

# A Socialist ACTION

An injury to one  
is an injury to all

A special supplement to  
Socialist Action newspaper

## Eastern strike reveals power of labor solidarity

**But the strikers  
need a winning  
strategy to  
defeat Lorenzo,  
govt.**

By NAT WEINSTEIN

Union-conscious working people in America will not fail to note the historic significance of the International Association of Machinists' (IAM) strike against Eastern Airlines. It is the first time in many years that the powerful American labor movement has displayed its enormous potential for defending the interests of the overwhelming majority of American people who must work for a living.

The magnificent solidarity displayed by airline pilots and flight attendants, who have enthusiastically honored IAM picket lines, has grounded virtually all of the struck corporation's planes. Only a handful of Eastern's planes has managed to get off the ground; and then, only with the help of management pilots flying nearly empty planes, as passengers chose more reliably scheduled airlines.

Eastern Airlines' initially planned to operate enough planes from the first days of the strike to demoralize strikers and spark a back-to-work movement. But these plans were quickly dashed by determined pilots and machinists.

And the threat by the IAM to picket railroads to extend the effect of its strike threw the corporate heads—and their political representatives in both capitalist parties—into a frenzy of public and secret consultation on how best to counter and undermine the effect of the strike. The nation's business-controlled editorial pages cried out with virtually one voice: "No secondary picketing!"

Of course, labor's antagonists wield great economic and political power, and are fully capable of taking effective countermeasures. They are always prepared to do whatever is necessary to defend profits. Even so, when the full power of workers is unleashed, when labor shows the same readiness to act in its class interests, their power is even greater.

Thus, the key to a labor victory lies in a strategy and set of tactics that can unleash this potential power. The outcome of this struggle, therefore, will depend on the decisions which will be made in the days and weeks ahead by the leaders of this strike.

But whatever the eventual outcome of this confrontation, the striking airline workers have already won a small but significant victory for all working people.

Ever since President Reagan busted the airline controllers' (PATCO) strike in 1981, the purveyors of doom and gloom—inside and outside the ranks of labor—have been preaching without let-up that "strikes can no longer stop production and force employers to terms." Airline workers have proven this much: Workers *united* remain fully able to match the economic power of the owners of industry, the capitalist class.

Of course, the problem of labor strategy doesn't end there. The economic power of the owning class as a whole is formidable. And despite differences among them, this class is



solidly behind Eastern Airlines' wage-cutting, union-busting effort. Moreover, the reins of political power are also entirely in their hands.

The capitalist class has a monopoly in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government—from President Bush on down to the most "pro-labor" Democrat. And, as in the past, they fully intend to use the repressive machinery of government against striking workers, if they can get away with it.

### The government and its agencies are not neutral

The first principle of an effective labor policy is to *understand* this simple fact of life. The unions must not have illusions that the government and its agencies are neutral. This truism is instinctively grasped by working people. That's why airline pilots rediscovered the power of solidarity; that's why the threat to extend the strike to rail

workers has inspired working people on one side, and has evoked a deadly combination of fear, anger, and hostility from the employers on the other.

Workers must go further to match and surpass the power of the boss class. They must rely in the first place on the independent power of their fighting institutions—the unions. But along with their own organizations they need to mobilize the support of  
*(continued on next page)*

# ... labor solidarity shuts down Eastern

(continued from preceding page)

their natural allies among the many victims of capitalist greed—unorganized workers, Blacks, women, and many others.

Certainly differences exist among the employing class, and can be, within limits, utilized to the advantage of working people. But it would be a colossal mistake to fail to understand that capitalists will close ranks—despite the greed which drives them to compete with one another—when their class interests are jeopardized. And make no mistake, they fear the reconquest of solidarity shown by the pilots, and invoked by the threat of a rail shutdown, like the devil fears holy water.

In the last analysis, the only factor that can decisively divide the class of employers arises when the workers demonstrate a determination to continue to resist their adversary's attacks and are able to effectively widen the struggle to include on their side broad sectors of their class who may not be directly involved. Adversity, typically, will cause dissension among capitalists too. A section of labor's adversaries will become demoralized and will seek peace with fighting workers so as to save themselves, or gain time for their class.

The IAM's threat to picket commuter railways correctly points toward a course of action that, if determinedly carried out, will unite working people in a broad defensive struggle. This is the only way to begin driving a real wedge among their adversaries in the corporate and banking boardrooms of America, and in the halls of Congress.

Moreover, an effective struggle will also win over layers of the middle classes, including small business people, who also

suffer from the monopoly on economic and political power held by the corporate giants of banking and industry.

On the other hand, the biggest mistake working people can make is to *adapt their policy* to the goal of winning "allies" from among the ranks of their adversaries.

## Should airline workers look to TWA's Carl Icahn for help?

Corporate raider Frank Lorenzo, chairman of Texas Air Corporation, which controls the struck Eastern Airlines, has been the arch-enemy of airline workers. Lorenzo is notorious for having used the bankruptcy courts to abrogate union contracts at Continental Airlines, which he had previously captured. He has prepared his assault on Eastern employees' jobs and wages by switching assets, at bargain prices, from unionized Eastern to its non-union cousin, Continental.

Lorenzo calculates that if he busts the strike, he wins, and if he doesn't, he goes into bankruptcy court, and wins there.

One pillar of IAM strategy in the struggle with Lorenzo has been to rely on a deal with another corporate raider, Carl C. Icahn, chairman of Trans World Airlines. The IAM leadership believes that Icahn's greed, which drives him toward profiting from Lorenzo's difficulties, will serve to bring Icahn into the fight on the IAM's side.

Toward this end, the IAM leadership has already committed its members to a deal with Icahn—or another of his ilk—to be paid for by wage and other concessions to an Eastern Airlines taken over by TWA. In exchange, the union hopes to gain a share in the ownership of a reorganized Eastern Airlines under Icahn's control.



Frank Lorenzo - airline terrorist.

This will do absolutely nothing except, perhaps, briefly slow down an unending series of further giveback demands from the new boss. But every giveback, in itself, encourages the owners of industry to demand more—even when they are already enjoying huge profits. Concessions feed on themselves, leading ultimately to a reduction of jobs for

airline mechanics, baggage handlers, pilots, and flight attendants. Why is this so?

Without taking anything away from the greedy motives of Lorenzo, or any other of the troop of corporate raiders running loose, the basic cause of the crisis in the airline industry is overproduction—there are more planes than paying passengers. This is

# Railworkers also face union-busters

By J.D. CRAWFORD

There are big events taking place in the railroad industry.

Management obviously sees a historic opportunity, not just to get some concessions, but to smash the rail unions and to pose the possibility of a fundamental change in the relationship of class forces in this country.

The ruling class is particularly interested in targeting the transportation industry. It is not coincidental that it destroyed PATCO, the air controllers' union, in one of its key moves.

This is a heavily unionized industry, with hard-won union wages and working conditions. But the rail unions in particular have become weak. There have not been large nationwide rail strikes in which the existence of the unions were challenged since the 1920s.

## The post-war boom

Coming out of World War II, the U.S. capitalists saw what they called the

"American Century" opening up before them. They were a little overly optimistic on how long this would last, but for the next 20 or 25 years U.S. imperialism did completely dominate the world capitalist market.

In recognizing that possibility, one of the things the capitalists wanted was a stable transportation system, free of disruption either from competition or strikes. They were willing to trade a general rise in the standard of living of transportation workers for a period of labor peace so as to exploit their domination of world markets.

A structure already existed for this development through the Railway Labor Act of 1926, which was also extended to the airlines. The Railway Labor Act established a mediation board appointed by the president to affect a settlement of labor disputes. Strikes are prohibited during the mediation process.

A few largely sham strikes did take place on individual railroads. The companies made no attempt to get workers to cross the token

picket lines put up by the unions. Eventually, the disputes were settled through mediation and government intervention. None of the settlements were designed to really attack the unions or attack the fundamental standard of living of the employees.

And so, the functioning of the unions became one of hustling votes for the Democratic Party in return for "fair treatment" under the Railway Labor Act...

## The Guilford strike

Despite the inability of top union officials to challenge the companies' attacks, there have been signs of a fightback among rail workers. At the 1986 national convention of the BLE, the union president and almost the entire leadership were voted out, an unprecedented event. The top salaries were also significantly reduced across the board.

An important struggle also took place on the Maine Central Railroad, where Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way workers were forced to go on strike in March 1986.

The Maine Central is owned by Guilford Transportation Industries, which also owns the Boston & Maine and the Delaware & Hudson railroads. Guilford's owner, Timothy Mellon, is one of the richest men in the country.

Mellon apparently had some kind of deal in the works to purchase a 1000-mile piece of ConRail and catapult himself overnight into one of the major rail owners in this country. But as part of the deal he had to show the government that he could smash the unions on his three railroads.

Two years before the strike began, Guilford hired professional strikebreakers to come in and write a white paper outlining their tactics in the upcoming struggle. The white paper suggested that the company break the smallest local on the most isolated carrier and then extend the process throughout the system.

The white paper also advised selling off branch lines to non-union operations. This

tactic is being carried out on major railroads throughout the country.

These branch lines are usually completely phony setups. The big railroads provide all the financing. Sometimes they don't even sell it, but lease it for a dollar. The branch line then becomes a pocket of non-union labor designed to be used against the core railroad when management wishes to move to smash the unions there.

## Solidarity among the crafts

The Guilford workers surprised everybody—including the international union leadership. There was almost solid support for the Maintenance of Way strikers. None of the other crafts crossed the picket line.

The membership on its own, with no direction from the international, went out and organized a whole series of demonstrations. A little town like Waterville, Maine, had a demonstration of 2500 people. Support activities culminated in a big labor demonstration in Boston.

The response of the international union leaders, on the other hand, was horrible. Their whole strategy consisted of a campaign to beg Reagan to intervene to impose a settlement. But Reagan wasn't interested. It seemed that, given time, the company had a chance to smash the union.

Guilford began to fly in scabs from other places around the country. Money, personnel, and equipment were funneled to Guilford from six other railroads. The major railroads saw it as a test run for 1988.

The strikers pointed to the Railway Labor Act, which says that if other railroads give direct aid to a railroad that is on strike, they can legally be included in the strike action. A judge ruled in their favor, and picket lines were set up at ConRail.

As soon as the picket lines went up, the ConRail workers walked off. Two hours after the ConRail strike started, Reagan came in and ordered the workers back to work for a protracted "cooling-off period."

The union officials are still trying to project this as a victory. But the railroad companies are more far-sighted. They immediately began a campaign to plug up the loopholes in the Railway Labor Act so strikes could not be spread "legally." Their strategy would be to isolate the unions from railroad to railroad, to provoke strikes, and to break the unions one by one....

(This article is reprinted from a forthcoming Socialist Action pamphlet on the struggle in rail labor.)

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symptomatic of an organic crisis afflicting the world capitalist economy.

The crisis takes many forms, but in all cases it expresses the increasing competition among capitalists in every industry and in every country. In the end, fewer and fewer, and larger and larger, monopolistic corporations will dominate economic activity worldwide.

Just a glance at the continuing crisis of Continental Airlines, which has run up \$574 million in losses over the past two years since Lorenzo's union-busting takeover at Continental, illustrates this dynamic. Continental seems doomed to go the way of People Express, also gobbled up by Lorenzo's Texas Air Corporation.

Icahn, and other captains of industry not yet playing a starring role in today's airline scenario, have in the past, and will in the future, carry out the same anti-working class policies now being championed by Frank Lorenzo. This really should come as no surprise to anyone! The pursuit of maximum profit—irrespective of the needs of human beings—is the sum and substance of our economic system.

### Can airline workers count on "pro-labor" Democrats?

Another pillar of IAM policy is hitched to the myth of "friends of labor." The myth of "pro-labor" Democrats, of course, is intimately tied to the existence of less disguised anti-labor forces concentrated for the most part in the Republican Party. This mythological conflict between "friends" and "enemies" of working people takes a curious form in the current strike.

In the course of following the strategy of a deal with Carl Icahn to save the IAM from Lorenzo's wage-slashing union-busting, the Machinists' highest union officials, along with those at the head of the AFL-CIO, have called on President Bush to invoke the Railway Labor Act (RLA).

Bush initially refused to declare an emergency—in accord with provisions of the RLA, under which the airline industry functions. According to this Act, Bush can order strikers back to work for 60 days. Then he must appoint an "emergency board," which would be empowered to write a law incorporating terms that would be imposed on strikers and their employer, subject to approval by Congress.

The Democrats in Congress—for what it's worth—support the IAM's demand for the President to end the strike and force a settlement of the dispute. But for the moment Bush says he will intervene only if the IAM carries out its threat to extend the strike to the railroads. His purpose, he declared, will be to introduce legislation outlawing secondary boycotts in transportation, today permitted by the RLA.

But, in this case, authoritative Democratic Party spokespersons in Congress, like "pro-labor" Senator Edward Kennedy, pledge to support such an anti-strike law if it includes a [wage-cutting] settlement of the Eastern Airlines strike.

This would still be a serious setback for Eastern's workers and a major legal setback for labor—another restriction on the right to strike. That is, it would outlaw entirely or in part secondary picketing in the transportation industry. This has been the case in the rest of industry since the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act was passed by Congress in 1947.

### What way forward for working people?

In the first place, airline workers can only depend on their own fighting institutions—their own and their sister unions, as well as other working-class forces. Such a class-wide mobilization should also look to their natural allies, which includes sectors of the population that to different degrees suffer from the arrogant profiteering of the captains of industry, finance, and commerce. This includes Blacks and women, white-collar as well as blue-collar workers, the self-employed as well as the unemployed, senior citizens as well as youth, professionals as well as farmers.

The objective premise for this strategy, a united front of working people and their natural allies around their common interests, is already firmly established in the minds of millions by the two-decades-long assault on living standards of those who work for a living. "An injury to one is an injury to all!" needs to be reaffirmed and reinscribed on its banner by the union movement, the most

potent organized force among these broad layers.

In the second place, a stance of open opposition and defiance must be taken toward the web of laws woven by the political representatives of the ruling elite which hamstring, hogtie, and negate the basic rights guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States. One example of this conspiracy to strip working people of the right to conduct an effective strike is the recent Supreme Court decision in favor of TWA. This decision allowed TWA to attack seniority rights by permitting the company to give seniority to strikebreakers.

Today, the struggle between airline workers and bosses revolves around the fundamental right to withhold labor by anyone directly or indirectly involved in a struggle to defend the living standards of American workers. And flowing from this is the indispensable right to organize to defend jobs from any and every one who threatens these rights.

Injunctions prohibiting strikes or limiting picketing—negating fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States—cannot be allowed to continue to hold working people hostage to capitalist greed. The labor movement was built in defiance of injunction rule in the 1930s.

The capitalist government was forced to repeal injunction law in the face of a mass defiance that included a years-long wave of sit-down strikes—factory occupations by workers. The right to exercise the unfettered right to strike has been lost. It must be reconquered!

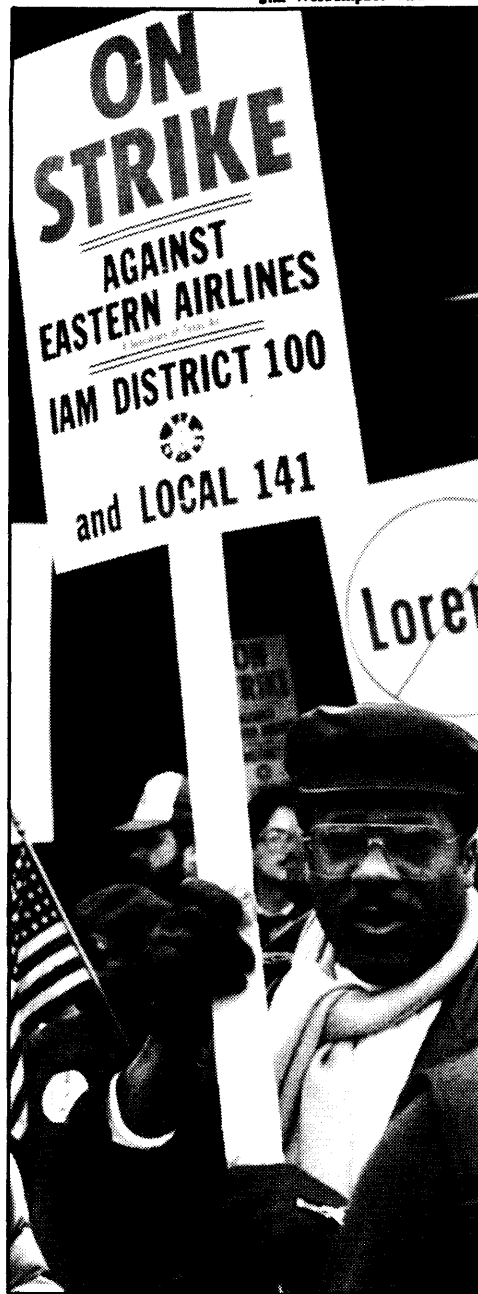
The working class of America is in a better position to carry out such a renewed offensive to regain lost ground than in 1934, when the working class took on and brought to its knees the largest, seemingly omnipotent, corporations in the world. The labor movement today is many millions of members stronger. We still enjoy the substantial fruits of the great victorious struggle waged by our grandmothers and grandfathers at the factory gates and on the streets of America.

### Reconquer the unrestricted right to strike—end injunction-rule!

At the time this is written, Eastern Airlines has filed for the protection of the courts to defeat its striking workers. The bankruptcy trick is to defeat the strike and to cheat its creditors—including customers holding worthless tickets.

The only way this trick won't work is if the unions and their supporters aggressively mobilize by the tens and hundreds of thousands to extend picketing in sufficient numbers to shut down Eastern's sister companies, and to appeal to railroad workers to join their fight.

The IAM has already targeted Continental



Airlines for picketing and has called on passengers to boycott Frank Lorenzo's non-union operation. This carrier is being used to pick up the business its struck sister airline, Eastern, has been unable to service.

But this attempt to extend the strike will have little effect if merely routine picketing is carried out. It will take a massive mobilization of strike supporters to stop non-union Continental workers from crossing picket lines, and to urge passengers to boycott this scab airline. It will no doubt require a mobilization of off-duty IAM members who work for non-struck airlines and other companies.

Railroad workers have also long suffered from their own bosses' assaults on their

living standards. They also have been hobbled by injunction-rule. This has negated their right to sympathy strikes, which are, moreover, entirely legal according to the RLA. They have been in the no-win position—as airline workers are today—of being stopped by injunctions that *illegally* abrogate their rights under the law!

Railroad workers will respond enthusiastically in accord with a vigorous initiative boldly carried out by the airline unions. It will have the effect of triggering the long-simmering pent-up anger of railroad workers and ultimately bring into the struggle the full power of the working class and its allies.

Of course, such extensions of mass picketing to Continental Airlines and to the railroads will evoke a ferocious response from the repressive agencies of the government, which is ever-vigilant in defense of big-business interests. It will be no easy struggle. But a genuine fightback is necessary and will prove, ultimately, to be inevitable.

Airline workers have begun to reconquer the tradition of solidarity upon which the most powerful workers' movement in the world was built. Airline workers have no other course but to go forward along that road. The battle-cry should ring-out: "No injunctions, no restriction on the right to picket and the right to strike!"

### Nationalize Eastern and place it under workers' control!

But this is only the beginning of a mass counter-offensive by the American workers. The fight can't be won on the economic plane alone. A political struggle must be launched to demand that the government nationalize such marauding robber barons as Frank Lorenzo. The labor movement should demand that Eastern Airlines be forced to open its books to reveal the full extent of Lorenzo's ravaging of the company that *owes* jobs to its workers, and transport to the flying public.

### Build an independent Labor Party based on the unions!

Labor must break with capitalist politicians and parties. A political movement, a Labor Party based on the unions, must adopt a program based on the class interests of all working people. Such a program would generalize the economic and social demands of all the victims of capitalist profiteering and anarchy. The working class movement would then be in a position to reestablish itself as the champion of all the oppressed and exploited millions in America and in the world.

"Solidarity Forever!" starting in every work place, between every union, between all workers, between all countries—especially starting with our least privileged sisters and brothers! That is the only road forward. ■

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# Toledo 1934: How strikers defeated court injunctions

In order for striking airline workers to find the way toward a course of action that can win, it is helpful to look back to some of the great victories of workers' struggles in U.S. labor history.

The Toledo Auto-Lite strike provides timely insight into the class-struggle methods that led to the construction of fighting mass industrial unions that brought America's giant corporations to their knees.

Together with the Minneapolis Teamsters and the San Francisco maritime strikes that same year, Toledo paved the way for labor victories that won all American workers big improvements in their living standards. These gains are essentially still intact despite the takeback campaign of the U.S. employing class.

The speech reprinted here was sent to the commemoration rally of the 50th anniversary of the Toledo Auto-Lite strike. The rally took place in Toledo on June 3, 1984.

The entire speech was published in the July 1984 issue of *Socialist Action*. For this edition, Selander adds, "In writing this speech, I checked my memory against accounts of the strike written by James P. Cannon. Credit for some of the best formulations in my speech belongs to this great socialist popularizer and champion of the working class."—The Editors

By TED SELANDER

Brothers and sisters, the key to an understanding of the magnificent Auto-Lite strike in 1934 is that it was a strike won on the picket line by a community uprising. I repeat: on the picket line by a community uprising.

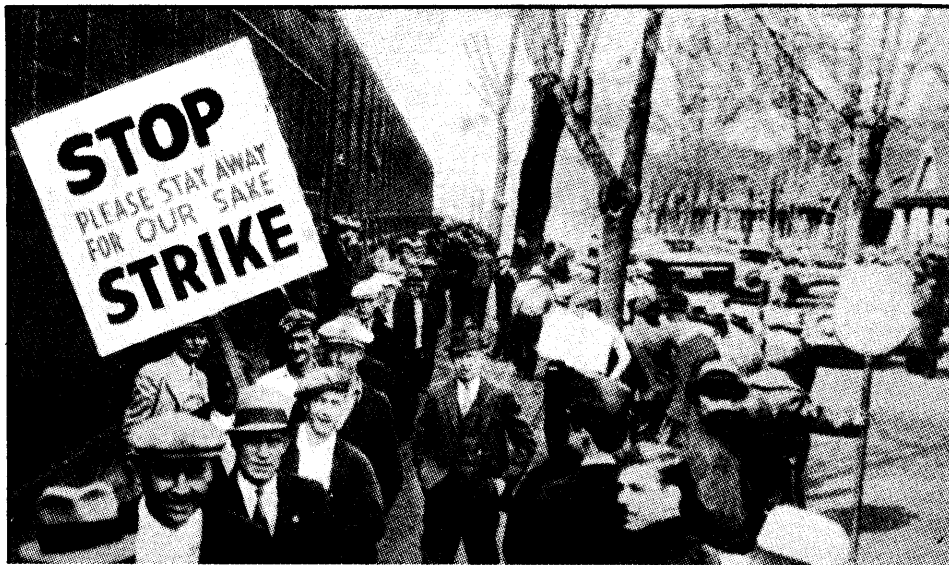
Toledo was in the grip of a tremendous popular upsurge of anger at the greedy bosses who hate to give their wage slaves a few cents more in their pay.

This was 1934 B.T.—B.T. meaning before television. As a matter of fact, it was before all the social gains which we fought for and won in the '30s—before unemployment pay, before food stamps, before social security, before the CIO, and before Medicare, etc.

After four years of depression, the Toledo workers were in an angry mood because of the bank failures, the idle factories, the overstocked granaries, and the 15 million unemployed. For four years we had poverty in the midst of plenty. Even the establishment was losing confidence in themselves and their system.

## Rank and file is muzzled

I don't think [as James P. Cannon pointed out] there was any real difference between the Toledo Auto-Lite strikers and the workers



involved in many of the *lost* strikes in the United States at that time. In practically every strike, the rank and file always displayed courage. The difference was in the leadership and their strategy and tactics. In nearly every strike the militancy of the rank and file was muzzled, many times snuffed out from the top.

The leaders are tricked by the courts, the labor boards, the mediators, the government, and the media to shift the fight from the picket line to the court and conference room. But all the while, the company keeps hiring scabs to take the strikers' jobs.

In the Auto-Lite strike, the company was hiring scabs by the hundreds and claimed they now had 1800 workers. We understood what was happening. We knew that the strike was dying and doomed. Only some bold, dramatic action could revive it, and even then it would have to be followed up with plenty of action

and support to give the company an all-out fight. And nothing short of an all-out fight would do.

As you probably know, we wrote a public letter to Judge Stuart telling him that we were going to violate his anti-labor injunction and call for mass picketing. By mass picketing we didn't mean a few hundred, we meant thousands. Could we get thousands down to that picket line? Well, that was the \$64 question.

We had spent the previous year organizing what some qualified observer said was the largest and most militant unemployed organization in the country—the Lucas County Unemployed League. We had held meetings and spoken in every section of the city and in the townships; organized countless marches, demonstrations, sit-ins; stopped evictions; won cash relief with a relief strike; and had held many, many other actions.

Because of this vast experience, we felt sure that we knew the temper of the Toledo workers. We felt we had a good chance to be the fuse that could ignite a spirit of solidarity with the Auto-Lite strikers to get union recognition and perhaps even win the first union contract in the auto plants of Toledo.

## Workers violate injunction

On the first day that we violated the

injunction, our mass picket line consisted of four individuals. That's right—just four. We were arrested, jailed, convicted and let out on bail and warned not to return to the picket line. But we told the judge that we were going back. And we did—picking up some 50 pickets on the way.

After that, there were a series of arrests, each one with a greater amount of pickets—first 46, then 108, and in between many smaller numbers. Every time we went back from the courts and jail, the picket lines kept growing steadily until on May 23 there were 10,000 reported on the street in front of the plant.

Now when you have a mass picket line of thousands, it enables you to counter the company's offensive moves. For example, they brought out a high-pressure hose and turned a stream of water on us. But it didn't take very long for a couple of hundred pickets to take the hose away and turn the water on them.

Many times the police and deputies brutally clubbed the pickets; but before they could shove them into a patrol wagon enough pickets rushed in and grabbed the picket away and often gave them a taste of their own clubs.

You know that every good union has two educational committees: one to arrange lectures of all kinds and the other to educate scabs who won't attend classes.

Half the employees at the Auto-Lite were women who were among the very best strikers we had. A couple of days after the National Guard came in, the women grabbed a scab, took him into an alley, and stripped every bit of clothing off of him except his tie and shoes. Then they marched him, naked as a jaybird, up and down the downtown streets.

Next day the papers carried a large picture of him on the front page, but they had their artist broaden and lengthen the tie to hide the family jewels. You can bet that picture discouraged a lot of scabs, but it got a big round of applause from the unionists in Ohio.

## Strikers fight National Guard

The Auto-Lite strikers battled first the police, then the company guards and deputies, and finally the National Guard. The first day the Guard came in they fired without warning at the unarmed strikers, killing two and wounding 25.

After those murders, the enraged strikers fought the guard for six days and nights—returning again and again to face tear gas and vomit gas, bayonet charges, and even rifle fire.

During lulls in the battle, we stood on boxes educating the guardsmen about the issues in the strike and how they were being used against the workers. By the way, the casualties were not all one-sided. The hospitals were patching up not only strikers but police, deputies, and the National Guardsmen.

On June 4, the company surrendered and signed on the dotted line a union contract giving the strikers priority on jobs, a 5-percent wage increase, and other concessions; agreed to withdraw all court charges and to pay all court costs. The logjam in Toledo had finally been broken, and 19 auto plants were organized before the year ended. The road was cleared to make Toledo a union town.

As a participant in the Auto-Lite strike of 1934, I appreciate this opportunity to join with you in this 50th anniversary celebration. It is a credit to all of you who organized this anniversary to keep alive the memory of labor's untapped strength as demonstrated in the Auto-Lite strike and all the other battles which prove that in unions we are strong.

## Essential reading for today's labor activists

### LESSONS OF THE P-9 STRIKE



A balance sheet of the militant struggle against Hormel by Jake Cooper

This pamphlet by labor veteran Jake Cooper examines the main lessons of the 1985-86 strike against Geo. A. Hormel and Co. It focuses on the role of the company, the government, the courts, and the labor bureaucrats in helping to break the strike. It also examines the crucial questions of strike strategy employed by the P-9 leadership.

Order now! \$1.50 plus \$.85 for handling. Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

## A letter to Judge R.R. Stuart

The following is the letter sent by the Lucas County Unemployed League referred to elsewhere on this page by Ted Selander. Selander and Sam Pollock, two of its officers, wrote Judge R.R. Stuart to inform him of their intention to violate the injunction by encouraging mass picketing. They did so. They were arrested, tried, and released after being warned to cease picketing. They went directly from court to the picket line with all their fellow unemployed league members and strikers who had been present.

His Honor Judge Stuart  
County Court House  
Toledo, Ohio

May 5, 1934

Honorable Judge Stuart:

On Monday morning May 7, at the Auto-Lite plant, the Lucas County Unemployed League, in protest of the injunction issued by your court, will deliberately and specifically violate the injunction enjoining us from sympathetically picketing

peacefully in support of the striking Auto Workers Federal Union.

We sincerely believe that this court intervention, preventing us from picketing, is an abrogation of our democratic rights, contrary to our constitutional liberties and contravenes the spirit and the letter of Section 7a of the NRA.

Further, we believe that the spirit and intent of this arbitrary injunction is another specific example of an organized movement to curtail the rights of all workers to organize, strike and picket effectively.

Therefore, with full knowledge of the principles involved and the possible consequences, we openly and publicly violate an injunction which, in our opinion, is a suppressive and oppressive act against all workers.

Sincerely yours,

Lucas County Unemployed League  
Anti-Injunction Committee  
Sam Pollock, Sec'y