhood Caucus, centered in the General Motors (GM)

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Fremont plant in California, whose members had been elected to key offices in the local on a reform program of equal rights for women and minorities. And the third was the Auto Workers Action Caucus, the newest and apparently smallest group, dominated by the Communist Party, and mainly from the East. There was also a scattering of other weak in-plant caucuses. Yet, as a body, the opposition could only muster a few hundred delegate votes. And, at least on paper, they were agreed on only one issue—to struggle for greater democracy within the union.

Two key issues—a longer three-year term for top officers and the majority right to reject contract settlements—hung over the delegates. But only the question of the three-year term provoked a real floor fight and potential challenge to the leadership.

Since the mid-fifties the UAW has bargained in three-year cycles, but the conventions, and the election of national officers, have taken place every two.

(Continued on back page)

Rising Ulster Nationalism N. Irish Strike Succeeds

by Margaret Fay

THE GENERAL strike of Protestant workers in Northern Ireland ended May 29 in complete victory for the organizers, the Ulster Workers' Council. The strikers successfully sabotaged the six-month-old Sunningdale Agreement that had been imposed on the Protestant community in December, 1973, after 21 months of direct British rule. This settlement had been negotiated by the Prime Ministers of England and Eire (Southern Ireland), and the ex-Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Brian Faulkner.

The inherent flaw of the Sunningdale Agreement was its assumption that politics has nothing to do with economics. On the one hand, through the mechanism of a "power-sharing" executive (i.e., four of its 11 members would be representatives of the Ulster Catholic community), it attempted to restore the constitutional status of the Northern Irish community as a viable self-governing state separate from the rest of Ireland. Yet the 11 members of the Executive were to be appointed by the British government, not elected by the people of Northern Ireland. On the other hand, it established an all-Ireland Council, whose goal was to integrate the economies of Northern and Southern Ireland into a rationalized system.

Having reached this settlement, British and Irish politicians thought they could return to the business of running their own countries, relieved that the problem of Northern Ireland had finally been settled. Nothing could have been farther from the truth. The paper harmony of the Sunningdale Communique immediately increased the insecurity of the daily lives of the people of Northern Ireland.

The IRA, insulted by the Irish government's sell-out in accepting the continued partition of Ireland, undertook a bombing campaign across the border. The Protestants, interpreting the Council of Ireland as an all-Ireland Parliament (in which they would inevitably be the minority), forced the resignation of Faulkner from the leadership of the Unionist Party (the majority Protestant party that has always occupied the government of Northern Ireland during the fifty years of its existence). How-

ever, Faulkner refused to step down as chief of the Executive and on December 31 the Executive was sworn in with Faulkner at its head to take over the unenviable task of governing Northern Ireland.

THE BRITISH GENERAL ELECTION

The Protestants did not immediately resort to militant action. They still had the hope of bringing down the Executive through the British political system. In February, 1974, the people of Northern Ireland joined the British electorate at the polls to elect 12 representatives from Ulster to sit in the Westminster Parliament.

(Continued on back page)

Fighting Utility Monopolies

by Jim Shoch

(The following article is reprinted from the May 15, 1974, issue of the San Francisco Socialist Coalition newspaper, Common-Sense.)

"I am angry with everyone," exclaimed Teresa Gilligan recently. "Tell the power lobby to go sit on a high-voltage wire." She is one of the 16,000 Boston-area residents who have stopped paying their utilities bills to protest Boston Edison's soaring rates.

The story is much the same everywhere. In New York City, consumers have disrupted Public Service Commission hearings on proposed Consolidated Edison rate increases, calling Con Ed executives "greedy animals."

In North Carolina, consumers fighting a Duke Power rate increase have allied themselves with miners in Harlan, Kentucky, who are striking a Duke Power

subsidiary for union recognition.

In San Francisco, Electricity and Gas for People (E&GP) is fighting PG&E's proposed \$233 million rate increase vowing to "Turn PG&E [Pacific Gas and Electric] Around."

All over the nation, workers and consumers are fighting the utilities monopolies for lower and fairer rates and are winning some important victories.

WHY UTILITIES? AND WHY NOW?

The utilities industry in this country isn't just big business; it's the *biggest* business. In 1971, for example, the 200 major "investor-owned utilities" (IOUs), which supply 78% of the country's electricity, spent \$12 billion on new facilities, bringing their total invested capital to \$90 billion. (Most of the companies expect to double their total investment in the next five years.) In the same year, 1971, the entire American automobile industry spent only \$1.8 billion on new

equipment and plants, while the whole U. S. steel industry invested just \$1.2 billion.

Utilities in this country are "regulated," but, as is true of almost every such industry, the various state Public Utilities and Public Service Commissions are largely controlled by the very companies they're supposed to regulate. Gas and electric rate increase requests have traditionally been rubber-stamped, and the power companies have raked in fat and virtually guaranteed profits of 10-13% on common stock.

But times are changing. In the past few years, and particularly in the last several months, the big utilities have been faced with rising oil, natural gas, and coal costs due to the developing "energy crisis." In addition, interest rates have been skyrocketing as the big banks, on which the utilities industry depends, have sought to keep pace with (or ahead of) inflation. Finally, the growth of energy consumption, which the utilities have done so much to promote over the years, has begun to slow down as American families feel the strain on their budgets and start to economize on their use of gas and electricity.

(Continued on page 4)

Pre-Convention
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Syrian Agreement Palestinians at Center Stage

by Fred Lowe and Susanne Roff-Lowe

IT TOOK THIRTY-four days and nights of shuttle diplomacy for Henry Kissinger to knock some sense into the heads of Arabs and Israelis who have been at each other's throats for the past twenty-seven years. In the process of bringing peace to the area, he was able, according to the western press, to make "friends" of former "enemies" like Sadat of Egypt and Assad of Syria. Under Kissinger's tutelage Sadat and Assad were quick to see the logic of signing troop disengagement agreements and the value of friendly coexistence with their Israeli neighbors and friends.

The most important question that remains before Kissinger and the Arabs now is the Palestinian issue. According to the *New York Times*, "The leaders of the Palestinian movement face the vital choice of defying the most powerful Arab governments or taking part in the move towards a negotiated settlement of the Arab Israeli conflict that these governments now advocate. This perhaps is the most important single result of the agreement."

THE OCTOBER WAR

The October war was fought by Sadat and Assad to alleviate the pressures on their domestic front brought about by the political deadlock that followed the 1967 defeat. The war was to be brief and aimed as a steppingstone towards a negotiated mid-East settlement. Then a ceasefire was quickly signed and the stage for negotiations was set.

Sadat declared a limited war of attrition on the Suez canal and Assad did the same on the Golan Heights in order to satisfy more militant tendencies who saw the advantage of pressing the battle. In the meantime, Israel's government was on the verge of collapse, the Palestinian guerrillas stepped up attacks within occupied territory, and more pressure was put on Saudi Arabia to use the oil weapon.

Under those circumstances, the U.S. felt it had to act fast in order to preserve its vast interests in the region. Kissinger was sent to the area to contain the political unrest that could lead to the fall of Sadat, Assad, and Meir and transform the political scene in the Middle East. His first task was to obtain a disengagement on the Egyptian-Israeli front.



Sadāt, who represents the new bourgeoisie in Egypt, was only too happy to bring back the status quo under the tutelage of the U. S. Indeed, an argument can be made that one of Sadat's goals when Egypt crossed Suez was to gain admittance into the U. S. imperialist family in the mid-East. (see NAM Newspaper, May, 1974, "Mid-East War—U. S. Only Winner") Kissinger suddenly became Sadat's "friend and brother, Dr. Henry," diplomatic ties with the U.S. were renewed, and Israel's evacuation of the canal zone was hailed as a miracle and victory. Thus Kissinger was able to temporarily overcome his first crisis—the Egyptian front. After Egypt's disengagement, Faisal of Saudi Arabia lifted the half-hearted oil embargo, and Kissinger turned his attention to the Syrian front.

In Syria, Kissinger found President Assad ready to sign an agreement provided that he could be guaranteed that radical forces within Syria would not overthrow him. After thirty-four days and nights of negotiations, and promises of financial aid from the U. S. and Saudi Arabia, Assad decided to take a chance. Kissinger got Assad a few crumbs from Israel, such as Quneitra and part of the Golan Heights. In return he provided Israel with a breathing spell to rebuild

Palestinian refugee camps after ex-C.I.A. chief Helms gave the signal to do so. Recently, Israeli jets attacked crowded camps in Lebanon and almost razed them to the ground. In all cases the Palestinians seem to survive and strengthen their resolution to struggle. The Palestinians within occupied territory are agitating and a genocide in Lebanon will not guarantee a solution to the problem:

In essence, Kissinger has only one option—to obtain Palestinian participation in a settlement. A Palestinian presence in Geneva would legitimize a capitulation agreement signed by Syria, Egypt, and Jordan. Since the only legitimate Palestinian representation, in the eyes of the masses, is the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), it is obvious that the PLO has to be seated in Geneva.

At the time of this writing, 150 members of the Palestine National Council, the parliament of the PLO, opened a four-day meeting in Cairo to discuss two agenda items: the question of participating in the Geneva Peace Talks, and whether to create a separate state in the West Bank and the Gaza strip if those territories are relinquished by Israeli occupation forces.



Palestinian Refugee Camp in Jordan

its shattered economy, consolidate its political leadership, and heal its wounded national psyche.

THE PALESTINIANS NEXT

Having strengthened his hand and neutralized some of the secondary fires, Kissinger will now turn his attention to the Palestinian problem, which has been the focus of the Arab national liberation struggle during the past two-and-a-half decades. The large Arab left will never accept the legitimacy of any Arab government that sells the Palestinian national rights and recognizes the Zionist fait-accompli. Kissinger knows that only too well—and he knows that in order to buy another ten years of peace in the mid-East with an uninterrupted supply of oil he has to somehow deal with the Palestinians. If Sadat, Assad, and Hussein go to the Geneva Peace Conference and sign a peace treaty with Israel, it is very likely they will be overthrown the next day. . . in the same way the entire generation of Arab kings and presidents (who tried to come to an accommodation with Israel after 1948) were either assassinated or overthrown by nationalist elements.

This leaves Kissinger two avenues for dealing with the Palestinians. He can either physically exterminate them or force them into a settlement. In 1970 Hussein bombarded Palestinian camps and killed 20,000 Palestinians in ten days, mostly women and children. In May 1973 Lebanon used its air force to bombard



P.D.F.L.P. Leader Hawatmeh

Palestinian authority instead of coming under the control of Jordan, which had occupied the West Bank after the 1948 war.

The moderate position also agrees that the Palestinians should send a delegation to the Geneva Peace Conference if the U. S. and the Soviet Union, the two co-chaircountries, invite the Palestinians to participate on an equal basis with the national delegations from Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Syria.

There is another condition for participation, namely that the terms of reference of the conference be changed to include the legitimate national rights of the Palestinians. The conference now is based on the Security Council's resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, which mentions the refugee problem but not the rights of the Palestinians.

The moderates make it clear that they will not recognize Israel in exchange for the mini-state they are demanding. On the contrary, they claim this mini-state is to become a Palestinian Hanoi from which guerrilla activity can be launched against Israel to recoup the rest of Palestine and fulfill their strategic goals.

To this the radicals reply: Do you think that Kissinger and Rabin will give you a Palestinian Hanoi at the Geneva Conference? The only way Israel will withdraw from any territory is by establishing a demilitarized puppet state under reactionary leadership that recognizes Israel's right to exist. The price for withdrawal will be Palestinian concession of their historical claim to the whole of Palestine—which means the surrender of the revolution.

The moderates reply: we do not have to depend on Kissinger to obtain a national state. We will push for such a state with the help of our friends at the peace conference: the Soviet Union, Syria, and Egypt.

The radicals reply: Under the present conditions, the Soviet Union would not favor a Palestinian Hanoi that would endanger "detente." As for Sadat, it is quite obvious that the last thing he wants to see now is a Palestinian Hanoi that will reinforce the left and the revolutionary forces in the Arab world. It is important to see that the Arab capitalist regimes are ready to capitulate to imperialism and cannot be depended upon as reliable allies. Under the present conditions, our presence in Geneva will only strengthen the hands of the Sadats and the Kissingers in their implementation of capitulation. If the resistance wants to continue the struggle, then it should be agitating with the masses and not in the halls of the Geneva Conference. Our role is to expose the capitulationists and to pursue the long struggle. If Hussein does take over Palestinian territory, we will continue the struggle against him as we are presently doing.

The question the Palestinian leaders like Arafat will have to answer at the Palestinian National Conference is what price will have to be paid for their participation in Geneva? If Habash and the radicals split from the PLO at this crucial phase, would it not discredit the participation of the other groups, and Arafat? On the other hand, not participating would probably bring down a strong repression from Israel and some Arab countries. ■

These two issues are being debated among the Palestinians between the "moderate" and "radical" guerrilla factions. The moderates include the leadership of al-Fatah, the largest guerrilla group, al-Saiqa, which is under Syrian influence, and the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The major constituents of the radical front are the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, under George Habash's leadership, and the Iraqi-backed Arab Liberation Front.

MODERATE-RADICAL DEBATE

Contrary to reports in the western press, the moderates will not accept a Palestinian mini-state in exchange for recognition of Israel. Both the radical and moderate factions believe in the creation of a democratic secular state in the whole of Palestine where all people can live together in justice. The disagreement stems from the tactical issues in the present stage of struggle.

The moderate forces favor an interim solution where the PLO would have national jurisdiction over any of the Palestinian territories evacuated by Israel. The moderate leaders agree to set up a Palestinian National Authority over the parts of Palestine occupied by Israel in 1967, notably the West Bank of the Jordan River and the Gaza strip. The basic idea is that if Israel were forced to evacuate any part of the West Bank this area should be put under independent

The New American Movement (NAM) exists to help organize a movement for democratic socialism in the United States. Our aim is to establish working-class control of the enormous productive capacity of American industry, to create a society that will provide material comfort and security for all people, and in which the full and free development of every individual will be the basic goal. Such a society will strive for decentralization of decision making, an end to bureaucratic rule, and participation of all people in shaping their own lives and the direction of society. We believe the elimination of sexist and racist institutions and the dismantling of American economic and social control abroad are central to the struggle for socialism.

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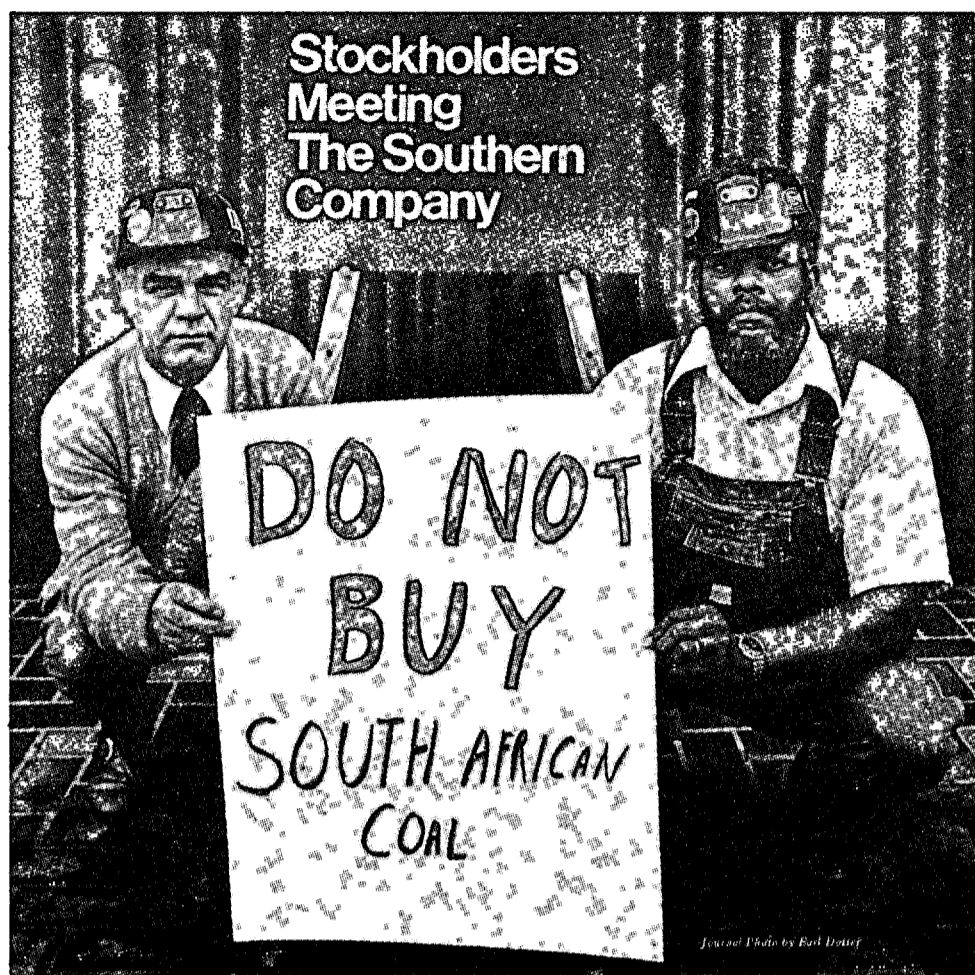
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Miners and Blacks Unite

Stop S. African Coal Imports



Miners protest S. Africa coal imports

photo from UMW Journal

by Harry C. Boyte

THE IMMINENT arrival of a ship bringing South African coal to the United States sparked wideranging protests in the last week of May. Mounting opposition to the coal was voiced by mine workers, third world, and environmental representatives, in what promises to be a new fight against threats to American jobs and U. S. corporate and governmental complicity in South African apartheid.

POLLUTION EXCUSE

The coal shipment was the first of 2½ million tons bought by the Southern Company, a subsidiary of Gulf Power Company, from the South African government last December. Company spokesmen indicated that more South African coal may be purchased unless pollution control legislation now in effect is amended. The company claims it must buy low sulfur coal from abroad to meet environmental laws which go into effect in 1975. Critics maintain that the company has not moved to develop emission control equipment that would allow it to use higher sulfur domestic coal.

The coal agreement represents a breakthrough for the South African government, which has been seeking a partnership with the United States in President Nixon's "Project Independence," the plan for "energy self-sufficiency" by 1980. It is the first important sale of South African bituminous coal abroad. Bituminous coal makes up 95% of South Africa's domestic production, but until recently it was consumed entirely in domestic uses. The government has now developed new rail and export facilities for bituminous coal export at Richard's Bay, near Durban, in the heart of what the government calls the "Zulu

homeland" which South African whites plan to keep for themselves after current native resettlement plans are concluded.

Connie Mulder, a prospective prime minister in the South African government, visited Washington in January seeking new agreements for technical and raw material ties with the U. S. He also made a secret trip to the Pentagon, reportedly to work out military plans for the Indian Ocean. According to the *American Metals Market* of January 25, 1974, American government and industry officials were "receptive to reopening the door to closer cooperation between the U. S. and mineral-rich South Africa, though some natural skepticism was visible."

APARTHEID IN THE MINES

South Africa's policy of racial apartheid is stark and glaring in the country's mines. The ratio of white to black workers' incomes is now 20 to 1, with blacks averaging \$30 a month. Mine conditions are reported to be very hazardous, though accurate accident rates are impossible to determine. Low-cost coal constitutes a threat to U. S. mine workers' jobs, and in fact about 375 workers are expected to be out of work because of the initial Southern Company deal.

On May 22 over 1,000 miners from a dozen locals, community residents, and others picketed the annual stockholders' meeting of the Southern Company. The picket and concluding rally, organized by the "Coalition to Stop South African Coal," protested "U. S. corporate and government support for colonial oppression in South Africa" and declared support for the "struggle of U. S. miners against Southern Company and other energy monopolies."

Meanwhile, in Washington, Charles Rangel (D., N. Y.) of the Congressional Black Caucus declared the caucus' opposition to the coal shipment. "The purchase," said Rangel, "sustains and encourages the growth of the most racist government in the world, and threatens jobs of American miners."

(The above article was prepared with the aid of materials of the Southern Africa Committee.)

10 Years After FSM

Cal Students, Others Stage Protests

by Nick Rabkin
Berkeley NAM

WITHIN DAYS of the publication of a study by social psychologist Daniel Yankelovich, campuses in several areas of the country erupted in militant political protest. The study had found that "college youth—the chief source of social dissidence in the 60's—has moved swiftly toward reconciliation with the larger society."

At Ohio University in Athens, President Claude R. Sowle resigned after confrontations with student campus workers, blacks, and other students over unionization, Afro-American Studies, and ROTC. San Jose State University was thrown into turmoil over the firing of several marxist economists. Ten thousand people gathered at Kent State University on the fourth anniversary of the massacre there to protest the continued war in Indochina, the coverups of the Kent and Jackson State killings in 1970, and to call for Nixon's impeachment.

And at the University of California at Berkeley, where the student movement leaped to national prominence in 1964, students escalated their fight to save the left-wing School of Criminology and to maintain the autonomy of ethnic studies programs established after major confrontations in 1968-69.

In the years preceding the student rebellion of the 60's social scientists failed to see the storm that lurked behind the peaceful exterior of the universities. Ironically, the problems that led to the current eruptions are remarkably similar to those that sparked the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley ten years ago. Yet the past year or two or relative campus peace was evidence enough for Yankelovich and others to declare an end to the era of campus rebellion.

AN END TO HISTORY

The Free Speech Movement (FSM) at Berkeley first enunciated the concerns

of the student movement. Mario Savio, 1964: "The bureaucrats hold history as ended. As a result significant portions of the population, both on the campus and off, are dispossessed, and these dispossessed are not about to accept this ahistorical point of view. It is out of this that the conflict has occurred with the university bureaucracy and will continue to occur until it is clear the university cannot function."

Most of the struggles waged by students in the 60's were aimed at transformations that would make universities more responsive to the needs of the "dispossessed" off campus and that gave students more autonomy on campus. But by 1969 the student movement was torn by confusion over the question of whether the task of the student movement was to transform the university or destroy it. That confusion, as much as the massive repression unleashed by Richard Nixon, was responsible for the decline of the student movement. Nevertheless, the sixties saw the establishment of programs of study specifically geared to the needs of third world students and women at many universities. The quiescence of student activism and the growing financial crisis have led to the curtailing of these programs in the last year or two.

The School of Criminology at Cal, formerly an advanced training institute for the forces of law and order, had been transformed into a school that investigated the injustice of the capitalist justice system and the crimes of the nation's rulers. This was accomplished through student struggles in the sixties. The ethnic studies programs, with considerable autonomy for blacks, Chicanos, Asians, and Native Americans were also established during this period at Cal. Both programs energetically used the resources of the University to enter the political arena, much as the civil rights activists of 1964 who sparked FSM did. It was this politicization that led to the University's repression of FSM and to the recent decision to phase out the School of Criminology.



Berkeley students on way to seizure of Haviland Hall. photo by Ray Pinkson

ACADEMIC STANDARDS SMOKECREEN

Using the smokescreen of academic standards to hide their political decision, faculty committees voted over the last year to eliminate the School of Criminology and to move the autonomous ethnic studies programs into the College of Letters and Science. Small student organizations immediately began to organize against the moves.

It became clear this spring that Chancellor Albert Bowker intended to wait until the summer to drop the school—a time when no student pressure could be brought upon the situation. The Save-the-Crim-School Committee raised a demand for Bowker to announce his intentions by mid-May. On May 29, 400 demonstrators seized Haviland Hall to back up this demand, to "rededicate (the school) to student and community action, and to reconstitute it as a place where faculty, staff, and students can collectively join hands in study and struggle." 159 of the demonstrators were cited late that night by campus police for violation of the Mulford Act, a California law designed to keep

troublemakers off campus.

The next day 2,000 people attended a support rally. 3,000 attended an ethnic studies rally the following day.

On Tuesday, June 4, Chancellor Bowker announced his final decision to eliminate the Crim School. Students briefly retook Haviland Hall the next day but left when threatened with arrest. They understood that their protests had come too late and that they were not organized to press further at this point.

FUTURE STRUGGLE

The struggles for the Crim School and ethnic studies are over for this school year. But the students promise to resume their fight in the fall. Their tactical caution and patience paid off as their movement grew rapidly this spring.

Their major problems stemmed from an inability to organically unite the two struggles. This was due, in a large measure, to the intense nationalism of some ethnic studies leaders. But the rapid and intelligent development of the movement during the spring encouraged growing racial unity and it is likely that the fall will see a united and revitalized student movement on the campus.

PRODUCERS VS. MULTINATIONALS

Banana War in Central America

(Reprinted from *International Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 11, published by Internews, P. O. Box 4400, Berkeley, CA 94704)

An economic war is being waged by three U. S. fruit companies against Central American countries that are trying to raise the price of bananas. The companies are Standard Fruit, United Brands, and Del Monte. This confrontation directly affects the lives of 100,000 banana workers in the region, and it is certain to affect U. S. relations with Central and Latin America in a period when U. S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has promised a "new dialogue" on issues such as the role of U. S. multinational corporations.

The battle began in early March when seven Central and Latin American countries met in Panama City and agreed to raise the price of banana exports. Five countries—Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama announced the formation of a producers' organization called the Panama—later agreed to place a dollar-per-crate tax on the fruit. On May 21, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama announced the formation of a producers' organization called the Union of Latin American Banana Exporters. So far, Ecuador, the largest exporter of the fruit, has refused to join.

The exporting countries say the tax would bring them a total of \$260 million a year. Panama's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Fernando

Manfredo, acknowledges that the planned price increases would be passed on to consumers in the industrialized countries, but he says it would serve as a "contribution to alleviate the poverty that abounds on the banana plantations."

Standard Fruit has led the fight against the tax. In March, a Standard spokesman told Internews that the company considers the tax "illegal and uneconomic, and does not plan to export under these conditions." The fruit companies gave the same message to heads of state in Central America and followed up with harvest cutbacks and export bans in Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama—the three countries that levied the tax.

The conservative International Longshoreman's Association in the U. S. backed the companies, threatening in April to stop unloading all produce from Latin America if the tax were applied.

THE HARDEST hit country has been Honduras. Three-fourths of the country's income comes from bananas, and Standard is the major exporter. The Union of Standard Fruit Workers in Honduras has backed the government against the fruit company. Union president Napoleon Acevedo called the government's stand a "patriotic decision," and charged that Standard has cut back banana exports from 500,000 crates a week to 150,000. He also charged that Standard is destroying 145,000 boxes of bananas, pineapples, grapefruits, and coconuts each week. According to an Associated Press report on May 21, Standard officials in Honduras admitted the destruction of the fruit, but

company spokesmen in the U. S. have continued to deny it.

Acevedo said that Standard is trying to create economic chaos in La Ceiba, a company town where 53,000 people are employed in the fruit industry. The com-



Donald J. Kirchoff, president of Castle & Cooke, which owns Standard Fruit. In March Kirchoff flew to Honduras and Costa Rica to pressure heads of state to abandon the banana tax.

pany has been accused to get the Honduran government to drop the tax.

Standard workers also say the company has broken local labor laws with its announced layoffs and salary cutbacks. On May 14, they filed a suit demanding \$79,000 from Standard in back salaries for dismissed workers.

IN COSTA RICA, the Banana Growers' Association charges that Standard has cut its operations by 70 per-

cent. Ninety-eight per cent of the banana workers in Costa Rica voted in late May to go on strike if Standard refuses to pay the tax. The government is now considering buying out Standard's plantations and facilities in Costa Rica, and Standard has offered to sell. If the deal is completed, it may be the first breakthrough for the producers.

IN PANAMA, the Chiriqui Land Company, owned by United Fruit, has suspended the harvest indefinitely. The government of Omar Torrijos has promised that Chiriqui workers will receive a percentage of the tax received from banana exports. In addition, on May 27 Panama gave \$2 million to support banana workers in Costa Rica and Honduras who have been hit by Standard cutbacks.

At the end of April, Panama hosted the first hemispheric conference of banana workers. President Torrijos addressed the meeting, which was attended by 500 delegates from Panamanian labor and student organizations, plus representatives of banana workers in Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Ecuador. Torrijos praised the workers for their sacrifices in the effort to raise banana prices. "We know full well," Torrijos said, "that bananas are not a strategic product like oil, but they represent the result of the effort of thousands of workers."

The fruit companies argue that they cannot pay the tax because it would raise banana prices in U. S. stores by 50 to 100 per cent, drastically reducing sales. They have ridiculed the efforts of banana producers to form a union, saying "bananas are not oil," and "no one will stand in line for bananas." But the company figures appear vastly inflated. If banana prices double, the companies themselves will probably be pocketing most of the increase, since the tax itself is only two and a half cents per pound.

National Roundup

Fighting Utility Monopolies

(Continued from front page)

In this situation of rising costs and declining revenues, the power companies are feeling the squeeze and are turning to their state regulatory agencies for rate hikes with growing frequency in order to maintain their comfortable profit margins. This means increased utilities bills for American consumers at the very time they are cutting back on their use of energy!

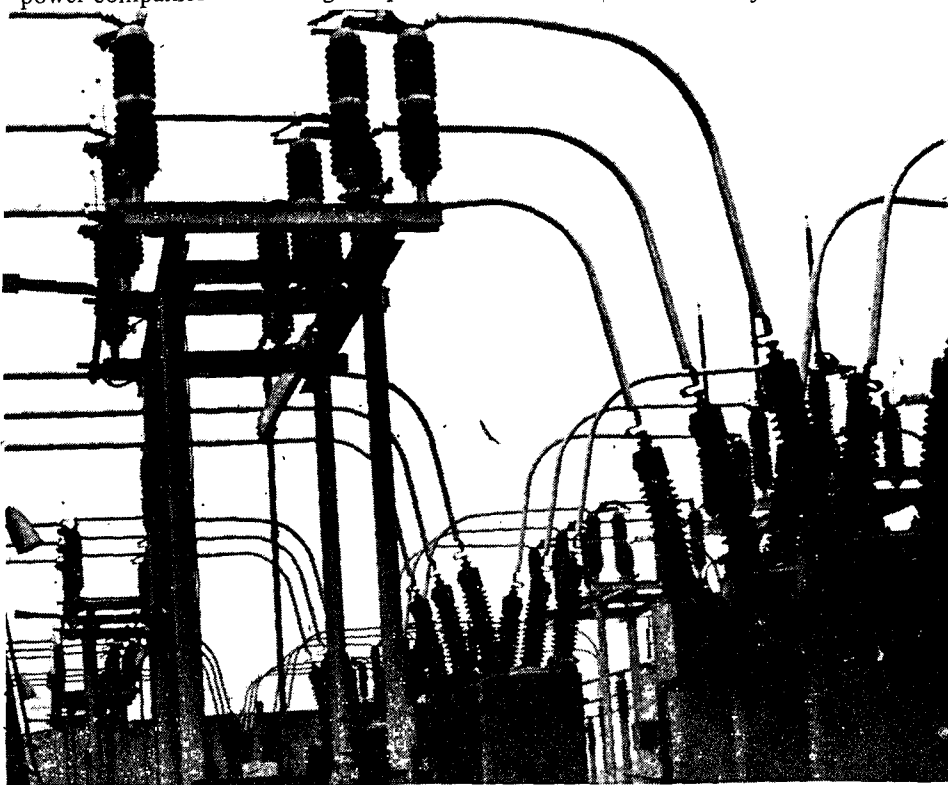
Utilities rates are soaring throughout the country. Boston's rates have climbed 34% in the last two years. Rates in Nevada, Georgia, and Vermont have all jumped over 25% in the last six months. The big utilities have threatened brown-outs, black-outs, and inadequate service in order to force these exorbitant rate hikes through.

But American workers and consumers are not taking this rate gouging lying down. All across the country, they are demanding that the power companies themselves absorb the cost of the crisis that they have in large part created through their reckless promotion of energy consumption. Attesting to the anger felt by millions of Americans towards the utilities monopolies is *Newsweek's* recent report noting the "depth and passion of the public's response" to skyrocketing gas and electric rates.

The consumer attack has focused on three main areas of concern: 1) "Fuel adjustment" clauses permitting the utilities to pass on the increased costs of raw materials to the consumer. 2) Rate increases designed to boost the utilities' rates of return (profit) on invested capital in order to finance unneeded expansion. Since utilities are virtually guaranteed a fixed rate of return on their investment, they have every incentive to add unnecessary capacity. It has been estimated that the utilities industry as a whole overbuilt by roughly 10% during the fifties and sixties. Utilities activists charge that the power companies' growth projections are way too high, particularly since consumers are beginning to effectively conserve energy. Hence, while these rate increases may be needed to-

keep profits up, they are for the most part not needed to meet the energy needs of the American people. 3) The utilities' rate structures which discriminate in favor of industry and against residential users. As rate structures now stand, big users of energy, mainly industrial firms, pay less per kilowatt hour than do small users. This in effect means that industry is subsidized by residential users.

Consumers have also attacked the power companies' advertising and pro-



motional practices, their hiring and employment policies, and their disregard for the environment. And in some cities, public ownership and control of the utilities is being seriously discussed.

GEORGIA POWER PROJECT

The most interesting group of utilities activists, at least from a socialist perspective, is the Georgia Power Project. Joseph Hughes, writing in the Summer, 1973, issue of *Southern Exposure*, des-

cribes the Project: "Since its beginnings during June, 1972, the group has attempted to fight from the bottom up to expose the corrupt practices of the Georgia Power Company and to present a more workable socialist alternative for distributing electrical power."

The Project was formed two years ago to oppose the Georgia Power Company's \$48 million rate increase application then pending before the Georgia Public Service Commission. Project members

formed an alliance with the Atlanta Labor Council (AFL-CIO) at the hearings to fight the increase. They argued that the Company's growth projections were much too high and that most of the increase was unnecessary. They demonstrated that the rate hike was actually designed to boost the profits of the big northern banks that control the Georgia Power Company (as well as most southern industry).

In addition, the Project attacked the Company's rate structure, its destruc-

tion of the environment, its extensive use of misleading advertising, and its racist and sexist employment practices. And throughout the hearings, the Project attempted to contrast the existing costly, inefficient, and destructive monopoly control of power in Georgia with its alternative—public ownership and regional democratic control of the industry.

The Project's intervention was partially successful—only \$18 million of the \$48 million request was granted.

Since 1972, the Project has fought the Georgia Power Company on several fronts. It has opposed subsequent rate increase applications, with some victories and some defeats. Along with the Welfare Rights Organization and the Tenants Council, the Project filed and won a complaint before the Federal Communication Commission forcing the media in Georgia to allow consumer groups to reply to the Georgia Power Company's advertising claims.

According to Joseph Hughes, the Project sees "the development of more broad-based coalitions" as "an important step toward education about the broader implications of reformism and for a more popular acceptance of anti-capitalist demands and programs."

Pursuing its strategy of raising the political level of the demands to include public ownership and control of power, the Project has begun to broach the idea of municipalization of the Georgia Power Company's distribution facilities in Atlanta. In the Project's words, "If municipalization should become a reality in Atlanta, then it would open up several possibilities in terms of rate reform, rate making, and management and control of the electric business. It would ensure that democratic processes rather than profit requirements would dictate the policies of this vital service."

MAJOR UTILITIES FIGHTS

In San Francisco, as already noted, Electricity and Gas for People—a coalition of labor, neighborhood, environmental, church, senior citizen, and other groups—is fighting PG&E's proposed \$233-million general rate increase, the twelfth such increase in the last 14 months, and the largest in PG&E history. E&GP also stands for 1) an end to the discriminatory rate structure that favors industry at the expense of residential users, 2) the "lifeline" concept, i.e., a

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New Yorkers Give Con Ed Static

by Tim Nesbitt

WHAT HAPPENED to Consolidated Edison this year should have happened to an oil company. Unfortunately there was little chance of that. But New York City's electricity-maker, the largest in the country in assets and sales, was a good second choice. Even as utilities go, Con Ed was a particularly painful peddler of the price increases levied by the oil industry earlier this year. So there was some short-lived justice to the story that followed when Con Ed came close to bankruptcy and New Yorkers got a lesson in the economics of private power.

At the start of the energy crisis last fall, Con Ed was already well fortified with a fuel adjustment clause that provided for increases (and decreases) in the cost of fuel to be passed on directly to the consumer. No petitioning of the Public Service Commission. No noisy public protests. Con Ed was an ideal retailer for the oil companies. Its trustees simply took the bills that came attached to every new barrel of high-priced, low-sulfur fuel oil and forwarded same to their customers.

The result was a shock to anyone who touched a light switch in New York City. Con Ed gets 85 per cent of its power from burning oil. As the cost of this oil tripled, the fuel adjustment increases escalated the average bill for all-electric homes to over \$250 a month. Some homeowners found themselves paying more for heat than they paid for their mortgages.

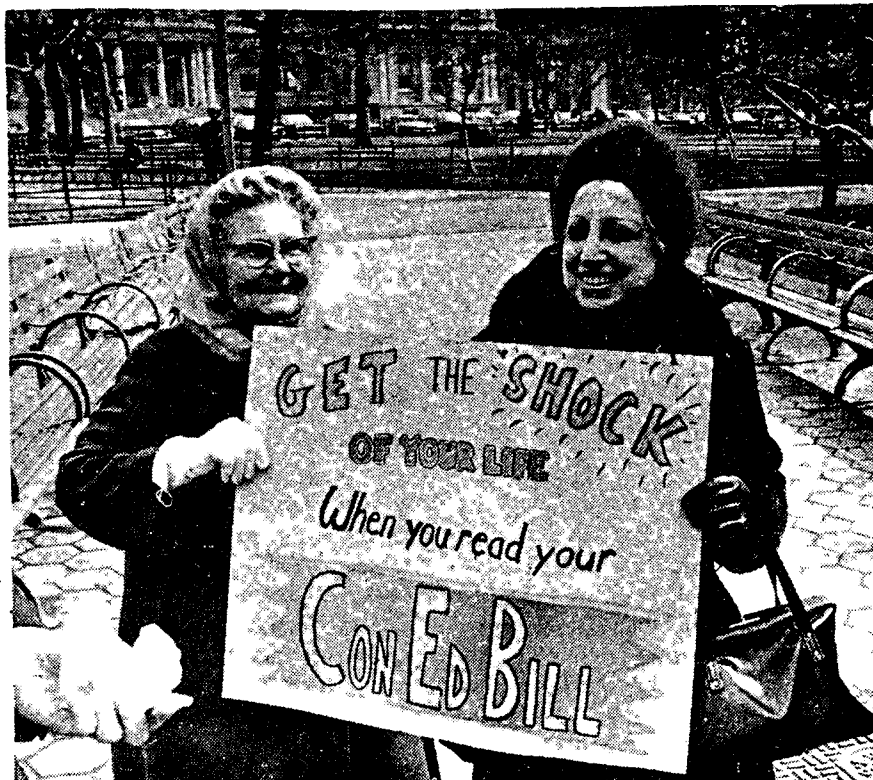
All this was well publicized in the chill of the energy crisis. But as the winter ended and the crisis thawed, Con Ed started getting some long-delayed

human static in its wires. Unpaid bills piled up faster than the computer could send out shut-off notices. And the utility's management complained that conservation measures taken to heart by its customers would cut revenues \$100 million in 1974.

On April 23, Chairman Charles F. Luce announced his decision. Because of this new "liquidity crisis" (not enough cash), Con Ed would forego its usual quarterly dividend of 45 cents a share. The decision probably seemed sensible under the circumstances. Luce, a former administrator of the federal Bonneville Power Administration and once an undersecretary of the Interior, may even have thought it was "sound fiscal policy." But this was Wall Street he was talking to—not the public.

Con Ed had never missed a dividend in all its 89 years. Investors, like horse-players, come to value that kind of consistency. The textbooks tell us that all the stockholders need do in a situation like this is to rise in revolt and throw the managerial bums out. They did show up for a noisy meeting in May. (The Wall Street Journal reported "fighting and shouting matches" among the pensioners.) But they never came close to a boardroom coup. The real revolt had already been fought and won on "the Street."

After the no-dividend announcement, the price of Con Ed common stock fell 50% in a week. And Standard and Poor's knocked the utility's bond rating from an already below-average BBB to a bush-league BB. These bond-rating services actually make the rules in the money game and with a BB rating, Con Ed's bonds fell below the level at which they can legally be bought by financial institutions in New York State.



A protest demonstration against Con Ed at City Hall. Credit/LNS

All this was a revelation to those who thought that a big monopoly was at least its own boss. The economics of the utility business showed through like old wiring in a burnt-out house.

Con Ed's rate of return, figured as a fixed percentage of its capital investment, is guaranteed by the state. This is what attracts all the little investors. The more it spends on plant and equipment, the more it gets back in revenue. But to get the money to spend, a utility must either issue new stock, float a bond, or get a bank loan. Retained earnings are usually small. So when a utility runs short of cash, whether because of increased fuel costs or consumer backlash and/or slumping sales, the crunch is on. The company has all it can do just to keep up interest payments on its outstanding debt. And, when it looks for money elsewhere, it faces a stock market that won't pay anywhere near book value for

its stocks and a bond market that demands exorbitant interest rates on its bonds. Then bank rates rise because the company is losing investor confidence. And with its stock selling low, it has less collateral.

This is economic blackmail, as Con Ed found out. "It is generally felt on the Street that Con Ed has burned its bridges in the capital market," reported Business Week. Where would the company get its money? Like many other citizens in similar straits, Con Ed's management applied for welfare. Luce made a quick trip to Albany, conferred with the governor, and announced a plan for the state to buy two of Con Ed's unfinished power plants for half a billion dollars.

Wall Street held out hope. Moody's Bond Survey of April 29 stated that Con Ed could keep its tenuous BBB rating only if the PSC granted a new rate increase and the legislature okayed the sale of the two power plants to the state Power Authority (PASNY). Luce himself reported that the banks wanted the same assurances. Less than three weeks later, the legislature approved the sale and authorized PASNY to complete the deal. In the meantime, the PSC gave Con Ed the right to charge 1.5 per cent monthly interest on the overdue accounts of its larger customers (like the City of New York, fifty days late with its payments) and granted a \$27.8 million increase in annual gas rates. Now it's listening to the utility's case for an electric rate increase of \$422 million more.

All this should prove, to no one's surprise, which way an investor-owned utility leans in its balancing act between private profit and public service. But events also show that Con Ed itself was caught in the middle of an even stronger conflict between the price-gouging oil industry and the interest-hungry money market. The squalling investors were an obvious front for the big financial institutions. After all, 60 per cent of all utility financing now comes from bonds and bank loans. It takes Wall Street to prove that even a monopoly is not always its own boss.

Does this mean the answer is public power? Luce wants it both ways. He complains that, while a state agency like PASNY can fund its new plants and operations with tax-free bonds, Con Ed is forced to compete with higher interest rates and a state and local tax bill of \$360 million a year. Luce suggests that the federal government offer credit assistance and/or loan guarantees to investor-owned utilities. But even purely public utilities depend, as they now operate, on the same money market that blackmailed Con Ed. PASNY's chairman, for example, when told by the legislature to go ahead with the Con Ed deal, warned that the terms of the sale must not hurt his agency's own good credit standing.

Throughout it all, the oil companies are silent. They catch little of the criticism that they get at the gas pumps. Perhaps they don't even mind the prospect of more state-owned utilities. The pass-on of costs will continue. The money market will get safer bonds. The consumer will still be gouged. Nothing too much will change in the switch from private to public power, perhaps, until what happened to Con Ed begins to happen to Exxon and the Chase Manhattan Bank. ■

Spinola Looks To Neo-Colonial Solution For Portuguese Empire

by Barry Rubin

Ceasefire negotiations between the new Portuguese government and the liberation organizations of Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique have begun in London and Lusaka, Zambia. Both FRELIMO (Mozambique) and the PAIGC (Guinea) have served notice on the new Portuguese foreign minister, Mario Soares, that the goal of the negotiations must be unconditional independence from Portuguese colonial rule.

In Portugal itself, a new provisional government has been named by the military junta including two Communist and three Socialist ministers in a cabinet of fifteen. The new minister for interterritorial affairs has announced that referenda will be held in each colony within a year allowing each adult, over eighteen, illiterate or otherwise, to vote either for independence or a continued federation with Portugal.

The following article, written by Barry Rubin of the Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP) just after the April coup in Portugal appears in the NAM newspaper now because of the important analysis Barry presents.

THE FALL OF Portugal's fascist dictatorship set off a national outpouring of joy and celebration, of sentiment pent up by a half century of repression. But while the situation is still in flux it is important to ask some serious questions about the background of Gen. Spinola's coup and what it means for the future of Portugal's African colonies.

Although the coup that overthrew Premier Marcello Caetano is undeniably a gain for the Portuguese people, one must also see it as an attempt by the new junta, backed by Portuguese big business and supported by the U. S., to salvage as much as possible in Africa. Certainly, it is impossible to understand the most recent developments in Portugal without



SPINOLA

analyzing their relationship with Portugal's colonial wars in Africa.

NEO-COLONIALISM

A decade ago France and Britain ended their direct governmental rule over Africa and granted independence. But this move sought to transform the old-style colonialism into an indirect control through the economic sphere, the continued control of trade, markets, and raw materials in these countries by European companies. This relationship is known as neo-colonialism. The program was based on the transfer of power to local elites which had been trained by and which were allied to the former mother country. This program did not always work and losses were incurred where nationalist forces came to power (Guinea, Tanzania). Still, with the help of foreign-sponsored military coups against nationalist governments, this system has functioned surprisingly well.

Portugal, though, was unwilling and unable to use this option. Its own economic weakness and backwardness made it inevitable that if its colonies were to be politically released they would drift into the British or American orbit. Secondly, even after 400 years of colonial rule the

Portuguese had not trained any local group to take over and establish a neo-colonial system. Thirdly, the ideological importance and relative economic weight of the empire in the Portuguese system made the fascist government unwilling to stand for any change. Lastly, the political pressure of over 800,000 Portuguese settlers in the territories would not allow any easy transition.

One of the main reasons for the European acceptance of the neo-colonial option was the fear that if direct rule were maintained more radical, nationalistic independence movements would arise. It is precisely this factor that will wreck Spinola's plan for granting only a very limited independence within a Portuguese-controlled commonwealth. Today the liberation movements are too strong, too nationalistic (with socialist leadership) and too aware of the dangers of neo-colonialism to allow the Portuguese to engineer stable neo-colonial regimes.

As the liberation wars expanded in the African colonies they ate up more and more of Portugal's budget (as much as 40 per cent) and caused severe domestic strains. One in four draft-age males were in the army while thousands of others left the country to avoid induction and the 30 per cent annual inflation rate. Meanwhile, Portugal was still the least industrialized country in Europe with the lowest standard of living. In some ways, as Spinola wrote, Portugal had become a prisoner of its own empire, or at least of its traditional strategy for holding it.

The behavior of the Portuguese government in Africa was even more brutal than its repression at home. The army had studied U. S. operations in Vietnam and copied them in many ways: bombings of civilian targets, forcing peasants into strategic hamlets, use of napalm and defoliants, looting of live-

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California Labor Laws Protection for None

by Toby Silvey
Berkeley-Oakland NAM

In the controversy over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), some have argued that passage of this law could bring an end to hard-won protective legislation, much of which is designed for women workers. In some states where the ERA has been ratified, it has been used as an excuse to lower the level of working standards for all people. Non-unionized women and minority workers are leading organizing efforts to fight for an affirmative interpretation of the ERA, insisting that protective legislation be extended to all workers. The following is a report on that struggle in California.

Governor Reagan's Industrial Welfare Commission (IWC) has recommended that most of the protective labor laws that now exist be removed from the books. The Commission says current standards must be brought into line with the Equal Rights Amendment, and that means no more special privileges for women. Instead of interpreting the ERA affirmatively and extending work regulations to male workers, the IWC has decided to use women's demands against women and men workers.

WHAT IS THE IWC?

In 1913, during a period of intense struggle for progressive labor legislation, the California State Legislature appointed an Industrial Welfare Commission to set and enforce work regulations. At that time, two of the five members on the commission represented labor and one was neutral. Reagan's administration, however, has appointed a commission with only one labor and no neutral representatives. The one labor representative is Mike Elorduy, a Teamster official in the food processing industry. Although he has continually been the one dissenting voice on the Commission ("I do not believe the ERA was intended to be used to deprive workers of protection", he does not represent unorganized workers—those most affected if the IWC recommendations become law.

The IWC was charged by the California State Legislature to design implementation of the ERA. The bill calling for

new legislation specifically called for an extension of protective laws to men. But the IWC has chosen to use the Amendment to attack the standards of women, minority workers, and in the long run, all workers, including unionized workers.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

The major protection in jeopardy in California is the 8-hour day. The right to work only 8 hours a day took 80 years of militant struggle to win. It can be reversed in much less time. If the IWC recommendations become law, all industries (except motion picture and canning) will be able to impose a 10-hour day plus mandatory overtime, up to 40 hours per week. Even worse, workers in hotels, retail workers, small shop workers, domestic workers, and all agricultural workers will lose all hours protection. These are the fields that employ the largest percentages of women and minority workers who, for the most part, are unorganized. If the IWC succeeds in wiping hours regulations off the books, they will directly increase employers' profits, reduce workers benefits, increase unemployment in the least organized sectors, and eventually drive wages down even further.

Another right workers stand to lose if the IWC recommendations go into effect is personal privilege time. That means that a trip to the bathroom can be counted as a break. Employers will also be able to keep minors on the job until 12:30 a.m. on non-school nights. They will be able to pass on the cost of mandatory uniforms and equipment to the employees. And there will no longer be any laws requiring drinking water, toilets and rest rooms, couches, ventilation, first aid, health facilities, or weight-lifting limitations.

This kind of attack on work standards is one of industry's ways of keeping profits up in the face of severe inflation. Partly because of the independence movements in the Third World, the U.S. is finding it increasingly difficult to export its economic problems. The cost of maintaining an inflationary country with massive international debts is being passed on to the workers, especially to the least visible (unorganized) ones.



Africa Support Parlay, March

by Harry Boyte

CLOSE TO 8,000 people marched under the banner of the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) on May 25 in Washington. The march and rally concluded a month of activity which brought to the surface a sense of urgency for change in the black liberation movement, as well as strong socialist sentiments.

The demonstration began in Malcolm X Park, continued through the black community, and moved to the Portuguese embassy, where marchers demanded freedom for African colonies.

At the rally, speakers addressed the three themes of the month's events: impeachment of Nixon, opposition to fuel hikes and the energy companies, and the struggle against racist and political repression of black people. The demonstration, the response from the black community, and the wide range of speakers indicated again this year the broad roots of the ALSC and its crucial role in the black movement. Moreover, both the rally and the ALSC conference (on May 23-24) revealed a new direction and ferment, which suggest major developments in the coming period.

The ALSC is a nationwide organization with chapters in nearly 50 cities and six countries. It describes itself as an "anti-racist, anti-imperialist, Black United Front." In two years it has mobilized over 200,000 people in solidarity with African struggles for liberation and in protest against conditions in the United States. Last year it raised \$40,000 and this year it will raise \$75,000 for the liberation movements in southern Africa. ALSC chapters around the country have also been involved in intense discussion about future directions for the black liberation movement in the United States.

The conference call expressed this focus: "Black people are at a stage in struggle that requires us to regroup and develop a new approach. We are in a period of massive discontent and government instability, police repression, and imprisonment of political activists. To counter this there is growing militancy in the ranks of workers, tenants, students, prisoners, women, and many others. There is a new stage in our movement coming into being. . . this is a decisive conference for the theoretical direction of our movement."

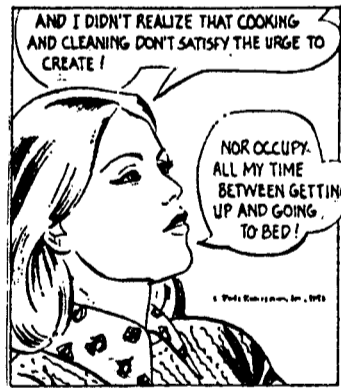
Conference organizers considered it a major success because of the number and diversity of participants, and especially because of the clarity with which different viewpoints from Pan-Africanist to Marxist-Leninist were expressed and discussed. Held at Howard University, the two-day meeting brought together about 500 activists from trade union work, campuses, community groups, and other backgrounds. Speakers included Stokely Carmichael, Dawolu Locke, chairperson of ALSC, Imamu Baraka and Owusu Sadaukai, regional directors of ALSC and cochairs at this year's National Black Assembly.

Several speakers stressed the dual role of race and class in the liberation struggle. The conference also held workshops on the labor movement today, the unemployed, prisons, police and justice, women, youth and education, and politics.

The IWC's orders were expected to go into effect throughout the state on April 1. Public protests by Sears strikers, San Francisco city strikers, California Homemakers, and Union Women's Alliance to Gain Equality (Union W.A.G.E.), won a delay of two months and additional hearings. These groups and additional supporters formed a coalition (Committee for Better Working Conditions) which collected petitions to present at the hearings, were refused a voice in the proceedings, and disrupted the Commission hearings to the point where the chairman adjourned the meeting, and set June 1 as the definite date protective laws would be lifted.

In May the California State Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO), mainly in response to persistent efforts of women in Union W.A.G.E. (who have been fighting for the extension of protective laws for three years), filed a suit challenging the legality of the IWC orders. One day before the laws were to be removed, and one day before a widely-publicized demonstration at the San Francisco Federal Building, an injunction was issued by the court, preserving protective laws at least for the time being, staying the IWC's hand, and demonstrating a clear victory for the organized opposition.

That victory was celebrated on June 1 at the demonstration called by the Committee for Better Working Conditions. Most of the people supporting the demonstration also strongly support the ERA. As a speaker from the California Homemakers Association said, "We're not fighting to keep these laws out of belief in special privileges or special protection for women. But neither do we accept equal oppression with men. We say, keep the laws for women—and win them for our brothers, too!"



Women and Voluntarism

by Mardi Kleus and Carol Peterson
Socialist Feminist Task Force
Minneapolis NAM

The Junior League recently sponsored a national conference on "voluntarism" in Minneapolis-St. Paul. Women from all over the country came to hear such speakers as George Romney and Ralph Nader, and to participate in workshops with titles like "The Volunteer as Change Agent."

The socialist feminist task force of NAM leafleted the conference to argue that voluntarism of the magnitude and direction endorsed by the conference, was basically a capitalist, chauvinist plot. The following is an expanded version of the information contained in the leaflet.

AFTER THE 1968 election, Nixon was confronted with two major tasks: to unite a country divided by anti-war, student, and civil rights protest; and to prop up an economy about to sag into

recession. One of Nixon's responses was to call for increased voluntary action, based on an analysis that voluntarism could channel protest into acceptable citizen participation. At the same time, it could reduce the social services budget which was, and still is, greatly strained by inflation and by increasing military expenditures.

As a government stimulus to volunteer activity, Nixon appointed former General Motors head, George Romney, to create a National Center for Voluntary Action. The Center is a non-profit, non-partisan organization completely dominated by private industry. Its task is to promote voluntarism by providing case studies of voluntary programs, advising groups on the availability of public and private funds for projects, and determining guidelines for national volunteer priorities. As of 1970, the minimum contribution to the Center was \$100,000, the maximum, half a million dollars.

Needless to say, the Center's program will not conflict with the interests of its

leaders (e.g., Henry Ford II, former chairman) or its donors, the corporate elite. The May, 1970, *Conference Board Record* reported, "The establishment of the private sector arm of the national program completed the link in what is described as a 'creative partnership' between government and the people it serves. The program is designed to have the government and the private sector work closely together in a harmonious rather than in a competitive fashion."

The people the Center serves are the corporate class, and the harmony it seeks is the transformation of peoples' movements for social change into non-threatening personal acts of charity.

The Nixon Administration and the Center hope to use the estimated 61 million adult Americans willing to donate 245 million hours per week to volunteer programs (1968 Gallup Poll). A large free work force would enable the government to justify laying off government social service workers, thereby accelerating social service cutbacks. Increased unem-

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Toward Racial Unity

by Mike Downing
Los Angeles NAM Pre-Chapter

(This is a short prose version of a talk Mike Downing gave at the Regional Conference in the panel, "Building A Multi-National Movement.")

ORGANIZATIONS often establish goals which are problem-ridden and the goal of a multi-racial organization is one of these. In what follows I do not offer definitive statements, but I do want to present some of the problems of building a multi-racial movement. In addition, I will offer some tentative proposals which may be ways of beginning to solve these problems.

There are two experiences which will illustrate some of the problems. At a recent regional conference NAM proposed an agenda which did not include any explicit discussion of racism, nationalism, or the progress or failure of building a multi-racial movement. This agenda was changed only after a criticism was raised—and even then the panel organized to discuss these issues was placed last on the agenda of the conference. The second experience is that of a discussion of building a multi-racial organization held in a NAM pre-chapter. This pre-chapter had only two consistently active members of racial minority groups, and the responsibility for leading that discussion fell only upon them. When weaknesses were detected in that discussion the blame, also, fell on them.

I understand that NAM is committed to building a multi-racial organization. The first experience cited above illustrates the problem of organizations committed to goals which they do not make

efforts to create programs around. Secondly, this experience reinforces the idea that predominantly white organizations will not discuss (and surely will not fight) racism unless they are pressured to do so.

This experience also tends to reinforce the idea that predominantly white organizations, even when they attempt to deal with these issues, may do so only in a cursory way; i.e., it is last on an agenda, or, if it is put on the agenda late, organizing around it is hampered. The second experience described illustrates the tendency to place the responsibility for dealing with issues of racism and nationalism on the Blacks, Chicanos, or Asians in the organization.

Some of the reasons for these situations come from the recent history of

the radical and left movements. Blacks and other racial groups developed independent organizations; thus the idea circulated that it was their job to fight racism. Also the responsibility for discussions or organizing in mixed groups was placed on those representatives of the racial minority groups present. Further, because all-white or mostly white organizations did not discuss or create programs, either on their own or in coalition settings, the situation arose in which whites felt guilty, could easily be intimidated, and adopted the policy of tailing after others who were doing something about racism. Another contributing factor was that there were (and are) tensions and disagreements among Blacks, Chicanos, Asians, etc., which were expressed in hostility

between these groups and between them and whites.

Let me end by saying that those problems cited are not the only problems: they are merely some central ones involved in building a multi-racial organization. Some solutions, or, rather, beginnings of solutions to these problems are: 1) initiate struggles against racism instead of merely supporting them. The political basis for this is that the black community, for example, is not the only place where racism is expressed. It also occurs in the trade unions, schools, local government, police, etc. of the white community and should be fought there. Moreover, racism does not affect only Blacks, Chicanos, Asians; it also affects whites and struggles to organize whites. 2) Create an ongoing institutional structure within the organization to continuously deal with issues of racism, nationalism, and class oppression. Obviously the responsibility for these institutions is not limited to those Blacks, Chicanos, or Asians in the organization. Also there should be candid discussions and some type of program to recruit so that the organization does not have representatives or tokens of racial groups. 3) Develop a strategy and get some practice in dealing with independent organizations of racial minorities. The political basis for this is that victories might be achieved and a revolution might be more likely if organizations work together. 4) Develop an ordinary language position on what structural changes could be made in a socialist society (and in socialist organizations now) to deal with institutional racism and a position on what steps can be taken to combat attitudinal and behavior racism in day-to-day work. 5) Develop a position on the right to self-determination and on nationalism, taking into account that this position might differ from Blacks, to Chicanos, to Asians, Native Americans, and so forth. ■



Party Building Today

by Harry Boyte Sanger NAM

THE NEXT YEAR may see the development of a new socialist party in the country, with several thousand members. Such a party would have the possibility of beginning to reach and give voice to the massive discontent throughout the country, and if successful in that task, could grow explosively in the years ahead. It is imaginable that a new socialist party could in fact begin to accomplish what has appeared to be simply the wistful and utopian fantasy of early NAM: putting socialism on the nation's agenda within the decade.

The key questions involved in party building are how a new party might be formed, how it should be structured, and what broad strategy and political perspectives it should adopt. The first is contingent upon a number of factors that should begin to come clear throughout the summer and fall months. The latter two questions are more dependent upon the overarching character of advanced capitalism and the revolutionary process itself.

It seems to me that two interwoven developments complicate the important business of party-building. On the one hand, there have been in the last year many quickening indications of the possibility for unity among what might broadly be called "left wing" socialist forces. And indeed, NAM can claim partial credit for initiating the process of dialogue in at least some sections of the left: NAM's call last year for talks between the People's Party, the SP, and NAM stirred wide interest in a number of left circles. Since then, many other groups have echoed that call, or have initiated similar processes on their own. For instance, the discussions about a new "mass party" have brought together (in addition to NAM and the People's Party) elements of the third world movement (the Panthers, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, and a number of other groups) with many local and state-wide organizations not previously involved in NAM (e.g., the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, the Wisconsin Alliance, Rising Up Angry,

rank and file steel groups, etc.). On the Maoist left several groups have talked about the possibility for a new party: the Communist League, the Black Workers Congress, the October League, RU; their initial discussions broke down amidst polemic about the "correct line" on a number of issues, but have since shown signs of revival.

On the other hand, the discussions within the ranks of the left itself have taken place against the background of much broader developments in the society (which partially underlie the left's new ferment): the last year's crisis in government and the energy scandals have fuelled and given form to long simmering discontents among the American people. Anti-corporate sentiment is at an all-time record level. Moreover, such discontents are coming to a focus at a time when the Democratic Party, the historic coalition which held together labor, minorities, women, intellectuals on the one hand, and southern reactionaries and certain business interests on the other, is racing toward a possible deadlock in 1976. It is entirely possible that the Democratic convention could produce a Jackson-Wallace ticket and a moderate to conservative platform.

This reality is beginning to create major shifts, of potentially momentous significance, within "mainstream" American politics: the call for a new party by the nation's leading black newspaper, *The Chicago Defender*; the polarization in the labor movement between left-wing forces and those close to Meany (social service and government unions in particular would suffer severely if the Democrats adopt a right-wing social program); the increasing restiveness of left-wing Democrats like Ron Dellums. The possibility exists for a massive breakaway from a right-wing Democratic ticket, which would involve literally millions of people in the country and would transform the entire language of American politics.

The effort, initiated by Arthur Kinoy, to found a mass party of the people,

senses and tries to straddle these two developments—growing left unity and the crisis in "mainstream" political institutions.*

Thus the mass party initiative attempts to speak to militants and socialists with its call for fundamental transformation, the people seizing power, a party not defined solely by elections, etc. And it also tries to speak to those who might be willing to bolt the Democrats in the next several years, with its vagueness about politics, structure, and the process of party-building itself.

But the two developments cannot in fact be combined, nor should they be. On the one hand, any kind of electoral breakaway on a significant scale will not occur before 1976 at the earliest. On the other hand, and of crucial importance, such an electoral party cannot be the basic instrument of left socialist forces, nor the catalyst and organizer of a massive socialist movement. In the nature of it, an electoral coalition is enormously diverse, held together by a common program and common candidates. It cannot be a party which has any significant national coherence outside elections, nor a party which takes a self-conscious and activist role in organizing mass struggles and campaigns.

Though critical participation in such a development (a left breakaway) might open a vast forum for a new left-wing socialist party, it would be a profound mistake for a new socialist organization to define itself in terms of or through any such electoral coalition. In the current left context, the "mass party" model is suggestive of a loose, electorally defined form; as such, it is impractical and inadequate.

What left socialists and grass roots militants can build in the coming period—and what is urgently needed—is an activist

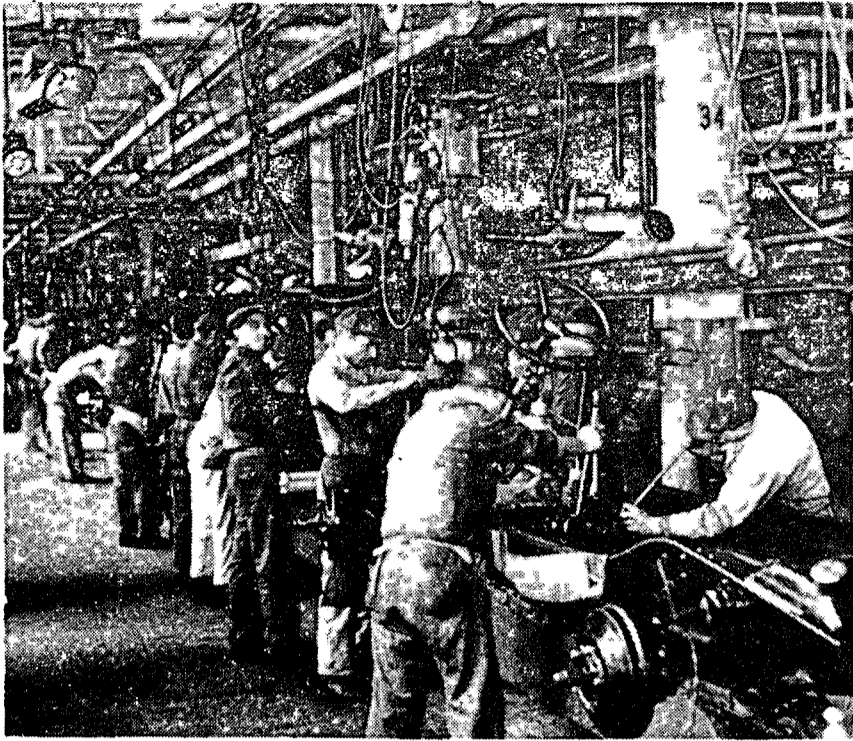
* The "electoral strategy" forces within NAM also sense such a reality, though they pose it in equally unrealistic terms—it is unimaginable that a socialist electoral party with radical political stances on international, feminist, third world, labor issues is going to emerge on a mass scale any time soon.

Recently the interim committee of the Kinoy group has accepted virtually all the NAM criticisms of the original proposal, and has moved much closer to an "activist" party model.

party that can take leadership in organizing mass struggle of all kinds, that can tie immediate struggles to the goal of socialism, and that can plan for and seek to shape and influence any developments in American politics in the next few years, as an aspect of its work. Such a party would be thoroughly democratic at all levels; it would encourage and allow wide diversity of organizing practice in its local units; it would constantly seek to maximize membership participation, and develop leadership skills.

At the same time, an activist party would be far more politically defined than what has emerged as yet from the mass party discussions: it would, for instance necessarily be openly socialist; it would have a class analysis; it would adopt socialist-feminist politics (and consequently be concerned with the entire range of social organization in advanced capitalism); it would be internationalist and anti-imperialist; and it would be thoroughly anti-racist and multi-national, involving from its beginning third world forces. It would have a program and coherence and national structure which generated far more unity and national presence than, for instance, the network of autonomous groups which make up the People's Party. It would practice and develop effective methods of criticism, evaluation, and support. And it would strive for greater unity over time.

The specifics of party organizing and strategy will, of course, have to be debated at length over the coming months. Yet it seems to me that the underlying argument for an activist socialist party is essential and uncontrollable. For the fundamental process at work throughout a revolutionary history—the process in which particular battles, programs, even the struggle for the state and socialism itself are ultimately only means—is the collective liberation and self-liberation of the working class, and through it humanity. And it will be as a new party learns to listen to the people, care about people's concrete needs and speak its intentions and views honestly and openly, and as a new party learns to help organize, lead, and politicize mass struggle against the power of the corporate class and its state apparatus, that it will sink real roots, grow, and kindle the massive insurgency which forms the heart of socialist transformation. ■



Auto assembly line, 1930

Socialism or Rootlessness?

by Bob McMahon
Chapel Hill NAM

The first task in forming a strategy is to ask what are our strengths and weaknesses, what goals can we reasonably set ourselves given our current strengths and following. Given an honest assessment of our strength, we can then begin to ask how to organize so as to best respond to the current moment, and to build our strength for future moments. Debates on "strategy" that ignore the need to be connected to our current, real situation are abstract games, with no roots in the present or ties in the future.

Strategic discussion within NAM—especially around electoral politics—has not been free of this overly abstract quality. One specimen of such writing appeared as an Opinion Column in the May issue of this newspaper, entitled "Socialism or Syndicalism," by Bill Burr. The article is a polemic directed against what Burr sees as syndicalist tendencies in NAM which urge focusing exclusively upon organizing for workers' control, to the neglect of any concern with politics or state power. State power, he asserts, must be pivotal to a truly socialist strategy, and elections are at present the best means of obtaining power and social legitimacy. NAM should focus on developing comprehensive programs that meet the needs of the working class as a whole: "In this way, we will not be restricted to fighting for the interests of specific sectors of the working class, but will be able to address

ourselves to every problem or aspect of life under modern capitalism." Syndicalists, by focusing only on workers in specific factories and only on their roles in production simply further the fragmentation and alienation of the working class.

PAPER TIGER

In his article Burr sets out to fight a paper tiger—the views he describes as "syndicalism" (an exclusive focus on workers' control to the neglect of all else, and especially of the state) simply do not characterize the broad range of our discussion on workplace organizing, although they may be held by a few in NAM. Burr does not even deal very concretely with workers' control as an organizing strategy to be followed at present. The whole of his argument against it is an abstract discussion of its insufficiency by itself as an organizing principle for a socialist society, together with a statement of the need to work around the multiple roles and spheres of life which workers deal with in capitalist society. But Burr himself immediately collapses this multiplicity of roles into that of citizen, and from then on speaks only of the state, where his primary interest lies.

The main point of "Socialism or Syndicalism" is the argument that the central focus of socialist work should be running election campaigns that offer total alternatives to capitalism. Although he might deny it, Burr's line of reasoning

would seem to cast doubt on whether one can organize, in truly socialist fashion, in any specific workplace or community project. For Burr argues that socialists should avoid fighting for the interests of specific sectors of the working class, but instead speak for the working class as a whole, and "address ourselves to every problem and aspect of life under capitalism." Underlying Burr's attack on syndicalism is the conviction that any limited organizing project, unless it is a secondary adjunct to a total electoral alternative, is really "syndicalist" by his definition.

REAL LIFE

It may sound very well to call for such a total alternative, but in real life we never organize around all the contradictions of capitalism at once, but around specific situations confronting particular groups of people. We can try to generalize from the lessons of such struggles. We can be constantly alert for opportunities to unite these struggles with those of other groups, to build a broader, class-conscious movement. Within this context we can try to present our vision of socialism as an alternative. But unless we remain concerned with the immediate and the particular, we have no roots in the present existence of the working class. Without such roots, how can we hope to engage the working class in the process of building a socialist movement?

Without such roots we cut ourselves off from our own existence as working people, subject as other working people to particular stresses and problems. Our role becomes effectively that of detached intellectuals, outside the immediate situation of the working class and able to see the needs of the working class as a whole and offer programs to lead it. Socialism becomes a set of ideas brought to the working class from without by an intellectual vanguard. How odd it is that such a Leninist notion of the role of NAM should come from our most fervently democratic, anti-Leninist tendency!

AGAINST ELECTORAL ACTIVITY

I would suggest that the attraction of elections for Burr is that they offer a way of "saying it all at once," of offering a comprehensive total platform. His contention that elections are at present the best means of winning power and legitimacy is hard to support—not that we won't use elections over the long haul as part of our road to state power, but at present, in most places, we haven't built the initial bases of support to win meaningful victories. It is one thing to run educational campaigns, like the Socialist Workers' Party or other sects. But Burr spoke of gaining real power, and offered elections as the best road now available.

Is this true? His abstract discussion of state power will not tell us—it says nothing about the state of our movement and its capabilities. Burr does not even mention, let alone evaluate, alternative

immediate strategies aimed at building mass community or workplace organizations as a base for power and influence (and also as the base any electoral effort needs to be successful). But realistically, I think we all know how slim our electoral chances are—especially for the kind of national victory required to implement the comprehensive alternatives that Burr calls for. Even in most places where a variety of strong radical community organizations exist, the left is so fragmented that it is hard to pull together an electoral campaign rooted in the left community.

Burr does not even discuss the experience of recent efforts at local socialist electoral campaigns. Groups like the Wisconsin Alliance began by paying lip service to non-electoral work, but focusing on elections. They scored some successes, winning city council seats and the like. But they found severe limits on how much they could accomplish from those positions in developing a broadly-based movement. (When a small group organizes to run election campaigns, then all it has time to do is run election campaigns.) Recently such groups have tended to reverse their emphasis, putting much more stress on community organizing than local elections.

It is relatively easy (and fun) to elaborate critiques of capitalism, and alternative programs to capitalist institutions. It is possible to become so caught up in such exercises that one believes the immediate choice before us is socialism or capitalism. Ultimately, of course, there is no other choice—but simply stating the choice offers no immediate guidance, nor reason for believing it will be made soon. Our strategy cannot be woven from such insubstantial fabric, but must come from a careful confrontation with our present. The process of reasoning exemplified by "Socialism or Syndicalism" offers little hope for such a confrontation. ■



Auto assembly line, 1970

Reform or Revolution?

by J. O.
Sanger NAM

At a time when a strong working-class perspective is developing within NAM it becomes vital to criticize strongly articles like Bill Burr's "Socialism vs. Syndicalism" There are two serious errors made in the article which invalidate the rest of the arguments. These revolve around why workplace organizing is important and around the nature of state power.

WHY FOCUS ON WORKPLACE ORGANIZING?

Burr believes that the growing tendency in NAM advocating workplace organizing as a primary strategic focus is based on an understanding of socialism basically as workers' control. He goes on to argue that this isn't really socialism, but left-wing syndicalism. I won't deny that such a tendency exists, although I think it is small and insignificant. Also, I agree with

some of the observations made about syndicalism. However, I strongly disagree with his characterization of American socialists who have recently refocused on the workplace.

The growing tendency to concentrate on the workplace is not based on an understanding of socialism as just workers' control; rather it grows out of an historical understanding of society, an understanding of capitalism and its material basis, and from an understanding of how people develop revolutionary class consciousness.

An historical understanding of society reveals that class struggle is the motive force of history. "In capitalist society, the capitalist class and the working class are the only pure classes. They are the only classes whose existence and development are entirely dependent on the course taken by the modern evolution of production and only from the vantage point of these classes can a plan for the total organization of society ever be

imagined." (Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*). The struggle between these two classes is the primary contradiction in advanced capitalism, and only the victory of the working class will advance society to socialism.

The social relations which characterize capitalist society are rooted in the workplace. (I may add, by workplace, I don't mean only factories, like Burr suggested, but also hospitals, offices, schools, the communications and transportation industries, etc.) It is the relations of labor that define the classes into which society is divided. The workplace is also where some of the more blatant contradictions of capitalism are found: the conflict between profit and human needs; collectivized production and private ownership; the benefits of production going to unproductive owners. Inevitably, we are most likely to develop a class consciousness which points to our common needs and to the common solutions which these needs demand at the very point where classes are defined and contradictions are clearest.

It is the eventual goal of the larger movement that defines a workplace focus as syndicalist or socialist. A syndicalist movement aims to take over production. A socialist movement aims to take over

society, to take over state power. A trade-unionist orientation, for that matter, can emanate from a workplace focus as easily, if not more easily, as a syndicalist or socialist orientation can. Burr's convenient mistake is to assume that syndicalism is the only inevitable outcome. Most groups I know and work with who are doing workplace organizing do see themselves working towards taking state power. They are working not only for workers' control, but a socialist revolution. So, if the workplace tendency is not necessarily syndicalist, how does it differ from what Burr proposes as socialist strategy?

izing: an exchange

Politics in Command!

Bill Burr
DeKalb NAM

McMahon's reply to "Socialism or Syndicalism" misinterprets the basic character of the piece as well as my motive in writing it. What moved me to write my piece was an understanding that there was a tendency within NAM towards syndicalist conceptions and that those individuals who put forth those ideas were primarily oriented toward workplace organizing. During various discussions at the NAM National Council, most participants put forth syndicalist conceptions of socialist organizing. Further, in the NAM literature on workplace organizing as a strategic focus, there is a strong tendency to completely ignore the role of political (state) power, as if society was nothing more than an array of economic relationships between people. I was not trying to attack a "paper tiger" in order to sneak in an argument for electoral politics, but instead to counterpose to the significant syndicalist tendency in NAM a broader conception of socialism's meaning for twentieth-century United States.

BEYOND "ORGANIZING"

More important than McMahon's misreading of my motives is his misinterpretation of the basic character and purpose of "Socialism or Syndicalism." McMahon is apparently convinced that any attempt to contribute to the development of a socialist perspective for NAM must take the form of a guide to

organizing. This leads him to misinterpret my position on the relationship of electoral participation to workplace and community organizing. He is simply wrong in seeing the "main point" of the piece to be a plea for immediately participating in election campaigns. McMahon gives convincing, if not wholly original arguments why running candidates right now would be a mistake for most NAM chapters. But it has apparently not occurred to McMahon that the question of electoral participation might require serious attention before it became an immediate "practical" consideration.

As demonstrated by NAM's experience in the Berkeley Tenant Organizing Committee, in the campaign against the Domes Stadium in Minneapolis, and in the current struggle in the Fox River Valley against a proposed shopping center, organizing in the workplace and the community, if it is at all successful, inevitably comes up against some branch of government. At that point of confrontation with political authority we face a choice. If we continue to confront government *only* as petitioners we leave the ability to shape the response and resolution of our demands to bourgeois politicians. Or, we can run candidates for office on the basis of serious, integrated platforms encompassing the demands that have grown out of our organizing efforts while we continue our struggles in the workplace, schools, neighborhoods, hospitals, etc. (For a more extended discussion see Part 4 of "Perspective on Electoral Activity" by James Weinstein in NAM Newspaper, June, 1973.)

The point is not that everyone in NAM should begin to mount election campaigns, much less to discourage organizing in "any specific workplace or community project." The point is that any such movement

which engages in community organizing must have a comprehensive strategy, so that all forms of short-term or sectoral organizing acquire significance in terms of a long range object, so that the resolution of every immediate issue involving particular groups of people can be seen as a choice between the maintenance of capitalism and an advance toward socialism.

LENIN AND DEMOCRACY

McMahon is correct in his claim that I made "Leninist" arguments in my piece. But he is incorrect to counterpose Leninism and democracy. After all, it was Lenin who said, "In the same way as there can be no victorious socialism that does not practice full democracy, so the proletariat cannot prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie without an

to draw votes?!?! This supremacy is based on the historical fact that the bourgeoisie is the ruling class, and its state is designed to represent its interests regardless of whom you elect. This is where the real differences lie. Burr would argue that this power is based on the ability to get someone elected. (Burr claims that the failure of revolutionaries in the 30's was their failure to come up with an electoral alternative to Roosevelt. This is ridiculous. The failure of revolutionaries in the 30's was due to a complexity of reasons including the determination of CPUSA politics by Moscow, and the failure to keep the final goal of socialism as the aim of popular mass movement.) I and others doing workplace organizing believe that the bourgeois state is designed to meet the interest of the ruling class. It doesn't matter who is elected; the state serves its masters faithfully. Socialist society won't be ushered in by having a new class governing within the context of the bourgeois state. Rather, we need to smash the old machinery and with state power build a new society that will represent the interests of the working class.

To do this we need to build a revolutionary socialist movement. Those of us doing workplace organizing believe that a socialist movement is not built by



SOCIALISM VS. CAPITALISM

I contend that any movement whose politics do not embody the choice between capitalism and socialism in terms of concrete programs, so that socialism proves to be an immediately necessary, practical, and urgent alternative to capitalist rule, will never be revolutionary.

Socialists *can* work on what McMahon calls "limited organizing projects" and nothing in my article should have given any other impression. At a certain point the socialist movement will have to develop a comprehensive program for U. S. society and give it political expression via elections, if it really means to implement it. We don't have that program and we do not have the political movement that could organize around it. Until then (and after) there is a need for specific programs which do immediately raise the question of socialist democracy.

The proposal for public ownership of the energy industries, introduced at the National Council by members of the Caucus for a National Strategy, is an example of what I have in mind (see the article by Dan Marshall in the May NAM Newspaper for an exposition of some of the basic ideas of the proposal). A program for social ownership of the energy industries would introduce socialism into the political discourse of U. S. society. At the same time it could help sustain and transform the already existing (however tentative) struggle of the U. S. labor movement against the ruling class offensive on the working class' standard of living (see Jim Livingston's article "Labor and Politics in the 70's" in the NAM Discussion Bulletin No. 7).

The great irony imbedded in McMahon's argument is that the exigencies of life in U. S. society now are bringing many working Americans to the point where they have to make a choice between capitalist rule and a system of public ownership and democratic control. At this moment elements of the U. S. labor movement are discussing in very concrete terms public ownership of the energy industries as a practical solution to the problems that the whole working class is facing because of the "energy crisis" (see, for example, the United Mine Workers Journal, April 1-15). And yet McMahon and all who share his views are, in effect, saying that socialists should lag behind the labor movement, ignore their discussions of nationalization, and thus cut the left off from the beginnings of socialist discussion in a social movement with more than 20 million members. Such are the consequences of a strategy based on the view that the left cannot make politics in "real life" on the basis of such an "insubstantial fabric" as socialism or capitalism. ■

There will be no NAM newspaper next month due to our summer publication schedule—which is disrupted by the NAM national convention in Lexington. Our next issue (September) will be out in mid-August. The deadline for articles is August 5.



UNDERSTANDING OF STATE POWER

The real disagreement can be found in Burr's second error, namely, his understanding of state power. From his argument about state power the differences between Burr's approach and a work-focus clearly becomes not "socialism vs. syndicalism," but "reform vs. revolution." What distinguishes us is our understanding of this struggle for state power. Burr writes, "a fundamental condition of capital's supremacy in all of society is its supremacy over the state." HOW TRUE! But, is Burr trying to suggest that this supremacy is based on capitalists' ability

people canvassing door-to-door, and trying to *convince* others of the "moral" superiority of socialism, and all we have to do is to "convert" enough people to seeing it like we do and voting us in. A revolutionary socialist movement is built through struggles that involve people in fighting capitalism and its racist, sexist, and imperialist manifestations; and people fight capitalism because of what it does to them; they struggle for socialism because the historical necessity for it becomes clear.

Elections are useful in that they can be used to demonstrate popular feeling, can act as a barometer of growing revolutionary consciousness. But elections won't ever *build* revolutionary consciousness. That comes with struggle, and the most significant focus for this struggle is where we experience the contradictions of capitalism and the necessity for socialism most clearly and in a collective (or class) context.

Again, we must be clear on the goals of our struggle. If "socialism" as it exists in England or Sweden is what we have in mind, then Burr's proposal is sound. However, as someone who has to deal with the oppressive conditions of work under capitalist society, I don't find that prospect very attractive. ■

reply to Easton

Women, autonomy and socialist strategy

by Barbara Machtinger and
Deborah Hertz
Minneapolis NAM

IT'S VERY NICE to open the NAM newspaper and read a provocative piece on our sacrosanct and increasingly dusty theory of socialist feminism. Easton's paper describes NAM's current paralysis in this area and attributes it to the incorrectness of our socialist feminist theory. One thing she points to is socialist feminism's dependence upon radical feminism. Her conclusion is that even the tendencies in the women's movement with the best politics—i.e., the socialist feminist unions—are not the answer because they are autonomous, split the working class, and therefore cannot make a socialist revolution. For Easton assumes, like all socialist feminists, that only a socialist transformation of our whole society can systematically destroy sexism and create real alternatives for women of all classes in childcare, health care, education, social and familial relations. Many of Easton's points are solid and we agree wholeheartedly with these. Yet somehow her conclusions don't seem to follow. Her major concern is not with the politics of the women's movement but with its claims to autonomy. The problem with her analysis is that although she mentions the need for some degree of feminist organizational autonomy at the beginning of her article, no recognition of the value of autonomy is incorporated into her conclusions. Because she does not seem to view women as an oppressed group, and autonomy as an independent value, her perceptive observations lead to the most traditional of conclusions: wait around, girls, freedom's for after the revolution.

We'll begin with our points of agreement. It is true that women in the organization have not made socialist feminism a concern of the whole organization. Men have been excluded totally from the process. This has been understandable; as with any oppressed group women have been more concerned with their own development and less with lending clarity to those around them.

Easton is correct that the implicit

expectation that socialism and feminism fit together like two puzzle pieces has to be criticized. But it does not follow that the solution to an incomplete integration of socialism and feminism is to pit them against each other once more.

Some of us have assumed that our theory is sufficient and if we only think and try harder we will come up with programs. Easton implies that our paralysis in programmatic activity is the result of incorrect theory. We feel this lack is due not to an incorrect theory but to an underdeveloped one. The criteria for good theory is if you can use it. This is not meant to downplay NAM's theoretical successes so far. We as an organization have reason to be proud. We have gone further than anyone else in developing socialist feminism.

Easton says that women in NAM feel guilty about being members of a mixed organization. If women feel guilty it is not because we are in a mixed movement but because we have no adequate programs to meet the needs and aspirations of women in this society.

One of Easton's major problems is her oversimplified and somewhat outdated notion of "feminism." She distinguishes between radical, liberal, and (autonomous) socialist feminism, but approaches these groupings in an overly static fashion. She fails to pay significant attention to the political development of these groups and to new constituencies of the women's movement. Aren't there struggles around the relation between class and sex within N.O.W.? Isn't the evolution of socialist feminist unions a much more significant development that Easton acknowledges? And what about the new Black Feminists Organization and the Coalition of Labor Union Women, which really don't fit any of the three categories, and are exciting precisely for that reason?

Also, since when does using a general term to identify oneself imply that one is uncritical of other movements which use the same label? Because NAM uses the term "socialist" to define itself, is it uncritical of other socialist movements, parties, or countries? So why should our use of "feminist" neces-

sarily imply a lack of criticism of the women's movement? On the contrary, NAM has consistently critiqued the uncritical concept of "sisterhood" in radical and liberal feminism, explaining that it obscures the class and racial hierarchies among women. At times this has prevented us from making short-term alliances with mass women's movements when it would be appropriate to do so.

And is it a slip that Easton claims that "Marxism sees productive relations as the basis of oppression?" After our heralded discovery of the role of reproductive relations in advanced capitalism, is Easton about to give us a Marxism which is as impoverished and undialectical as her "feminism?" For we have not been trying to integrate Marxism and feminism merely because of our "concern" with women's oppression and "support" of the autonomous women's movement. Our investment in this area, as NAM women, has been far more existential than that. This leads us to the heart of the matter—Easton's approach to autonomy.



-rebecca davenport

Unlike Easton, we respect the right and indeed the need for a degree of organizational autonomy for all women. She totally undercuts the reasons and advantages of such autonomy. Her statement that the women's movement has influenced the development of socialist feminism more than the socialist movement is neither surprising nor horrible. Women in autonomous organizations are not drained by working with men and can work on socialist feminism full time. That we should work together, and, when appropriate, look to them for leadership on these questions, seems logical.

Fundamentally, the reasons for women's autonomy are not simply who can do what program or who can

recruit what constituency into the army of the proletariat. We need autonomy for survival: we need to gather strength away from men; we need to fight for things like control of our bodies, or childcare, that no one else but women will fight for. It won't do any good to try to combine socialism and feminism by collapsing the tension between them, by acting as if some degree of autonomy for oppressed groups is not an independent value that may not always coincide exactly in the short range with the class struggle.

The point is that because Easton doesn't seem to see women as an oppressed group with consequent needs for autonomy, her rather traditional conclusions don't really follow from quite interesting observations. For example, why should the fact that the family is post-patriarchal not indicate a greater, rather than lesser need for women's culture and community? As the family breaks down and men fight back by withdrawing affection, all the more reason for us to band together!

One of the most ironic things about Easton's conclusions is that she is part of an organization which prides itself on attempting to come to creative syntheses of outdated polarizations which have impeded socialism in advanced capitalist countries. We want a new definition of the working class, an activist party of a new type. So why not continue to work toward a new combination of Marxism and feminism also?

It is also an omission not to have discussed the increasingly urgent situation of women within NAM and our internal struggle against sexism. After all, it was because of sexism within a mixed movement that women abandoned the left in droves.

We think the best way to deal with sexism is to have more autonomy within NAM, not less. We see the need for a strategy which includes plans for an expanded national women's caucus formulating national programs around key women's issues like abortion. We see the need for local cooperation between NAM's women's caucuses and socialist feminist unions around such national programs. We see the move toward greater unity on the left as exciting because in a socialist federation of some type women's unions and NAM could both be a part of a larger left organization. We must not pit socialism and feminism against each other; nor should we collapse one into the other. Living on the borderline between two movements is not always fun. But let's not give up too soon! ■

NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT

Lexington, Ky.; July 11-14

3rd Annual National Convention

ILLUSIONS OF CAPITALISM'S endless expansion have been profoundly shaken by liberation struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the last ten years. A new era of inter-capitalist competition has begun that threatens the world hegemony that the U. S. achieved after World War II. Watergate and the energy crisis have laid bare the sinews that connect the corporations to the state. As a result, confidence in business and government is at an all time low, while support for insurgency is rising.

NAM, as part of the socialist left, has crucial decisions before it with regard to how it will develop as an organization within this context.

PARTIAL AGENDA

THURSDAY, JULY 11 – UNITY ON THE LEFT

Report and discussion of initiatives toward left unity by NAM, People's Party, the Mass Party People; proposals.

Building a Multi-National Movement.

Evaluation of our efforts over the last year and discussion of the relation between a socialist movement and national struggles in the U. S.

FRIDAY, JULY 12 – THE PARTY

What sort of party do we seek to build and how should NAM proceed to build it?

Building National Organization.

Evaluation and suggestions for developing nationally.

SATURDAY, JULY 13 – WORKPLACE ORGANIZING

Panels on the labor movement and socialist strategy, and organizing approaches to the workplace.

SUNDAY, JULY 14 – SOCIALISM AND FEMINISM

Discussion of NAM's relations with the autonomous women's movement and programmatic suggestions for the integration of women's liberation into the struggle for socialism.

PROCEDURES

All NAM members and observers are welcome to the Convention. Registration for members is \$5.00; for observers it is \$10.00. Observers will have no voice in the plenaries. Only NAM literature will be distributed inside the hall, except for that of groups specifically invited to bring their literature by the National Interim Committee. Registration begins at noon on Thursday.

LOCATION

Main Ballroom of the University of Kentucky Student Center, which is located at the corner of Euclid Avenue and South Limestone Street in Lexington.

HOUSING

Rooms will be available in campus dormitories at \$10.00/day double occupancy. Other housing is available off campus.

DAYCARE

The University's Early Childhood Laboratory will be available to children of registrants from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. It will be staffed by paid personnel and volunteers.

For further information write to the NAM National Office, 2421 E. Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55406.

Party Building a Subject

Pacific Regional Draws 200

by Bill Kononen and Del Griffin
Berkeley-Oakland NAM

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA was the site of the third Pacific Regional NAM meeting held on May 18 and 19. For the first time the Regional was organized as a public event open to participation by NAM members and anyone interested in NAM. 125 to 150 people attended, including representatives from recently-formed chapters in Chico and Santa Cruz, several representatives from a group of 40-60 socialists in Los Angeles who are considering joining NAM, and numerous individuals from around the San Francisco Bay area, as well as members of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Berkeley-Oakland, and ELF/NAM.

Seen as a conference to help NAM chapters develop their politics, the meeting was organized around four panel discussions on questions facing the national organization and around workshops where regional programs and structures were to be developed.

THE PANELS

SOCIALISM AND FEMINISM

NAM's relationship to the autonomous women's movement, and practice around women's oppression, as well as theoretical approaches to socialism and feminism, were among the topics discussed in the widely-attended panel by Barbara Easton and Toby Silvey of Berkeley-Oakland

of women as a key to the liberation of the entire working class.

Within NAM, she argued, the Women's Caucus must function as a pressure group in the organization. Everything must be done to assure that NAM becomes a mixed organization with balanced membership.

Barbara Easton traced NAM's failure to generate more practice around women's oppression to the continuing influence on NAM of the separatist tendency in the women's movement. This sometimes results in a moralism that leads to confusion over who can

or cannot work on issues generally associated with women's oppression. It should be as much a concern of men as of women to work towards the elimination of the capitalist division of labor in the factory or office, the home, and in the socialist movement itself. We must work toward solidifying, not avoiding this unity of interest.

THE PARTY

The highlight of the conference for many was the evening panel on the

A unified party, moving with cohesion and strength, presupposes democracy. Participation in decision-making is the precondition for unity of action. The party is *not* an army and, Healy said, "unity does not mean conformity, and discipline is not blind obedience."

James Weinstein (San Francisco NAM) pointed out the significance of NAM's present discussion of the party. When NAM was started two years ago, it was almost impossible to raise the issue of party-building in the organization. Social developments, however, especially Nixon's policies and the political and economic crises, have given rise to an

Building the New American Movement

understanding by many people of the need for socialism. This, in turn, forces the need for a party rather than an organization or a movement. The party's function is to represent or speak for a class contesting for power over society as a whole.

The perspective of a new society transcends the politics of the New Left whose stress was around interest-group politics framed in negative terms (anti-war). Here, there is much to be learned from Lenin, at the heart of whose politics are two principles. First, that within the working class the key issue has to be socialism versus capitalism. Second, that politics is a struggle of one class against another for power—state power.

WORKPLACE ORGANIZING

NAM's perspective towards the workplace, the major topic of this summer's national convention, was discussed by two women involved in organizing on the job. Amy Hollander of Berkeley-Oakland NAM, a shop steward in AFSCME, emphasized that workplace organizing must be made an essential part of consumer actions since otherwise consumer demands can easily be turned against workers involved in that industry. For example, a victory for consumers around job cutbacks at utility companies could result in workers losing their jobs.

She also related the difficulties in talking to people from different backgrounds about political issues and described the building of "unionism" in her workplace—the increasing consciousness of workers in their power and how to assert it.

Sharon Stricker of Los Angeles NAM, a teacher in the L. A. school district, discussed organizing in the social service sector. For a genuine socialist movement in this country, she asserted, real workers' control must exist. Teachers at her school have begun to build what might be considered a workers' council in embryo, emerging from a long process of struggle with socialists clearly articulating an alternative perspective.

The issue of community control is also essential, she said, and teachers must try to build organizations of both parents and community members throughout the city. Such organizations will hopefully avoid the narrow interest-group politics that could arise with teachers moving to control their own workplaces. Once these city-wide groups are formed, electoral campaigns could be waged in the context of a new socialist party.

A MULTI-NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Jeff Scott of Berkeley-Oakland NAM began the panel on the need for a multi-racial movement by relating the strengths and weaknesses of the Black nationalist movement of the 1960's. That movement correctly saw that racism was a fundamental problem in American society and that militant, collective solidarity was important—that black people must look to themselves for liberation. Moreover, the nationalist movement stressed the need for systematically

fighting racism and for black power over decisions that affected the lives of black people. These aspects of black nationalism had revolutionary potential, Scott stated.

The major weakness of this nationalism, however, was that the goals of the black movement could not be achieved by blacks alone. NAM must understand that all sectors of the working class must be unified in a socialist organization, a party, that includes blacks and other ethnic groups. To accomplish this goal of a multi-national organization, NAM must actively participate in anti-racist struggles as well as initiate them.

Mike Downing of the Los Angeles "pre-chapter" reiterated the importance of revolutionary groups initiating struggles against racism. This activity will begin to overcome the idea that racism is just a minority issue, will help break down the distrust that minorities have of whites, and will create on-going institutions to deal with racism. It will also point out the strategy for approaching racism as a political issue—the necessity of unity for a revolutionary movement.

NAM must develop a perspective on the right of self-determination for third world people, Downing continued. New structures must also be created to deal with institutionalized racism. And since racism is not simply a matter of economics, we must also seek to transform people's personal attitudes towards minority-related issues.

The final speaker in the national minorities panel, John Ohta of the Los Angeles "pre-chapter," raised the problem of the distrust minorities have of whites. Sources of this distrust include the labor movement's racism towards Asians and the white left's inconsistent support of issues critical to Asian people. Style is important too—arrogance, competition, and language usage all act to turn off third world people. At the very least, the left must learn to talk in language that non-leftists can understand. Different third world people should be approached in different ways: in institutions formed along racial lines (on campuses, at churches) as well as in organizations cutting across racial distinctions (unions).

RESOLUTIONS

Out of the energy workshop emerged what might potentially be the beginnings of a national strategy around the nationalization of the energy industry. Plans were made between several of the chapters to develop the outlines of a legal statute to be introduced into the Congress, as well as the possibility of linking up with the many utility struggles existing across the United States.

To look into the possibility of promoting this program as well as to plan future conferences and promote traveling within California and the Pacific Region, a State Coordinating Committee was established ■

battered homes

(Continued from Page 14)

and that organizing to stop redevelopment isn't enough. Such admonitions are undramatic and stand as appendices to the play rather than integral parts of the plot, and hence may be lost to many in the audience.

Despite some loose ends and characterizations that sometimes threaten to overwhelm the play's slender framework, *Battered Homes and Gardens* is tremendously lively and enjoyable, utilizing an immediate medium to teach some basic lessons in socialism in a non-rhetorical way. The play is class conscious and stresses the necessity of collective action in the struggle for power and control.

Alive and Trucking members see *Battered Homes and Gardens* as part of a continuing process that begins with their involvement in community and NAM struggles, moves to a dramatization of those struggles that educates and activates an expanding sector of the class, and leads to renewed struggles. *Battered Homes and Gardens* has its immediate roots in Minneapolis NAM's domed stadium struggle (which Alive and Trucking supported with skits downtown), but in the last three years Alive and Trucking has worked with over fifty community organizations dramatizing questions around education, welfare, sexuality, daycare, work, and people's history.



NAM. Recent debate in the NAM newspaper (May and June) over these issues had created much excitement and discussion. 200 people (including many from local women's groups and radical psychiatry) were in the audience.

Easton and Silvey agreed that NAM has failed to make a substantial commitment to programmatic activity around women's oppression, but disagreed on the basis for this failure. Silvey argued that our failure stemmed from the continuing heritage of the New Left—an assumption that "women's issues" are not political and a failure to deal organizationally with the lower level of political skills that women in this society have. She advocated the development by NAM of a "socialist program for the United States" that feminism could have a major input into. As examples she suggested the socialization of domestic labor, vastly expanded nurseries, neighborhood restaurants, collectivized housecleaning. She argued against a uniform notion of feminism as an ideology that sees women as a competing interest group in society, and for a socialist feminism that sees the elimination of the oppression

party, especially the speech by long-time activist Dorothy Healey. The audience was large and enthusiastic and the discussion lively.

To Dorothy Healey (formerly in the Communist Party and now an at-large NAM member and part of the L. A. "pre-chapter") there is an enormous gap in NAM between theory and organization. She affirmed the continued need for a vanguard party though she emphasized the difference between a true vanguard and the practice of most groups calling themselves that.

The function of the vanguard is to lead the working class in the struggle against capitalism. To do this, the party must unite the different sectors of the class around the goal of socialism. She emphasized that the party will have to unite whites and third world peoples, men and women through an active commitment to racial and sexual equality in its programs and internal functioning. She was critical of socialists who think that such unity can be postponed indefinitely, while different movements conduct "parallel" struggles.

What's Puzzlin' You?

by Warren F. Seltzer

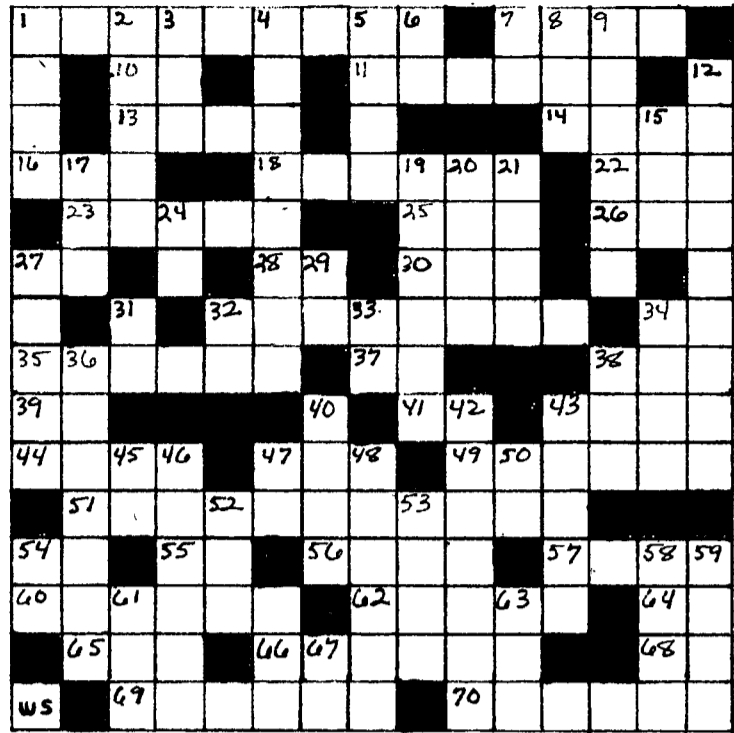
ACROSS

1. Political tendency that sees the movement as an end in itself.
7. To distribute punishment.
10. The first 13th of the alphabet.
11. A series of jobs allowing the worker to dream of Ruling Class membership.
13. Destroy.
14. A car used by capitalists and their major lackeys.
16. A consumer group of car owners.
18. Guatemalan leader ousted by CIA group.
22. Native-American spiritual-political organization.
23. Charisma on the individual level.
25. A brand of denim work clothes.
26. It disappears when you stand up.
27. Unfull.
28. ... HA!
30. The monarch of all Vietnam who abdicated to Ho Chi Minh, Bao ...
32. Central theme of American morality and politics.
34. AH ...!
35. This nation was created when the U. S. engineered a military secession so a canal could be built.
37. Euphemism for taxes.
38. Used to have.
39. Chancellor . . ., one target of Berkeley Save-the-Crim School struggle.
41. Nazi terror organization whose name meant "The Night and the Fog."
43. The UN got into the Korean War when the Security Council passed a resolution that the U.S.S.R. did not . . . because their representative was not in the session.

44. Poor people's clothing.
47. Domestic victim of U. S. imperialism or of an inter-capitalist war.
49. Inflation is making us all
51. One who succumbs to the multi-billion-dollar advertising industry.
54. Enemy of healthy teeth.
65. Government agency supposedly helping the people in 47 across.
56. Obsolete fascist greeting.
57. Socialists must study the . . . and flows of class struggle.
60. Members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party which was formed in Russia in October, 1905. The party fought the Bolsheviks and sided with the monarchy.
62. Frequently posed as the alternative to nuclear power.
64. An exclamation.
65. Neither rain . . . snow, etc. (pony express ideology).
66. Having been spiteful.
68. Musical note.
69. Result of war, along with profits.
70. Appropriate response to oppression.

DOWN

1. What the residents call the capital of Italy.
2. A clothing company recently unionized after a nationwide struggle involving thousands of supporters.
3. One Big Union.
4. This former president of Ford, having served an apprenticeship masterminding the destruction of Indochina, now a junior member of the Ruling Class as head of the "World Bank."



5. Misguided worker who works while others strike.
6. Mother.
7. The self.
8. Snake-like aquatic creature.
9. Legal tactic of governmental repression aimed at wasting movement resources.
12. In a neo-colonialist nation, the domestic ruling class that sides with the foreign imperialists against the local peasantry and working class.
15. Segment of the American victims of the Indochinese war most loved by the right wing.
17. To know the truth is not enough; one must . . .
19. In a society, those with seniority.
20. Proximal.
21. The theoretical journal of the German Social-Democratic Party, published from 1883 to 1923, *Die Neue . . .*
24. Before noon.
27. A subsidiary of Chrysler selling auto parts.
29. Vietnamese hero.
31. Right . . .!
32. Complementary to 24 down.
33. 3.141592635.
34. Emotion felt by oppressed person towards oppressors.
36. Pipeline approved by U. S. Congress during "energy crisis."
38. Underutilized pronoun.
40. Also known as crystal.
42. One who inadvertently pours liquid.
43. One who utilizes the popular "agent of change" within the system.
45. Physician without specialty.
46. Without mercy.
47. Social outcome of "free love" ethic.
48. Original dialectical constituent of synthesis.
50. In a capitalist society this word denoting possession takes on added significance.
52. King Cole.
53. Anarchistic group violence.
54. Area fighting for statehood.
58. A word for manager, connoting the role of agent of oppression.
59. What happened to Martin Luther King.
61. Our official agency of Aggression.
63. Suffix implying addition of water to a fruit juice.
67. Measure of acidity-alkalinity.

Puzzle-nuts who have agonized for hours over these gems: please feel free to write us for the answer to any puzzle we print. On political questions, however, we make no such promises.

Portugal

(Continued from Page 5)

stock and property, massacring whole villages suspected of supporting guerrillas, employment of herbicides and crop-burnings to starve the population into dependence on government food supplies, and systematic torture to gather information.

U. S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

During this whole period, the U. S., Britain, and West Germany gave Portugal vast amounts of military and economic support. Without this assistance Portugal would have been defeated long ago. The Portuguese had earlier opened the colonies to foreign investment to give other western countries a stake in the maintenance of Portugal's power. Many of these investments were held by U. S. companies—particularly Gulf in Angola—which exploited underpaid labor and resources while paying taxes to subsidize the Portuguese war effort. The U. S. was also interested in the colonies inasmuch as they protected its South African allies (the economic stake alone of the U. S. companies in this bloc was \$1 billion) and strategic naval positions in the Cape Verde islands and around the Cape of Good Hope sea route.

For the U. S., unlike the Caetano



government, there was little sentimentality involved. As long as the Portuguese were holding on the U. S. would support them, even in the face of African opposition. Still, there was consciousness on the part of U. S. policy-makers that if the guerrillas gained the upper hand, U. S. interests would lie in favor of a neo-colonial strategy. Then, as Waldemar Nielsen, former president of the African-American Institute, suggested, American pressure might be used to bring "some progressive modification of Portuguese policy" in the hope that "this might well be sufficient to restrain the more extreme and dangerous tendencies on the African side."

The primary goal on the U. S. side would be to protect present and future investments in the colonies. Angola alone has large amounts of oil, coffee, diamonds, and one billion tons of iron ore that are only beginning to be mined. As a London *Times* reporter wrote days before the coup, Angola "looks like it's becoming one of the richest countries in southern Africa—given the capital and technical know-how to develop it."

PRELUDE TO THE COUP

Events during 1973 indicated that Portugal was indeed on the verge of military collapse. Not only was there increasing opposition at home by both the mass-based political opposition and by underground revolutionary groups attacking military targets, but also by growing cracks within the army itself. The independence declaration by Guinea-Bissau, where the Portuguese retained only a coastal foothold, and its quick recognition by almost 90 countries, was a major blow at the government. Perhaps the last straw was the continued advance of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) further into that country's south—operating 600 miles from the Tanzanian border, threatening to cut the important Rhodesia-Beira rail line and stopping work on the Cabora Bassa dam project.

There was another factor encouraging the coup. In July 1972 an agreement was signed to eliminate by 1977 trade barriers between Portugal and the Common Market countries. This had been a major goal of the Portuguese upper class, but if it were to succeed massive investments would have to develop Portuguese industry before it lost all protection to outside competition.

Portugal's two most important indus-

trial combines—the Companhia Uniao Fabril (CUF), a \$3-billion company that controls the economy of Guinea-Bissau) and the Chamentalmaud Group (which played a key role in the economies of Angola and Mozambique) both had close ties to Spínola and both had become tired of the war. Some of their branches in the provinces, particularly those of CUF, were actually losing money because of the conflict. They supported Spínola to save their overseas investments while cutting military costs.

As for Spínola himself, he comes from a model background (at least from the point of view of the Portuguese oligarchy): from one of the most important fascist ruling families, graduate of the military academy, volunteer on the fascist side of the Spanish Civil War, observer with Nazi troops on the Russian front, volunteered for service in Angola, and, finally, military governor of Guinea-Bissau. In Guinea-Bissau he introduced some of the main techniques he plans to include alongside his commonwealth scheme. He organized the use of troops for "civic action" projects and pushed for "Africanization" of the occupation army. Many of his ideas are derived directly from U. S. military strategy.

CAN SPÍNOLA succeed in his plan for autonomy within a framework of Portuguese control? The Portuguese have lost in Guinea-Bissau. Nothing can save them and, indeed, given the relatively few resources and few white settlers in the country, maintaining power there can hardly be their main priority. On the other hand, the Portuguese still hold all the

strategically important Cape Verde Islands which the Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde (PAIGC) has pledged to unite with the mainland. The Portuguese can be expected to continue efforts, which the PAIGC will reject, to divide the futures of the two.



In Mozambique, FRELIMO has also rejected the Portuguese plans but the latter have already begun to sponsor a "multi-racial" party, the Group for the Union of Mozambique (GUM), and will possibly try to use it to establish a puppet government.

In Angola, where the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) is weaker than in the other colonies, the Portuguese chances seem best. Angola is, after all, the most valuable of the colonies with the largest number of white settlers. There also exists a group under the leadership of Holden Roberto which is a puppet of Zaire. Since Zaire also has close ties to the U. S. it is possible that Roberto could become part of a neo-colonial solution giving Zaire indirectly a slice of the pie.

But in the next few years it is doubtful whether any stable neo-colonial situation is possible. The African peoples have already gained too much experience in political and military struggle to stop short of complete independence, and Spínola has little to offer them at any rate. The struggle continues.

Theatre Enriches Political Actions

by Martin Bunzl and Scott Jackson
Minneapolis NAM

Battered Homes and Gardens: Women and the Subversion of the Community, by the Alive and Trucking Theatre Company.

THE ALIVE AND Trucking Theatre Company has created a new play, *Battered Homes and Gardens*, at once an education in urban politics, a link to community struggles, a victory celebration, and a call to arms.

Bourgeois theatre often succeeds in creating rich characters immersed in complex, if narrow, relationships. But they act out their struggles in isolation, cut off from the larger social world that would politicize their personal actions and give them meaning. If the world is allowed to intrude, it is only to make the play "topical." Political theatre, on the other hand, paints its characters in broad and unambiguous tones. They represent contending ideologies or groups rather than flesh-and-blood individuals. In the welter of polemic and propaganda the personal dimension of political struggle is often lost.

In their latest play, Alive and Trucking has attempted to synthesize and transcend the limitations of both political theatre and theatre as art. Although they model themselves to a great extent on the San Francisco Mime Troupe's style of political theatre, in *Battered Homes and Gardens* they go far beyond the Troupe in their attempt to portray the psychological and sociological dimensions of political life.

The play opens to a convention of city planners at the Minneapolis Auditorium. Max A'Million, city coordinator (dressed as the Pillsbury doughboy), and his cohort Phoebe, a bourgeois feminist ("I am a woman with a Ph.D. in urban planning... but, I am also a mother..."),

give the standard liberal view of the city's history and planning, complete with chorus line, songs, and juggling. They sing and dance their way through Minneapolis' transformation from a milling town to a diversified center of industry, commerce, and banking, and a "beacon of light to city planners everywhere."

But in the sixties something sinister creeps onto the stage, anathema (and boon) to city planners and corporate liberals alike—"urban blight." Only through enlightened redevelopment on a regional basis can urban blight and its associated troubles—crime, decay, restless colonies, and disaffected youth and women—be pacified and harmony and capitalist rationalization restored.

The scene shifts to the central focus of the play: the conflict caused when the city coordinator's office (representing the interests of Mr. Billion and Trillion and Mr. White McKnight) plans to build a new highrise complex, "Looming Environmental Site." (How can the people ask for more—we're giving them LES!) A working class family refuses to offer its home up to the bulldozers. The play details the growth of this conflict, as the planners go blindly on their merry way, ignoring citizen complaints (while proposing citizens' participation boards to co-opt them) and refining their vision of the city, while the family becomes progressively radicalized—moving from individual protest to petitioning to a public meeting where they confront Max and Phoebe and halt the project.

The plot is at once simple and complex. The drama gains depth because new dimensions are interwoven through every character in the play.

Mom is a fifty-year-old housewife whose life centers around her husband and children. Dad is a shipping clerk at Sears (where other employees are getting laid off without any intervention on the



Over a beer at the neighborhood bar, Dad (r) tells his friend George about the recent layoffs down at Sears.

part of their union) who takes out his frustrations and insecurity on Mom. Both in turn lean on their teenage daughter Jackie and her radical friend, a waitress named Beth. Beth numbers among her customers Max and Phoebe as they plan the city's future. The incest deepens as we learn that Mom and Dad have a second daughter, Sally, who works as Max's secretary. And Sally's husband, Tom, is hired as a PR man by Max to put together a slide show to sell LES at the community meeting.

Their radicalization, the movement from apathy or outrage to action and victory, emerges from the interaction of self-interest and personality on the one hand, and a growing political awareness and willingness to act collectively on the other. For example, Mom ("They don't call me Mrs. Sherlock Holmes for nothing.") is a mystery buff who is initially drawn into the fray because she loves to snoop around and get to the bottom of things.

Though the play moves inexorably toward a happy and utopian ending, it raises a number of thorny issues along the way. Particularly exciting is the way in which Alive and Trucking attempts to contrast the bourgeois feminism of Phoebe (with her recent article on women in leadership in *MS*, and her motto: "Equal treatment of women bosses"), and the efforts of Mom and her community to struggle around their sexual politics in relation to other aspects of their oppression. Alive and Trucking began three years ago as a consciously feminist company, and their growth toward a socialist feminist politics and their portrayal of the struggles of working men and women with their contradictory and often sexist politics without underplaying or idealizing them, may have outstripped many members of the audience, particularly those people whose lives they portray. Their characterization of bourgeois feminism seems at times heavy-handed, while their realistic portrayal of the relationships of Mom and Dad, and Sally and Tom, might easily be accepted without understanding their more important function, of critique.

Their socialist feminist politics emerge more importantly, if less obviously, through one of the major theses of the play: that women, because of their unique oppression and the roles ordained them by society, are the basis of the community. They possess a greater sense of the community—its existence, problems, needs. They participate in an informal network of communication and influence. And they are best suited to organize and mobilize the community. In *Battered Homes and Gardens* Mom, Beth, and Jackie in the streets, and Sally in the suites, are the front-line organizers who are instrumental in defeating LES. Despite some initial hesitation, an unwillingness to get involved in a project that seems at first hopeless, and an acquired self-doubt, they prove to be persistent and canny. The men are largely adjuncts.

That is the primary defect of the play: the men are less well delineated, less willing to act, less sympathetic. In political theatre some characters are more superficial than others. They are often caricatures, or represent positions and contending forces rather than real people. The plot, the setting, the assumptions of *Battered Homes and Gardens* all work to limit the male characters to superficial and static roles.

Alive and Trucking has not been satisfied to reconcile itself to the limitations of political analysis that can be projected in guerrilla theatre. Yet their alternative in this play has often been to place key characters in didactic roles at crucial points in the play just to remind the audience that things aren't as simple as they seem. For example, Beth points out that the community does need new housing

(Continued on Page 11)

for victory. I think that public ownership of utility companies is the wave of the future.

In struggle,

Len Stanley
C. P. Gilman NAM

LETTERS

To the NAM Editors:

I submitted an article about the April coup in Portugal to the editors of the NAM newspaper. For some reason, probably a misunderstanding, the editors considerably rewrote the article before publishing it. But they left my name on it. Unfortunately, the article which appeared offered a somewhat different political analysis than the one I wrote.

For example, in the first paragraph, the editors describe the Portuguese junta as "committed to a restoration of democracy." I included material in my article indicating that the younger officers who made the coup are somewhat naive and indeterminate in their ideology. In fact, the junta has already threatened repression if the workers continue efforts to intervene directly in the political process—such as strikes, the removal of fascist managers, and direct action against the war in Africa.

The editors also included several paragraphs on the Portuguese Communist Party—concluding with the laudatory comment that the Party is "generally credited with being the most legitimate anti-fascist organization." I had said little about the CP in my article because by that time of writing (May 6), it was unclear if it would live up to its generally revisionist reputation. By now (June 3), it has. Observers in Portugal agree that the CP has made a deal with the junta to control the workers and the militant left parties in exchange for being included in the government.

Finally, near the end of the article, the editors inexplicably wrote, "(Spinola) is against an immediate ceasefire and negotiations." False! Spinola is for a ceasefire and negotiations. Negotiations with FRELIMO and PAIGC are already scheduled, but the guerrillas are insisting on independence. Spinola wants a federation. It's possible that the NAM editors and I have political differences. My only objection is to having my name signed to what they write.

Jim Mellen



Elsie (r) tells Mom that petitioning's a fine thing, but it takes a lot more than that to beat the downtown business interests.

Dear NAM Newspaper Collective,

There is a large and growing socialist community in the Chapel Hill-Durham area. Though a lot of people aren't in NAM per se, we were part of a coalition (along with Welfare rights, Ministerial Alliance, League of Women Voters, etc.) in calling originally for public hearings on the sale of utilities.

A very real possibility for public ownership of the means of production is electric utility companies. Private, profit-making utility companies all over the country are being forced to put massive rate increases into effect to keep their financial viability (to keep profits high) and to increase dividends to their stockholders. Hence, people all over the country are furious.

In Chapel Hill and Orange County, there was a real possibility for public ownership since the University was selling its utilities and a public corporation had been formed to bid on it. The assumption was that the Commission appointed to make the decision would just automatically give the electric company to Duke

Power and the phone to Southern Bell.

Then we came on the scene, the Orange County Citizens for Alternative Power, called a press conference at the state capitol (which got excellent TV coverage), began a petition campaign, contacted local support groups, etc. They decided to have a "public" hearing—for one hour at 10:00 a.m. After we issued more statements calling it a "mockery," they scheduled an evening meeting.

Then the newspapers and radio picked up on it, giving great coverage to my statements in the 1-hour hearing and good coverage to the next hearing. It was a real "people's victory"—the place was packed and people from all over the area (farmers, professors, engineers, realtors, etc.) spoke up in support of the public corporation, mainly for reasons of local control. Although the final decision has not been made, the public input—once we forced them to have it—was overwhelming and will be hard to go against.

I hope that you can give this same kind of coverage in the context of other concrete issues that people can organize around—and that present real possibilities

Voluntarism Utilities

(Continued from Page 6)

ployment would serve to depress wages and job opportunities by creating more competition for scarce jobs.

Since much volunteer work entails educational activities, it would increase an already critical surplus of teachers existing in the country. Jacob Clayman of the AFL-CIO has stated, "If in the process of providing socially valuable goods and services as well as wholesome training for youth, we destroy the economic standards of their elders, we indeed would be jumping from the frying pan into the fire." By depressing wages, voluntarism indirectly adds profits to the overstuffed pockets of the capitalists.

WOMEN AS VOLUNTEERS

The government and the Center have been aiming much of their work at middle and upper class women who have traditionally been the backbone of volunteer activity. Because women are socialized to smooth over personal conflict within the family, they are particularly well suited to apply their nurturing skills to an ill society.

Given their well-intentioned goals, what's wrong with the fine tradition of women as volunteers?

First of all, the key to the general subordination of women in the U. S., both at work and at home, is that "women's work" is not considered worthy of pay. The new "social change" terminology of this national voluntarism represents a cynical attempt to co-opt women's increasing activism and dissatisfaction with their own and other's oppression, into the same old unpaid service work—at best, in paraprofessional positions, or in weak lobby groups.

Secondly, much service-oriented voluntarism separates women by class. Privileged women who have time to donate to volunteer work bestow their services upon non-privileged women. But people prefer to struggle for the self-determination and right to basic human services (health, adequate food, shelter, childcare, employment), rather than depend on someone else's charity. Additionally, what's given to the "needy" can always be taken away unless the services are formally institutionalized. Why must fulfillment of basic human needs take place *outside* of our economy?

Thirdly, much volunteer work aims at patching up the results of bad public

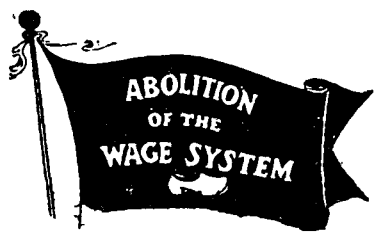
(Continued from Page 4)

law requiring utilities to provide a basic minimum of gas and electricity to households at a fair and reasonable cost not subject to increase, 3) hearings on public power, and 4) an end to "price-fixing and profiteering," i.e., pressuring the Public Utilities Commission to force PG&E to fight its suppliers for lower oil and natural gas prices rather than pass them on to the consumer.

E&GP has turned out hundreds of people for PUC hearings and demonstrations at PG&E headquarters. The organization has opened up closed PUC meetings and has forced the PUC to cut \$31 million from a recent \$90-million fuel adjustment rate increase request.

On the other side of the country, the Vermont Alliance, the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG), and the legislative liaison of the National Council of Senior Citizens joined nine other groups last summer to fight for "lifeline" electricity service. The costs of the service are to be borne by large energy users which will begin to reverse the rate structure. A "lifeline" bill has now been introduced into the Vermont

policy rather than *changing* policy. Many volunteers soothingly apply band-aid, individual solutions to institutional conflict. Satisfying as such personal service may be, there is a nagging feeling that, like housework, "women's work is never done."



WOMEN, AND MEN, then, must redirect their energy to activity that will result in basic institutional changes that will insure that the basic needs of all people are met. This work, because it threatens monied interests, will usually not be funded, and is technically "volunteer."

But the significant difference is whether such action gets at the roots of social problems. This unpaid work would then not be called "voluntarism," but political and economic struggle.

state legislature.

The Vermont Alliance has also proposed that the state take over the Central Vermont Public Service Company's electricity transmission system and replace it with cooperatively-owned distribution companies.

More recently, the Vermont State Supreme Court blocked the utilities from using the state's automatic fuel adjustment clause until the next Public Service Commission hearing.

Just to the south, the Massachusetts Energy Consumers Alliance (MECA), which includes the Attleboro and Malden Teachers Associations, the State Older American Association, and the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), delivered petitions with 60,000 signatures to a Department of Public Utilities hearing on April 30 demanding an end to the fuel adjustment clause. As mentioned earlier, 16,000 Boston-area residents have stopped paying their Boston Edison bills to protest skyrocketing utilities rates.

MECA wants the fuel adjustment turned into "low-interest energy loans" to be paid back to Boston Edison's customers. The organization also wants the utility to push for an independent audit of the oil companies.

In nearby Connecticut, local 200 of the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers (UE) representing 700 employees at Bryant Electric Company in Bridgeport, is circulating petitions calling for the abolition of automatic fuel adjustments.

In New York City, where Consolidated Edison rates have jumped 35% in the last six months and where some owners of all-electric homes are getting monthly bills of \$250-\$300, several outraged consumer groups are militantly fighting new rate hikes. AC-DC (Active Consumers Defy Con Edison), FACE (Fight Against Con Edison), and other groups have held demonstrations at Public Service Commission hearings and in Queens, Westchester, and Staten Island against a \$13.8% (\$174.7 million) interim rate increase. Con Ed wants a 29.3% permanent increase over two years which, if granted, will mean \$427 million more in yearly revenues for the nation's biggest utility.

A group called Get Consumer Protection obtained a State Supreme Court order in March ordering the PSC to show

cause why the 13.8% interim rate hike should not be overturned.

A neighboring organization, Long Island Citizens in Action, is fighting a 19% Long Island Light Company (Lilco) rate increase, the fifth such increase since 1970. With its slogan "Say No to Lilco," Long Island Citizens in Action is demanding restructured rates and an elected Public Service Commission. If these demands aren't met, the group will consider a move to put municipalization on the November ballot.

SOUTHERN STATES

In North Carolina and Kentucky, an exciting two-pronged struggle is under way against Duke Power and its coal-producing subsidiary, the Eastover Mining Company.

Duke Power is asking for a 17% (\$60 million) rate increase on top of a 10% increase granted only a few months ago. The fight against the rate hike is being waged by groups including Carolina Tax Action and New American Movement (NAM).

Meanwhile, in Harlan, Kentucky, 180 miners are striking Eastover's Brookside mine for union recognition. Last June, the miners overwhelmingly voted to join the United Mine Workers, but company officials have adamantly refused to recognize the union.

In a striking display of unity, the Brookside miners have joined forces with the North Carolina utilities activists in a combined effort to beat Duke Power and its Eastover Mining Company subsidiary. A petition drive has been undertaken, and confrontations with Duke representatives have been staged involving consumer, labor, church, student, and other groups.

Over in Arkansas, an impressive group known as ACORN (Arkansas Community Organization for Reform Now) successfully fought a \$12.2 million Arkansas-Louisiana Gas Company (ArkLa) rate increase that had gone into effect in November without Public Service Commission approval. The rate hike increased residential bills from 30-64%.

ACORN's tactics included a petition drive, several demonstrations at company offices, and a "Turn Off ArkLa Day" on February 20 during which participants used as little gas as possible.

Two days later ACORN had its victory as the PSC cut the rate increase by more (Continued on Page 15)

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utilities

(Continued from Page 14)

than half and ordered ArkLa to give cash refunds to all overcharged customers. The PSC also ordered ArkLa to take steps toward rate equalization.

Down in Austin, Texas, 800 senior citizens, armed with 20,000 signatures, each with a tea bag attached, held an Austin Tea Party to petition the governor for lower utility rates.

MID-WEST

In Chicago, the Citizens Action Program (CAP) Senior Citizens Coalition is fighting a proposed Commonwealth Edison rate increase and the utility's whole discriminatory rate structure.

A little to the north along Lake Michigan, 50 members of the Milwaukee Tenants Union demonstrated on March 19 against the Wisconsin Gas Company, demanding an Emergency Fund to help customers pay increased heating costs. The demonstrators attempted to pay their bills with bags of groceries in order to show, as one protester put it, that "we have to take more and more money away from food and clothing just to keep our homes warm."

Other utility fights have taken place or are under way in Washington, D. C., Philadelphia, Maryland, Michigan, Maine, Nevada, Rhode Island, Minnesota, and Oregon.

All over the country, people are finding that utilities organizing provided a good way to get a handle on the so-called "energy crisis."

Bert DeLeeuw, coordinator of the Movement for Economic Justice (MEJ), a national clearing house for all sorts of current neo-populist organizing, has analyzed the advantages of utilities fights. Writing in the February, 1974, issue of *Just Economics*, the MEJ newsletter, DeLeeuw argues that utilities is "an issue that impacts locally, an issue that is immediate and specific and realizable." It is "an issue which builds a mass-based constituency demanding control of our resources."

DeLeeuw goes on to point out the broader implications of utilities organizing. Noting the many interlocks between the major utilities and the big banks and oil companies, he observes

that "while we are organizing locally against rate hikes, for fairer rate structures, and against pollution, we will be taking on a fight against the banks, the oil companies, and many other big money interests." DeLeeuw concludes, "By starting to organize, we can build a movement to take back our

power—energy and political—from the special interests that have robbed it from us."

That DeLeeuw is a militant populist and not a socialist only serves to emphasize that utilities organizing can be an excellent area for socialists to work in. Utilities is definitely an issue whose time has come. ■

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United Auto Workers

(Continued from Page 1)

For decades these elections have been a farce, a mere formality. There has not been a serious contest for top office since Walter Reuther beat R. J. Thomas in 1946. Then why the push for a three-year term? First, it enables Woodcock, who would otherwise have to retire in 1976, to wind up the '76 negotiations and not leave his successor with a bargaining crisis at the start of his first term. And second, it enables the leadership to coordinate bargaining on three-year contracts. In either case, it reflects a growing trend toward longer-term contracts, more conservative bargaining, and, most of all, less democracy in the UAW.

FLOOR FIGHT

The floor fight on the three-year term furnished a rallying point for all the dissidents. The United National Caucus (UNC) took the lead and tried to organize a broader front, hoping to include many delegates who were pro-Woodcock, but opposed to the three-year term. Apparently even the International Executive Board was split. But the final vote was a clear victory for the leadership, by perhaps as much as three to one.

The defeat took the steam out of the UNC drive. Every other vote until adjournment was overwhelmingly in the International's favor. On Thursday, all local offices were tied to the national three-year term, pulling them one step closer to Solidarity House and one step farther from the rank and file.

Finally, also on Thursday—the last day of the convention—the other key issue of contract ratification came up. In 1973 skilled workers at Ford who, like all skilled auto workers, have had the right to veto contracts since 1967, rejected their national agreement by almost 4 to 1. Woodcock, ignoring both the constitution and their vote, declared the contract binding. The International, now trying to paper over the conflict, prepared a

statement/resolution assuring Ford workers that nothing had changed. They still had the right to ratify, but *not* to vote, which the International Executive Board now claimed they never really had in the first place. In other words, you can always vote yes; you just can't vote no. After a lengthy but futile debate, the resolution passed overwhelmingly. Shortly afterwards, the meeting was abruptly adjourned and the 24th UAW convention came to a close.

GROWING REBELLION

But democracy was not the only thing missing from this convention. There was also the complete unwillingness of the UAW leaders to acknowledge the growing rebellion of young workers in the factories. As Paul Schrade, ex-UAW regional director said in a leaflet distributed on the convention floor, "Workers are rebelling against boring and stupid jobs, machine-paced jobs, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, dictatorial work rules, and heavy-handed harassment of supervisors. Workers are rebelling in negative ways: through absenteeism, apathy, drugs, booze, violence, sabotage, and low-quality work. Production is being so seriously disrupted that it is the top problem facing officials of unions, corporations, and government."

Auto workers, in other words, are desperately searching for something better than the "prison factory;" and, so far, neither their union nor the companies has offered any real alternative, except earlier retirement. Indeed, Schrade himself was recently purged from the UAW for trying to seriously raise these issues from within the bureaucracy.

This refusal to deal with the problem of work was confirmed in President Woodcock's keynote address delivered on Sunday afternoon. In great detail Woodcock laboriously analysed the last contract signed in 1973, but only at one point did he allude to the deeper issues. He said, "we wanted to improve the work

environment. We said we didn't have any instant answers but that if they (i.e., the companies) would refuse to work with us cooperatively to this end, then that would be an item of confrontation between us. And a letter of agreement provides joint committees on this question, on work design, at both the corporate and local level."

UNION TAILS COMPANIES

Job re-design, or job enrichment, is one of several management strategies aimed at changing jobs to make them more varied and human, as a way of trying to ease dissatisfaction in the plants. In this respect, GM and Ford are more advanced than the UAW. Indeed, current thinking of top management goes far beyond this. Recently for example, Henry Ford, after visiting the new Kamalar Volvo plant in Sweden where the traditional assembly line has been abolished, called it a "miracle." This remains true although the company's ultimate purpose is greater profits, not a humane work environment.

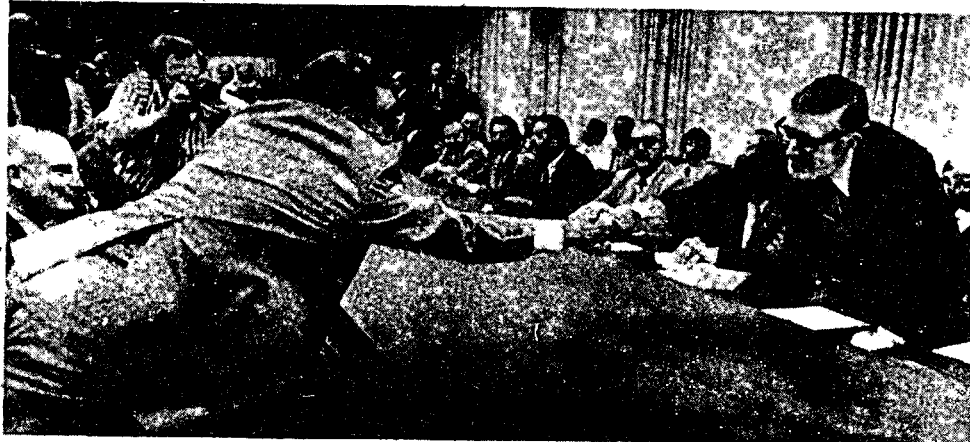
But in 1973 the UAW was only responding to company pressure. They have no real interest in job redesign, either from the top down, as management would like it, or from the bottom up, as part of a strategy of rank-and-file control. Instead they reasoned that if the corporations were determined to

introduce these job experiments, then at least the UAW should take part. This in no way represents a real desire to come to grips with the issue of the quality of life on the job.*

CAUCUS LIMITATIONS

But at the same time none of the rank-and-file groups have understood the importance of this issue either. The UNC proposal on working conditions, for example, entitled "Rebuild the Union in the Shops," stresses the need to fight for democracy on the shop floor, as their members fought for it on the convention floor. But making the union more responsive to rank-and-file pressure is not a substitute for a program to humanize and democratize the workplace itself. Lacking this dimension, the UNC, like the other caucuses, seems doomed to remain isolated and ineffective. Only by bringing the struggle for union democracy together with the struggle for industrial democracy, will a majority of auto workers be persuaded to join the fight to take control of their union, their job, and their society. ■

*For a superb introduction to the recent history of the UAW and the problems of auto workers see William Serrin, *The Company and the Union*, Alfred Knopf, New York, 1973, and a new revised edition soon to be released in paperback.



UAW's Leonard Woodcock leans across boardroom table to shake hands with GM's vice president George Morris as talks begin for new contract.

Irish General Strike

(Continued from Page 1)

In Northern Ireland, this general election revolved around one issue, Sunningdale, and at the ballot box 52% voted against this imposed settlement. Eleven of the 12 Ulster M.P.'s joined the new Labor-dominated Parliament at Westminster, to demand the rights of their constituents to the democratic process of electing representatives to replace an Executive that had been structured and appointed without the participation of the Ulster people.

On the strength of the vote in the British elections, it was clear that a majority would have decided to throw out Sunningdale.

The new Labor Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, refused these demands. He had won by a very slim margin, and his mandate to govern depended on the support of the British public, who now wanted Britain to pull out of Ulster and stop the diversion of their taxes in cleaning up the mess in Northern Ireland. Moreover, the eleven Ulster M.P.'s belong to the Unionist Party, the Ulster version of the Conservative Party in Britain.

Deprived of self-determination by the British, and denied their just recognition of their long years of allegiance to the British Crown, the Ulster Protestants decided on industrial action.

A SUCCESSFUL GENERAL STRIKE

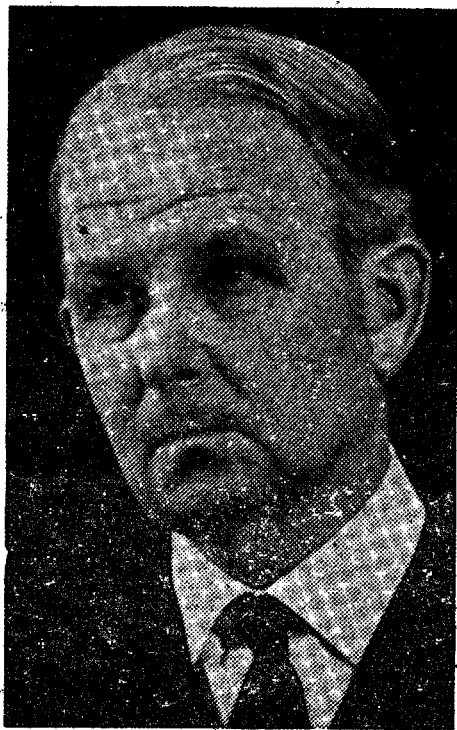
In most countries, the state monopolizes the legitimate use of force, and is able to break workers' strikes under the guise of imposing law and order by deploying its civilian militia and armed forces. In Northern Ireland, the British government (which had always taken responsibility for the armed defense of Ulster) has lost this monopoly, because it has failed to make the border safe against IRA attacks.

In April, 1974, a month before the strike, Prime Minister Wilson gave into demands from the Ulster community to legalize one of the Protestant para-

military forces, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). At the same time, the Ulster Workers' Council (UWC) first appeared on the political scene, with a strategy of using industrial action to force Britain to renounce the Sunningdale agreement.

When the UWC called for a general strike in May, the workers knew that their withdrawal of labor-power would be backed up by military defensive action from the newly-legalized UVF. Once the strike had brought about the collapse of the day-to-day operation of the social order, all the outlawed paramilitary forces, including the IRA, were free to operate in public. Not only did they police the workers' residential communities, and the picket lines at the factories, but also provided patrols to monitor the movement of industrial supplies, and the distribution of gas, food, medical supplies, and the mail.

There are three reasons why the strike proceeded unchallenged. First,



BRIAN FAULKNER

there was initial widespread support for its aims in the Protestant community (as the 52% anti-Sunningdale vote in February had demonstrated). Second, the strikers were able to mobilize grass-roots organizations to provide for the immediate needs and welfare of the community, thus retaining their support. Third, and most important, the workers were able to back up their strike with military force. This factor became especially important in the second week of the strike, when the British government (against the advice of its army officials) ordered the troops flown in. What Britain's new Labor government had failed to recognize was that the strike had so integrated military and civilian activity that any military "solution" was doomed to failure.

Catholics, who had been given a "share" of the Executive at Sunningdale and had a stake in its continuance, nonetheless generally observed picket lines. They had been shaken on the second day of the strike when a bomb, probably planted by Protestant extremists in Dublin, exploded, killing 27 people. As a result, the IRA surfaced to protect Catholic communities, but recognized the fight as one between Protestants and England.

The reluctant British troops made little effort to challenge the control of the UWC's paramilitary forces over the vital means of industrial production and community sustenance. This situation was a blow to the Northern Ireland business community whose sole aim was to get the economy going again. So they decided to ignore their tacit alliance with the public forces of law and order and negotiate direct with the UWC.

The consent of Ulster business owners and industrialists to the workers' cause was the final straw that broke the back of Sunningdale. Deprived of their support, the eleven-man Northern Ireland Executive resigned (all except for the four members of the Catholic-based Social and Democratic Labor Party) and Britain reimposed direct rule.

The strike has forced a significant realignment of forces in the Northern Ireland struggle, and has set the stage

for a phased withdrawal of British political influence. The Provisional IRA, committed to using violence to drive out the British, has for the first time since its 1969 split from the Officials (who were prepared to delay military tactics in the hope of a political victory), developed a base inside the Northern Irish community among a section of the Catholic workers in Belfast. The Ulster bourgeoisie has identified itself openly with the demands of the Ulster working community, and dissociated itself from the British ruling group.

The British Parliament is no longer debating the religious fanaticism of Ulster, but openly recognizing the emergence of a new historical force, Ulster nationalism. Exhausted British taxpayers now have a stronger lever on British policy than under the Conservative Party. The initiative for reformulating the constitutional status of Northern Ireland has passed from the paperwork of British and Irish state officials, into the hands of the Ulster working class.

At the same time, there are grave predictions that the strike has destroyed the labor-intensive economy of Northern Ireland. The economic miracle that has kept it going since the beginning of the troubles in 1969 has been "good industrial relations." As long as the political and social conflict was not fought out on the shop floor, businessmen have been willing to continue and even expand their enterprises to take advantage of the availability of labor, and government grants.

It has now been demonstrated that the British government's military strength is inadequate to protect and guarantee the uninterrupted operation of factories and the continued flow of profits.

Already, five firms that had been negotiating with the British government for loans and grants to invest in Northern Ireland have now dropped their negotiations. Hopefully, the dramatic closing of factories will thrust on to the strife-torn working community a more immediate awareness that the struggle to be fought is not the geo-politics of the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, but the still unchallenged operation of capitalist exploitation. ■