

the rank and file in action

Labor Today

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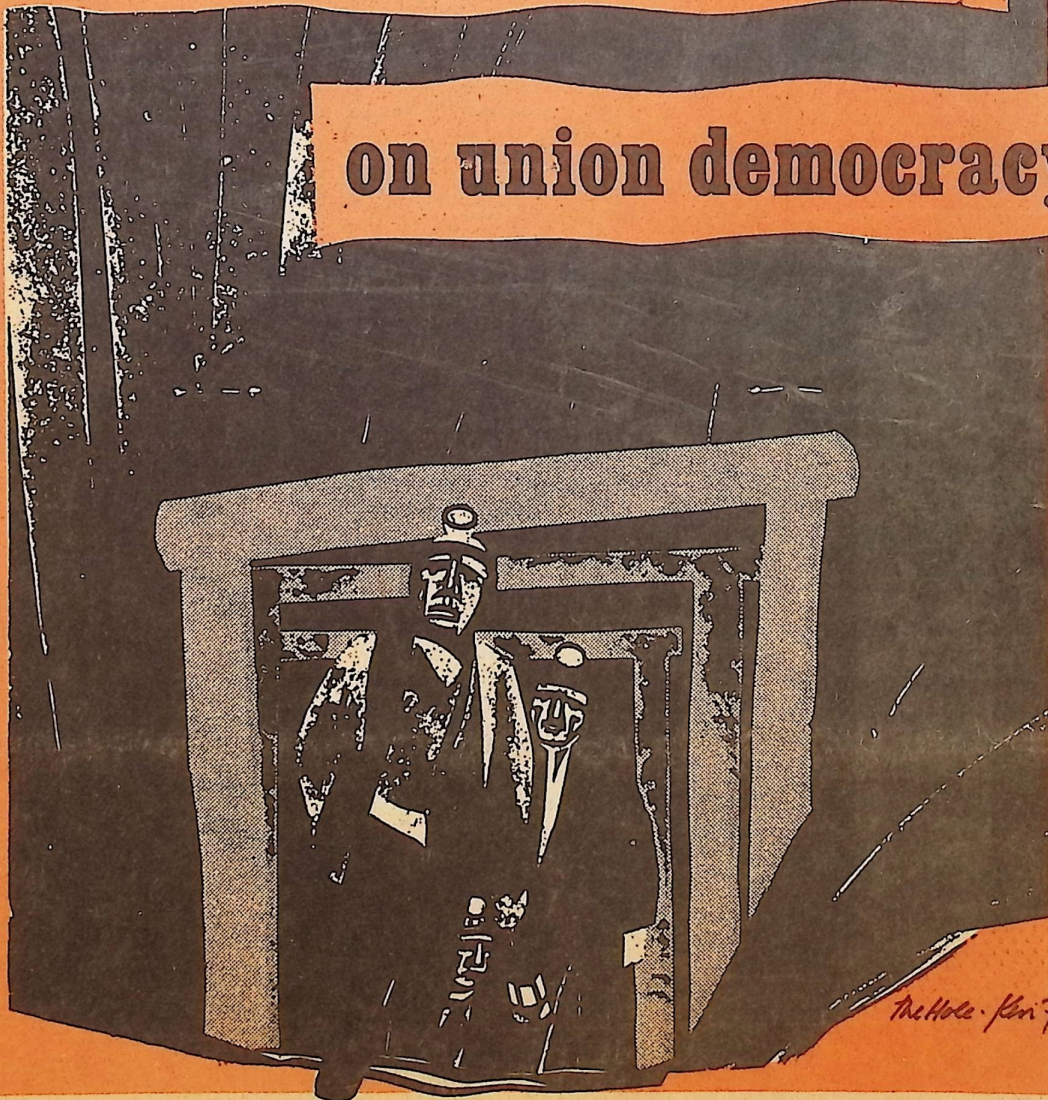
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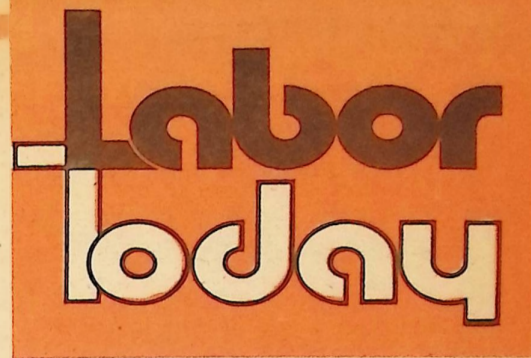


Arnold Miller, Ed Sadlowski

on union democracy



McHole - Sep 74



BARGAINING AND ORGANIZING

ARNOLD MILLER speaks his mind

by JIM WILLIAMS, CO-EDITOR
LABOR TODAY

A few months ago, I contacted Arnold Miller, President of the United Mine Workers, to see if he'd consent to an interview for LT. He agreed and from then on, it was just a matter of catching him and getting him to sit still long enough.

That's not an easy job.

Some union presidents are glued to their desk chairs. Arnold Miller is not. The first rank-and-file leader ever to successfully challenge an entrenched machine, Miller is not happy sitting in an office. So, he is usually on the road, out in the coal fields talking to rank-and-file miners. That's the kind of guy he is.

I finally caught up with him in June, in Los Angeles, of all places. He was passing through the United Auto Workers convention en route to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees convention. Those are the kinds of unions he feels most at home with.

I sent word up to the platform that I was down there somewhere in the press gallery and did he have time to talk? He did, and began to thread his way off the platform.

He stopped a number of times on the way. Auto workers, whose soft accents indicated their Appalachian origins, wanted to say hello; maybe talk about when they quit the mines to come up to Detroit to work in the auto plants; maybe to give him the name of an unemployed auto worker who recently bid Detroit farewell to return to Appalachia and an expanding coal industry. ("You look him up, he's a good ole boy. He'll help you organize around there.")



"Is there somewhere we can get a cup of coffee?" Arnold asked. I steered us to the press room's free urn and turned on the tape recorder....

LT: What's the attitude of the operators? What kind of posture are they coming into bargaining with?

MILLER: Well, they indicate that they want to start bargaining as soon as possible. Somebody's trying to get the

government involved in the bargaining and I stopped that. I told the government representative if we need him, that we would call him.

LT: Who was that?

MILLER: It was the Cost of Living Council with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

LT: What kind of impact is the energy crisis going to have on this year's bargaining?

MILLER: Well, I think lines are clearly drawn. They need the coal. And they're getting a damn good price for it. This means our demands are not going to be all that difficult to meet. I know what our membership would accept, ratify and work at and I don't think our demands are going to be unreasonable. They may be high by the companies' standards but they will be able to meet our demands. They won't put them out of business. They might reduce their profits from 200% to 100%, but I don't have any problems with that. Might even do them some good.

But we're not going to stay in the same bargaining trap as in the past. There's a new departure in our ratification procedure and we have people involved in the bargaining who know something about mining. This is something we didn't have in the past contracts.

LT: There's always a kind of trade-off thing in bargaining where the company's always willing to throw a little more money in the pot in order to get a little

Arnold Miller,
UMWA President



more control over strikes, safety: what can be done about that?

MILLER: I don't see anything foreseeable that they could do to speed up production. They have some production problems, which stem primarily from lack of training programs and inexperience where we now have a lot of young fellows in the mines. These are problems that ought to be dealt with. We're going to point the way in contract negotiations.

But I'm not inclined to bargain in a position where a trade-off...I know bargaining is such where you offer something and then you trade off, but there will be some areas where we'll be adamant and we will not trade off.

If they want a contract of longer than one year's duration, then there will be an escalator clause and there's a number

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PEOPLE BEFORE PROFITS

Coal bargaining issues

by LABOR TODAY STAFF

On November 12, a collective bargaining agreement covering some 200,000 coal miners will expire. One side of the bargaining table sits the profit-bloated Bituminous Coal Operators Association. On the other, sits a revitalized, rank-and-file controlled United Mine Workers of America.

Right now, most observers expect that sparks will fly.

In August, UMWA members took to the streets and hollows in a national "memorial strike" made possible by a provision in the 1971 contract which provides up to 10 days as memorial periods in which no coal can be produced.

The purpose of the strike was to protest:

Unsafe conditions in the mines and failure of government to act.

Strike-breaking activities of the Duke

Power Co.'s mines in Harlan County, Kentucky.

Importation of racist, slave-labor coal from South Africa.

In calling the stoppage, UMWA President Arnold Miller said, "At a time when coal miners are being asked to double or even triple coal production, it is important to pause and remember the price that miners have paid throughout the century to insure the nation an adequate supply of coal. We do not intend to pay that price again."

An average of one miner is killed every two days in the mines, while injuries run into the hundreds.

Miller noted that 63 miners were killed in mine accidents in the first six months of this year in comparison with 56 mine fatalities during the same period last year. Noting that 100,000 miners have been

(continued on page 4)

Arnold Miller (cont. from p. 1)

of ways you can have an escalator clause. They're going to be opposed to that, especially of some of the ideas I have on the escalator clause itself. But the kind of escalator clause I'm referring to is going to be based on profits.

LT: Nobody wants to strike and nobody can predict one way or the other if there's going to be one. If there is, what do you think the attitude of the present administration in Washington is going to be to the strike?

MILLER: I don't think there's going to be any real tolerance here for government interference. I think it's fair to say that the tactics they used in the past were not effective and I hope that we won't get into that kind of a position. If we do, I'm not going to be alarmed about it. I think it's been clearly understood by everyone in this country in the past. If we don't have a contract, there won't be any coal mining.

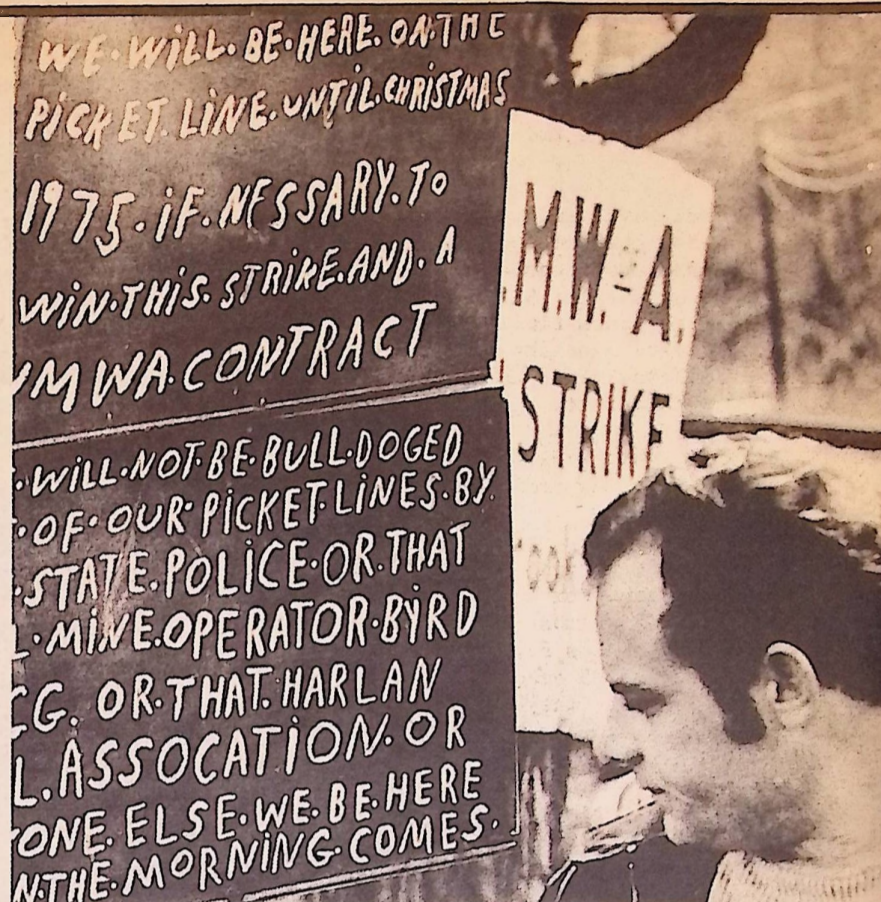
LT: If there is a strike, what can the rest of the labor movement do to support the mine workers?

MILLER: It depends on the length of it. We may at some point need some help from the other labor movements in the way of finance, or we may need some help in areas where there are a number of non-union operations running. I'm sure that they would try to expand those to meet production demands. I think it's fair to say that that will not work. The industry must have production tripled by 1980. I don't see any real effort on the part of the government officials or the operators now to try to meet that demand. There are a few mines being opened up, but that's always been normal. They're always opening up a few mines because some are being worked out. I don't see enough interest in that direction to indicate that they're going to solve the problem of increased coal production. If they're not doing it now, they're going to have to do it.

LT: If the government gets mixed up in the strike with injunctions and everything, are you going to be asking the rest of the labor movement for political support?

MILLER: If labor will get together we could solve the problems. I think that's one thing we need to do. Get together and support one another. I don't see any resolution to the political problems until '76. I think we're stuck with the current administration we've got. We'll still have an administration dominated by corporate interests and until this changes, we can't really expect much of our government.

A long struggle:
one down,
an industry to go



If there's an effort on the part of the government to use force, I would say probably that would be met with force. It's never been proven that you can force miners to mine coal. And miners will be very quick to tell you that if you're going to bring down an army to mine coal, they'll say, let the army mine it.

LT: The government tried to do that in Britain, didn't they? Now I understand that you were over there for a while and Joe Gormley of NUM was over here for a while. Was that a fruitful exchange?

MILLER: It was a very fruitful exchange. I didn't spend as much time in England as I wanted to, but I plan on getting back. We established an exchange program. They're doing some things in mining over there that I think would be useful over here and I think we had a very good exchange of ideas that would be useful to them over there.

LT: I understand that a couple of members of the executive board are over in the Soviet Union right now?

MILLER: There's been a lot there, and I've had two in Europe re-establishing our ties with the labor movement. This is a change that I think is necessary. We were isolated for a long period of time in the labor movement in general. And we're now re-establishing our ties with all the labor in the world. My understanding now is that they had a pretty good trip. They learned quite a bit.

LT: What about this South African coal situation?

MILLER: The situation down there in South Africa as far as mining unions is that they're practically nonexistent. The government there won't bargain with them. That has the effect of no union at all. We think that if all international labor organizations would get together, we can effectively bring it under control.

LT: How do you feel now, after about 18 or so months in the "hot seat?"

MILLER: I feel pretty good. I think it's most gratifying to be in a position where you can do something about it--the problems we've known about for a long time, as opposed to being in a position where

you want to raise the issues and there wasn't really any position of any real influence to bring about change. We're getting something done every day. That is probably what motivates me to keep going. I think that I'll probably have to run again for another five-year term.

I don't think we'll have reached all our goals. They're not going sufficiently so I can step aside after one term. I was hoping I would get it done in five years, but the problems we've encountered are greater than we anticipated.

LT: There was a big legacy of neglect left over, wasn't there?

MILLER: Yes, there was. If I was to serve one term and not have developed safeguards in our union structure so that our union would not be taken down the same road of degradation that it was in the past, then I'd be derelict in my duty and my obligation to the membership if I didn't run again. That's the position I'm in right now. I can't visualize getting the problems under control in another 3½ years.

LT: How's unity down at the grassroots? Are people getting together pretty well now?

MILLER: I'd say about 90%. I want to improve on that, but 90%--I can accept that. One thing we don't want to do: one thing I have no ambition to do is start stifling dissenting opinions. If they're constructive then they'll be useful to the union. And if they're not constructive, then they don't carry much weight.

LT: What about new organizing?

MILLER: I think it's going along very well. We had to restructure the organizational department and train some new personnel. We're in the process of hiring some more to go along and train them.

We're taking in membership as we go along. We've got a logjam in East Kentucky we hope to break before too long. We think that once we break that logjam down, by the end of the first term we will have a substantial portion of those non-union mines under our jurisdiction.

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Arnold Miller (cont. from p. 2)

LT: You see light at the end of the tunnel at Brookside?

MILLER: We're not gonna quit. We're not gonna get out. The cost of coal is going up, and since that power company, that utility company buys about 95% of the coal they burn, they're gonna finally realize that it's cheaper to mine the coal in our jurisdiction than it is to go out and buy it in the open market.

LT: What kind of support have the Brookside miners been getting from the rest of the labor movement?

MILLER: They've been getting very good support. Good support from the memberships. The membership almost on a day-to-day basis raises finances for them and they're sending words of encouragement. They're going down when they have an opportunity to go.

LT: What kind of role is labor going to be playing in the elections? Are they going to be playing a more independent role in '76 than they have in the past?

MILLER: I think the people in the labor movement are going to be closer together in '76 than they have been in quite a while. I saw a new trend in the primaries in my own home state which I believe is indicative of what has been transpiring in the last three or four years of the Nixon administration. We have a lot of machine politics in my own state which I'm very familiar with. And in the recent primary, the machines were not able to nominate or elect their candidates. Now this is a trend, I think, in the right direction. To openly elect public servants who are strong and responsive to the people.

LT: Do you see more trade union people running and getting active, as opposed to the old party functionary types, the old types?

MILLER: Well, I think definitely that the members of the labor movement are becoming more concerned, more active in the political structure and more knowledgeable of the political structure. I think we've been burned by what has happened from 1972 up to date, and there's two schools of thought currently on the Watergate atmosphere in Washington. There are those who think that this will create more apathy among the general public. I don't feel that way. I think that what has happened is that more people will be more concerned, more active. I think this is what candidates are gonna have to recognize. They're gonna have to go down to the people. This is one thing that I think is sorely missing now in the political process, the political structure of this country. We were able to put candidates in the recent primary in that manner. In the grassroots, old-fashioned campaigning. And we were effective and got the votes.

LT: In every country in the world, you'll find a lot of trade unionists in government. Now you look at the congress of the U.S. and you could probably count them on one hand. Is that something that needs to be changed?

MILLER: It needs to be changed and I think there is a definite way to do it. I don't think that labor unions can go out and say this is the candidate we're gonna support, this is the candidate we're gonna vote for, without first creating some awareness and getting records out and this is what's been wrong. This is what we're stressing in our political action committee.

LT: There's been some talk about nationalization of energy. Since oil companies own the coal companies, that means coal too. Do you have any feeling on whether that's a good notion or not?

MILLER: Occasionally I talked to some of the operators, coal operators who are always poor-mouthing, and I say maybe we ought to nationalize them. And that shuts them up. Because they know that they're making profits and yet they try to come out and tell the public that they're not making profits.

LT: How can we get them to act right, short of nationalizing?

MILLER: We're collecting research on it now. We're going to be able to tell the general public how much profit they're making and I think this is something that needs to be done. Any effort on this question in the past has been fragmented and not widely accepted. It doesn't do those in a responsible position in our government or in the labor movement much good to know what the problems are if we can't get it across to our membership.

LT: So you think some kind of increased public control over energy is the way to be going?

MILLER: I think there ought to be a commission set up that is really representative to have the authority to direct the



YOU CAN TOO!

How the miners did it

by JOE NORRICK
VETERAN MINER AND STEELWORKER

Art Shields' 20-page pamphlet, The Miners Did It, ought to be widely distributed, now. What the miners did in wresting back their union from the "rottenest company stooges in the country," other unions can do. And not only the unions, but the people everywhere! They can have a say about what happens to them, and in the days ahead--after Nixon--they are going to have to do what the miners did. That was to organize, and to bring their organized strength to force radical change.

The value of the pamphlet is that the author tells step by step how the miners did it.

They came out of the mines to take over the state legislature in West Virginia and to stay as long as needed--three weeks, as it turned out--to force passage of the "Black Lung" law.

They went on from there to challenge the long-entrenched, corrupt and criminal leadership of the United Mine Workers of America. To do that, they brought a powerful ally to their cause: "Jock"

fuel energy program. That's what I think is the ultimate answer, instead of nationalization. And I think that this can be done. I don't think this can be done with the current administration.

LT: There's been a tendency now to discuss ways of doing away with the right to strike...How do you think miners feel about that?

MILLER: Well, we are not ready to even consider it, any no-strike provisions in our contract, until the operators show a willingness and desire to sit down and deal with some of the other problems we have, that put us in a position where we have to strike. It's not foreseeable right now. We're going to change our arbitration procedure in this current contract negotiation. A fairer way of doing it, where there'd be penalties extracted from the operators to induce them not to engage in trivial arbitrations, as a means of effecting a no-strike provision. That's what they have to do. I don't know whether they'll do it or not. I don't think they're willing to go that far. And we're not willing to go the other route.

LT: What about giving up the right to strike in bargaining?

MILLER: Well, we would not be so inclined, I think it's fair to say that I can express the views of our membership--we would not be willing to discuss the possibility of that now.

Yablonski, to run against "Tony" Boyle. Yablonski's death served not as a deterrent, which was intended by those who paid the gunman to wipe him out, but as a goad to greater struggle. The murder of Yablonski brought the miners to a realization of what they were up against in the fight to get control of their union.

Shields rightly praises The Miner's Voice for the role it played in preparing the way for the next step: organization of Miners for Democracy. That rank and file organization had strength enough, by May, 1973, to put its own slate of officers up for election against the Boyle administration. Men from the mines: Arnold Miller, for president; Mike Trbovich, for vice president; and Harry Patrick, for secretary-treasurer. Miners, all.

They won, and they have gone on from there, step by step, to bring the union back to rank and file control. Their convention last December, in Pittsburgh, was a working demonstration of what democracy should and could mean. In his 50 years of labor reporting, Shields writes, he had never seen anything like

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Coal issues (cont. from p. 1)

killed in the last century, Miller said, "It's not enough to mourn lost tragedies, the time has come to remind the industrialists and the bureaucrats that we are human beings and we have had enough."

The memorial period was marked by increasing company goon attacks on miners. In Harlan, a foreman reportedly shot a striker point-blank with a shotgun. On August 8, the home of Mickey Messer, President of the UMWA local at Brookside, was riddled with dozens of bullets. Pickets at the Highsplint mine were reportedly shot at by a machine gun from company property.

Nonetheless, UMWA hopes for a settlement at Brookside soon remain high, as pressures against the Duke Power Company increase from all sides.

A settlement at Brookside, especially one which accepts pro forma, the terms of the to-be-negotiated national agreement, would be a powerful lever in the hands of the miners. Such a settlement would probably

How miners did it

(cont. from p. 3)

it. Nor had this old miner, with his memory of many conventions.

So here is the story, for all to read.

The old-timers will remember the struggle, in the 1920's, to hold the union to its course against the class-collaborationist policies then being introduced into the unions, to deflect them from their working-class interests. Those remaining in the mines, reading the pamphlet, will say, "Yes, that's what we did," and others, coming upon it, will take courage from the miners' example when their turn comes to organize.

A word about Art Shields, for those newly come to labor's struggle. He did his first labor writing in the gold fields of Nome, Alaska, in 1918. He joined the staff of the Daily Worker (now the Daily World) in 1924. In the five decades since, he has been on hand to report upon the major labor struggles of this country.

He spent part of his childhood among the Cherokees in Indian Territory, now Oklahoma. So he must have gathered knowledge first hand of dark matters that I, as a boy in southern Indiana, learned about only from travelers. Most of the stories were about the boundless opportunities to strike it rich with the opening of the territory to white settlement. I realized later that the lands were stolen property.

I remember, though, a story of another kind. With the opening of the territory for white settlement came the need for coal. Mines were sunk and miners brought in. Union organizers soon followed, but woe to anyone caught having anything to do with them. A coal-miner cousin who had been there told about the punishment meted out. "Company guards," armed with clubs, lined up facing one another. Their victim--the union man--had to run the gauntlet, dodging their blows as best he could.

That's something to remember when we think of the strength and the courage it took to build the UMWA: or, for that matter, any of the unions that are the working man's shield today.

Available from Political Affairs Publishers, 23 W. 26th St., New York, N.Y. 10010. Ten cents; in orders of 10 or more, eight cents.

mean that Duke's mines, if they settle now, would be allowed to operate during a national strike; a powerful competitive argument.

Actions against the importation of South African coal also continued during the memorial period, as thousands of miners and their friends gathered in Birmingham to demonstrate against the Southern Coal Company. It is this company which initiated the importation of slave-mined coal.

A key problem facing the miners' negotiations is the question of strip mining. About 40,000 strip miners produce almost half of the total coal production. Most of these strip miners are unorganized. Recently, the UMWA Executive Board took a stand in favor of a strong, federal anti-stripping bill, with Miller casting the deciding vote. UMWA organizers complain that it's difficult to organize people whose jobs you're in favor of abolishing. The fact that strippers do now produce such a large quantity of coal means the UMWA's ability to totally shut off coal production is greatly lessened.

While many who attended the December, 1973 convention of the UMWA were excited by the miners' affirmation of the six hour day, serious observers feel that it will not be a serious issue in bargaining. A six hour shift would normally include about 45 minutes' travel time to the mine face, 30 minutes lunch break, some down-time--all of which means about four hours' actual production time. This means relatively doubling the work force underground, further worsening the competitive position of deep miners against the strippers.

What did the memorial stoppage accomplish?

For one thing, it further depleted coal reserves and halted the continuing stockpiling by power companies and coal companies. The supply of metallurgical coal for steel production is in very short supply--some estimate an eight day supply. Other

13-month struggle ends

VICTORY AT BROOKSIDE

by LABOR TODAY STAFF

On the night of August 24, Kentucky state police say, Brookside miner Lawrence Dean Jones was shot in the head following an argument with mine foreman Billy Carroll Bruner. Police have charged Bruner with murder.

The confrontation, similar to others during the 13-month strike by the United Mine Workers at Eastover Coal Company's Brookside Mine, was the last blow struck in the long battle between the Harlan county miners and the powerful North Carolina-based Duke Power Company, which owns Eastover's string of mines.

At first, when news of the shooting reached Duke's offices in North Carolina, they discounted the story as UMWA propaganda. Finally, a call from Kentucky State Police made it clear that they were financing the murder of working people.

On August 29, Duke Power caved in.

On August 29, everyone agreed that the union had finally come back to East Kentucky, from which it had fled in the early sixties during the latter days of John L. Lewis' corrupt rule and the ascendance of his stooge Tony Boyle.

"The Brookside strike and the contract signed today are a monument to the raw courage of the miners' families," UMWA



utilities claim supplies ranging from two to four weeks.

FRATERNAL SUPPORT ESSENTIAL

A national coal strike could produce severe governmental reaction against the miners. The coal operators (that is, the oil and steel interests) will seek federal intervention.

Inevitably, a miners' strike will become a political strike of some consequence. Just as the oil shortage last winter provoked considerable anti-Arab feelings, the oil companies' propaganda machines will seek to turn public sympathy against the miners.

The support of the whole labor movement then gains considerable importance for the furtherance of the miners' cause. Because the UMWA, with its new rank and file leadership, marks the best in the present labor movement, it is especially important for rank and filers to defend the miners as part of their efforts to reform their own unions.

President Arnold Miller told a packed Washington press conference. "The meaning of this strike goes beyond a single contract and a single coal mine. This contract is a message to every non-union coal operator in the land that coal mining families have had their fill of death-trap mines, starvation wages and meager benefits."

The settlement, a major win, provides that Eastover's miners will be covered immediately by the provisions of the 1971 Bituminous Agreement, retroactive to November 12, 1973 and will automatically be covered by whatever contract is reached in the 1974 national coal negotiations.

In return, the UMWA agreed that it wouldn't strike Eastover in the event of a national coal strike on November 12.

The pact also provides for the complete re-hiring of all UMWA supporters fired during the strike at Brookside and the men who honored the UMWA line at the Highsplint mine.

The UMWA's victory has strong implications for east Kentucky's unorganized mines. It signals the UMWA's determination to wage fierce and costly struggles against the operators, unlike the Lewis-Boyle leadership.

Once again: the miners did it!

DISTRICT 31's NEW ELECTION

Ed Sadlowski vs. the machine

by JIM WILLIAMS
CO-EDITOR, LABOR TODAY

District 31, containing 130,000 organized steel workers, is the largest district in the United Steel Workers of America, AFL-CIO. For over 35 years, it has remained under the heavy-handed grip of Joseph Germano and his hand-picked successor, Samuel Evett.

Last year, a rash young staffer challenged this set-up.

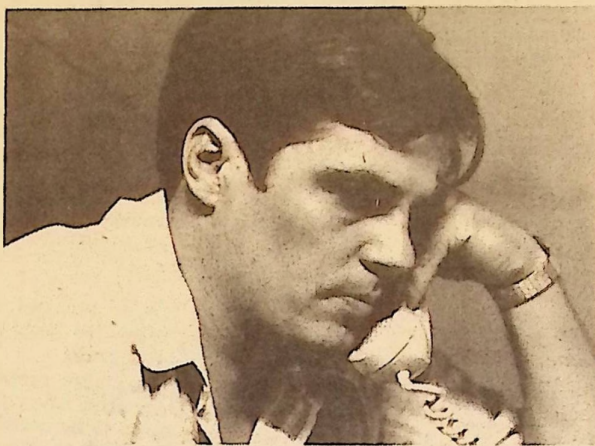
Ed Sadlowski, 34, came up through the ranks, holding virtually every office in USWA Local 65 during the past 12 years. Eventually, the "machine" gave him a staff job, figuring to shut him up or co-opt him into the Abel machine.

They figured wrong. Sadlowski challenged Evett head-on in an election February, 1973. When the dust settled, Evett had won. Or, at least, Evett thought so.

Sadlowski cried "foul" and cited numerous instances of funny-stuff at the ballot boxes.

A searching Department of Labor investigation turned up widespread evidence of voting corruption on the part of Evett's machine.

Now, a court has ordered a new election to be held no later than November 19, 1974.



So, Eddie Sadlowski is running again, and running hard.

What makes Eddie run?

Sadlowski is a hard guy to figure. A Polish-American from South Chicago, he ran a reform slate for control of his local that included Blacks and Latinos. Sadlowski, who is uneasy about being tagged an idealist, shrugged it off. He counted the votes. About forty percent of the workers in his local were Black or Latino. Still, it's not the kind of thing a nice Polish boy from ethnically-polarized South Chicago does.

Sadlowski terms social reformers as "romanticists." Yet, he talks like a sociologist.

His campaign is straight out of the Kennedy-Larry O'Brien book. A lot of hand-shaking. A lot of good populist rhetoric that suggests rather than outlines program.

Some steel workers want more than rhetoric. Ravaged by inflation, speedup and the effects of racism, they pressure Sadlowski for more nitty-gritty.

Sadlowski is beginning to respond by speaking more directly to the issues.

Yet, whether Sadlowski takes the "correct" position on every issue or not, one thing seems abundantly clear: his election will mark a slap in the fact to the kind of machine-politics that has dominated the Steel Workers since its inception.

Rank and filers will be able to breathe easier under Sadlowski, knowing they'll get a hearing and a fair shake.

For a lot of steel workers, that will be enough.

#####

(The following interview with Ed Sadlowski was conducted in mid-August, just after Nixon's fall and before the courts announced the possibility of an election before November 19.)



THE INTERVIEW

LT: How about Nixon?

SADLOWSKI: Yeah, how about Nixon? I think 30 years finally caught up with him. The real shame of the matter is, as far as Nixon is concerned, that Nixon ever existed to begin with.

The real thing is that hopefully, it gives some class consciousness in America that a guy can be had when he does something wrong. I don't know if the American public sees it in that light. A lot of lessons can be learned with the situation that developed around Nixon.

LT: A lot of people are calling for a moratorium period with Ford.

SADLOWSKI: The fact of the matter is, that Ford's going to have to show me-- Ford, with 25 years in the Congress under his belt, left a hell of a lot to be desired. I don't think Jerry Ford is the answer to what ails America today. It's not a question of his supposed lack of mental capacity, as they're projecting in the streets right now. I just think Jerry Ford's a bad-news guy for the work-

ing class in this country. He's projected that right down the line. He's been very consistent.

If you measure him using COPE as a yardstick, this guy emerges as one of the bad congressmen in the last quarter-century. Every social piece of legislation that's come down the pike off that hill, Ford was trying to put the skids to it.

LT: He's talking about bringing back wage-price controls.

SADLOWSKI: That plays a big factor in the dilemma that the working class is in today. Not only the whole inflationary spiral, but that damn wage-price freeze was really one to get the working class in the neck. My point is, though, that the wage-price control is not a solution of the problems that we're in right now. It just doesn't work any longer.

"JERRY FORD's a bad-news guy for the WORKING CLASS"

LT: What do you have to say about the choice of Rockefeller as Vice President?

SADLOWSKI: Well, I don't have great expectations for Rockefeller or Gerald Ford. Rockefeller's background leaves a lot to be desired. His whole social outlook leaves a lot to be desired. I don't put too much stock in him as a choice.

LT: You're not holding your breath?

SADLOWSKI: (Laughs.) Let me throw that back to you. Both of us would be laying side by side if we held our breaths waiting for these two guys. I don't see anyone within the ranks of the existing political structure that's going to address themselves to the problems that are confronting the country.

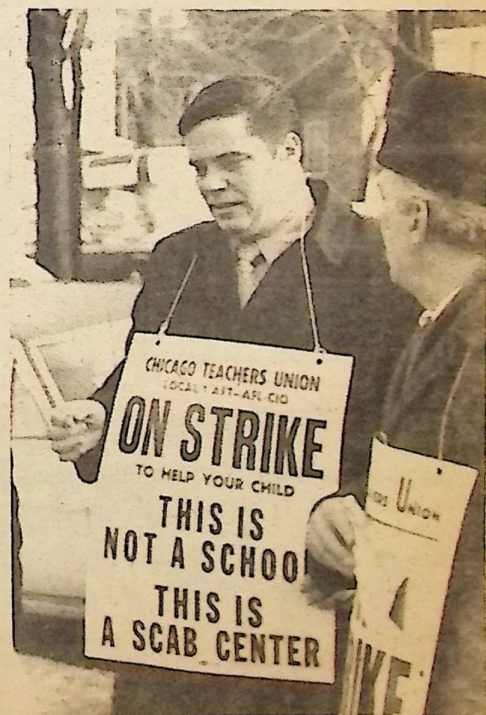
LT: How do you think the recent steel contract fits into the picture in terms of dealing with economic situations?

SADLOWSKI: In basic steel, you find that that doesn't meet the needs of a steel worker as a consumer. It doesn't meet the needs at all, especially with the cost of the loaf of bread or the gallon of milk.

A guy in basic steel today, for example, that's making 9, 10, 11 thousand dollars a year, he's not making it. He's just not making it, economically speaking. When you see a guy that now has to worry about buying a pack of smokes, for Christ's sake, he's in bad shape.

(continued on page 6)

Sadlowski joins striking teachers



Steel massacre vet girds for new fight

By Tom Fitzpatrick

At first old George Patterson said he didn't know if he ought to get up and talk. But that was more than an hour before the members of Local 65 of the United Steelworkers filled the sprawling hall at 9350 South Chicago Av.

Then Studs Terkel, who was master of ceremonies, told everyone Patterson was in the hall and the 66-year-old Scotsman moved toward the stage to take the microphone.

Applause rolled over the hall. Patterson has to be a legend among the steelworkers of Local 65. Two times, Patterson served as president of the local. On top of that, Patterson is still remembered as the picket captain at the Memorial Day massacre in 1937.

Patterson is a small and wiry little man. He still talks with a faint Scottish accent. He had seemed nervous an hour earlier when Studs first asked him to speak. Now, standing at the speaker's lectern, his leadership qualities became apparent.

"I was involved in organizing this union when things were a little bit rough," Patterson said. "In fact, I was fired at the age of 28 for putting the union into the South Works and from that time on I worked as a union organizer."

THE CROWD OF HEFTY men gathered around the bar in the rear corner suddenly became quiet as they realized it was Patterson at the microphone.

"The trouble at Republic Steel in 1937 started after we had tried to get a contract and their president, Tom Girdler, said he'd rather dig potatoes than ever sign a contract with

Fitz

any labor organization.

"We already had a contract with U.S. Steel but we went over to Republic to help out. Well, on Wednesday night I was arrested when the police broke up our picket lines.

"On Thursday we went back to picket again. Same thing Friday, we went back and some of us had our heads split open by the police.

"So that's how it came that we marched on the plant on Memorial Day to picket. There were 10 of us killed that day and 88 wounded in order to establish the simple act of recognition for the United Steelworkers union."

Patterson hesitated.

"Mario Manardo, who's in the hall right now, was there that day. So was this man here, Studs Terkel. I haven't seen him since that day but I still remember him.

"Studs was there with the Chicago Repertoire group and they were there slinging as we were marching. They had a tremendous part to play."

It was quiet in the big hall.

PATTERSON LOOKED OVER to his left where Ed Sadlowski was standing with his father, Ed Sr.

Patterson and the rest were on hand to show their support for the younger Sadlowski,

also a former president of Local 65.

Sadlowski, 35, was narrowly defeated last February when he ran for regional director of the United Steelworkers.

The Labor Department has since found evidence of vote fraud and filed suit in U.S. District Court in Pittsburgh to set aside the election and hold a new one.

"I like to think I played a role in this union," Patterson said. "Now we have another young man. He's a first rate man and if we have to march again to put him in office, we'll do it."

Sadlowski lowered his head as applause filled the hall again. The speeches went that way for a couple of hours.

There were many other speakers. But Joseph Rauh, the attorney who represented the late Jock Yablonski of the United Mine Workers, was special. Rauh has now joined Leon Despres, the Chicago alderman, as legal counsel for Sadlowski.

"I've had the privilege of serving with Walter Reuther and A. Philip Randolph," Rauh said.

"Reuther used to pay cash to have his pants pressed in hotels because he didn't want his union members to pay for it. Randolph never took one dime more than his workers got.

"I'm representing Sadlowski because I think he's going to be a union leader of the same caliber."

RAUH LOOKED OUT over the crowd and the men at the bar in the rear stopped talking again.

"I remember the day back in May of 1939 that Jock Yablonski walked into my office and told me he wanted to clean up the United Mine Workers even though they might kill him for it.

"I remember the time they tried to kill him in a hotel room in Springfield, Ill., and I went to then Sec. of Labor George Shultz and begged for an investigation.

"Shultz did nothing. So Yablonski, his wife and his daughter were murdered in their beds. They paid the price for bucking the leadership."

Rauh took a quick look over at Sadlowski, who was still standing in the wings.

"I remember the cold day they buried Jock Yablonski on a hill. We all went back to the church. We sat in a little room together. We were all scared.

"Someone asked me what the chances were if we went on with the fight. I told them. When I finished they stood up and said they were going on with it. Then we all cheered.

"It took us three years from that day to win a reform election. We can do the same thing here. But don't think it will be easy. It takes time. It won't come tomorrow."

The meeting went on that way. Finally, it was time for Sadlowski to take the microphone. He is a big, husky man who strides with confidence. He doesn't look like he knows much about fear.

Everyone in the hall stood up to cheer. Sadlowski grinned at them. Patterson was on his feet, too. So was Sadlowski's father, Edward Sr. He was cheering too. And there were tears of pride streaming down the cheeks of both men.

Sadlowski interview (continued from p. 5)

In order to consider a contract equitable--this is my opinion on the thing, and it makes sense to me--it has to equal or go above what that dollar is capable of buying, and it has to be then drawn into consideration of what that industry is capable of producing and the profit they're making on what they're producing.

Now this industry's capabilities, in basic steel, are--God only knows. They don't tell the American public. They produce 110, 115, 120 million ingot tons of steel. They've quit publishing figures of what they're capable of doing at full capacity. They're producing steel today cheaper, per labor cost, than they ever produced in the history of this industry, per unit time. They're in very good shape financially. I think that a bigger bite could have been taken out of their ass. We find ourselves in a very, very bad position bargaining-wise with this industry as a union, though.

This industry, by virtue of putting a tremendous amount of new technology into it in the decade of the sixties--now that the decade of the seventies is here, will start paying off on it. You can see it. You can see it happening right now.

LT: So they can't say they're not competitive.

There was no question of a JAPANESE STEELWORKER making up steel for LESS than an AMERICAN STEELWORKER. That was ---- from the word GO.

SADLOWSKI: No, there wasn't even a question of that. I don't think that was the question to begin with. The world market and the world money scheme was what primarily caused the influx of foreign steel into this country. You don't hear the bugaboo any more about "Where's Joe," and you don't hear the bugaboo any more about "buy American steel," or something like that.

They're not on that kick any more. By virtue of the devaluation in March of last year and the money market in the world being what it is, changing almost over night, they find themselves in a very lucrative and competitive condition with steel throughout the world. And it always was there. The hidden factor was always there to begin with. There was no question of a Japanese steel worker making up steel, that unit ton, for less than the American steel worker. That was bullshit from the word go.

This industry is becoming tremendously advanced technologically. It's not an industry that you can readily automate, in the pure sense of the word "automation." It's an industry that can have these technological changes and not necessarily change the whole concept of the steel-making process. That's exactly what's happening today in this industry. Like I say, they're in very good financial shape. You look at everything, you look at the invested dollar, you look at the return on sales, and it's a very healthy industry.

Now the approach that we've taken on the experimental agreement thing, is one that is completely foreign to me. I don't think that that was the proper approach at all. Basically, it takes out of your hands completely and totally, any form of exercising economic muscle as a working man.



There's no doubt in my mind that something has to be explored in the respect of putting it back on that equal level bargaining-wise, and my concept of what has been done is not the solution to the problem.

I think that as we go down the road with this type of concept in bargaining with the industry, that more and more people will become disenchanting with it. There were a lot of concessions made that benefited the industry immensely, a tremendous advantage to them. They got off very cheaply. Abel wanted to buy industrial peace. If they wanted to buy industrial peace, that's what they got, at a very cheap price.

LT: There's an obvious temptation to compare your campaign with Arnold Miller's campaign in the Mineworkers. Do you see a parallel there?

SADLOWSKI: Yes, I would say so. I'm not trying to flatter myself in that respect. Parallels in the respect of the mechanical structure that existed in the Mine-

(continued on p. 7)

Sadlowski interview (continued from page 6)

workers union in the election processes. And the election process as it exists in the Steelworkers union is almost identical. The constitution of the Steelworkers union is basically patterned after the Mineworkers' constitution. If you picked up both documents prior to the recent changes in the Mineworkers' constitution, you'd almost think that you were reading one and the same.

Those real crummy clauses that are in that constitution didn't just drop out of the sky. There were a lot of son-of-a-bitches sitting in a back room somewhere figuring out how to shaft people. And that's basically what happened in the election processes, both in the Mineworkers and in the Steelworkers. You can run an honest, decent election, if you intend to run an honest, decent election. And if you don't have any intentions of running an honest, decent election, then that constitution will provide you with a lot of areas where you can get around an honest election.

LT: We interviewed Arnold Miller just a month or so ago. He said that he thought one of the major victories they won was the right to vote on contracts.

SADLOWSKI: Yeah, reading the Mineworkers Journal, I noticed that they've done a total revamping of the constitution. But more than just a total revamping of the written word, there was a--you could see almost a revamping of philosophy in some respects, of the philosophies of what that union was about. And what it should



have been about for the last 40 years, and what they think it should be about.

You could see the ideas of a lot of guys that were very concerned being projected there in the written word.

And some of the areas that I was very glad to see that they changed were ones of ratification of labor agreements, proper safeguards for guys that participate in election processes.

Probably what happened with Miller at the convention and the whole Mineworker thing in general, was these guys didn't have to

stay awake at night, because they had gone down that road, and they knew how they got shafted, and it was an easy thing for them to do, to put the proper things in. I take my hat off to them for doing that. It was long overdue.

The ratification question in the Steelworkers union is very goofy in this respect, administratively. There's no provision in the constitution at all about ratification, or not ratifying. There's no language at all in there about who determines, or wage policies, or who makes policies, or things along that line as far as contracts are concerned. Nothing. And it's intended to be that way. I would suspect, a ballpark guess, but pretty close, that probably 65-70% of the membership in our union do ratify their agreements.

It's a question that we as a union have to address ourselves to. It's a question that's easy to resolve, and it's a question that guys that work for livings inside steel mills or can factories or aluminum companies should have the right to determine their own destinies, or at least the conditions in which they want to work under.

And I kind of think that the leadership in the union historically has been very reluctant to let them because they're afraid of the guys biting them in the ass. And I find no threat with that. If you don't produce, you should get bit in the ass.

LT: What about the EEOC concent decree? Do you have any feelings about the agreement or where you see the industry heading?

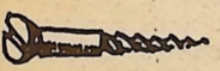
(continued on p. 8)

SWOC veteran says: "ABEL KNOWS BETTER."

by GEORGE PATTERSON
USWA L. 65, ret.

(EDITORS' NOTE: George Patterson was head of the AFL Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin and Steel Workers at US Steel's South Works in Chicago. He became a leader of the CIO-Steel Workers Organizing Committee and was a leader of the efforts to organize Republic Steel during the Memorial Day Massacre period. Now retired, he reflected on the future of the United Steel Workers Union for LABOR TODAY.)

It was from the bottom up, not from the top down, that our union was formed. This business of beginning from the top down getting a contract is against all the rules and these men that are the leaders of our union today know better. Even this man Abel knows better. I can only come to one conclusion, that somebody has converted their minds.



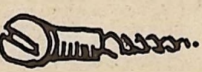
I think that the best thing that could happen is for a committee of workers with the visible backing of a large segment of the membership of the USWA should go to Pittsburgh and compel a meeting with the IEB and put them on the spot. Let Abel, Burke and the rest of them explain how the union has become a defender of the companies and the government.

Now, when we get to a convention we know that all the committees have been appointed in advance. We know that 1/3 of the delegates are staff members. Throughout the history of the SWOC and the USWA there have been workers who took the floor to advance militant positions, but they have always been shouted down

or voted down by the International forces in the room.

When it gets down to negotiating contracts you have to have a good, sound grievance committee. You've got to have a good bargaining committee. You've got to have workers who can talk; and talk louder and sounder than the organizers. I've been an organizer for 35 years but I never enjoyed a meeting if I had to do all the talking. The workers know what they want better than I do and I've always followed that policy. The workers have to talk loud and clear and have got to make the staff man know they mean business.

We watched Phil Murray and Dave McDonald buy people. The International can do many things with committee people. They pay for their hotels. They give them big expense accounts. Kind of reminds me of when Ramsey McDonald was Labor Prime Minister of England. He was a real militant as long as he was a coal miner and worked for his union. But, when he became Prime Minister he was wined, dined and teaed by the same bosses he used to fight...the British certainly know how to create a company union.



You sometimes wonder how much the White House has to do with what's going on inside the union. We know that McDonald went to the White House. We know that Abel has been to the White House and heaven knows he has sat down with the top officials of the Steel industry. When we begin to get contracts that take away our right to strike for a period of years to aid the "economic situation" in the

from LT, April 1973

LIKE THEY SAY

It takes a crook....

In 1953, David McDonald succeeded Philip Murray as president of the USWA. He was defeated in 1965, by I.W. Abel, who was pledged to "give the union back to the membership."

In his autobiography, UNION MAN, McDonald spills the beans about how he stole the District 31 directorship for Joe Germano back in 1942.

158 UNION MAN

chosen by acclamation. Within a few minutes all the results were in but one—from our largest district, District 31 in Chicago. They were meeting backstage, out of my view, and I dispatched one of my assistants, Howard Hague, to find out the cause of the delay.

He came hurrying back to tell us that our candidate, Joseph Germano, was in trouble. He was being challenged by a man who had consistently followed a Marxist line and whom we believed to be a Communist. The challenger had lost an eye in the Memorial Day Massacre and was looked on as a hero by a good many union members.

I said to Murray, "I don't want that man on our board. Can I do something about it?"

He said, "Go ahead."

I questioned Hague, found that one of Germano's friends was presiding and trying to delay a vote as long as possible while Germano henchmen beat the auditorium for votes. I told Hague to round up the members of our auditing staff who weren't known outside the general office and could circulate unnoticed among the Chicago delegates. Then I joined the Chicago group to offer chairman John Doherty a hand. He didn't need it. He was pretending to be confused about the vote tally and doing a magnificent job of stalling. I watched Hague's recruits drift into the room and counted them. When we had enough to swing the election, I nodded to Doherty, he dropped his act and called for a vote.

Germano won by a whisper, and in later years became a power-

U.S., you have to wonder if he's working for the industry and government instead of the workers.

Sadlowski interview (from p.7)

SADLOWSKI: Yeah, well I have feelings about the decree.

On the decree as a whole, the decree in my opinion falls very short in some areas. In the area of creating a broader base on seniority. Take U.S. Steel's South Works, for example, we have approximately 65 seniority sequences in that given mill, affecting about 9,000 guys. It's absolutely and totally too many units for a guy to bid into, and then you're stuck and you can only follow a certain sequence.

In the area of inter-plant transfers, the decree didn't go far enough. Some organizations and some groups, as well as steelworker groups that are denouncing the decree or saying the decree didn't provide enough monetary restitution, things along that line--that's been the basic center of argument. NOW has projected that argument, the legal arm of the NAACP has projected that argument, there are some steelworker groups that have projected that argument.

That, I don't really think, is the real crux of the matter. I don't think there was enough money provided. Fine. What is enough money? Personally, I hope NOW wins their argument. I hope the NAACP legal arm wins their argument.

"The RATIFICATION QUESTION is very GOOFY - and its intended to be that way"

The real problem there, though, is one that not many of these organizations, or any of them, are really talking about, really getting to the meat of. And that's the whole question of equitable and proper concepts within promotions in that industry. Transferable rights for people. And the things that I've seen published by the various groups and organizations really don't touch on the question. They're really spilling a lot of rhetoric on emotional issues.

LT: What about the concern about two-year rate retention--people thought that wasn't long enough?

SADLOWSKI: Well, I think six months could possibly be long enough. Under the conditions that I'm talking about, of where you would have one type of unit--if you would take this broad base that exists basically in basic steel and develop it into one type of unit, you wouldn't need rate retention.

You see, the rate retention provision was stuck in there--and there's a theory on my part, and you don't have to blow your

mind thinking about that--is that a lot of son-of-a-guns thought, well, look, we have no intention of correcting sequences, promotional opportunities, so we're going to have to put rate retention in to nullify some of the bitching that possibly would exist, or something. If you were really looking to do a job, you wouldn't need rate retention, is what I'm saying.

If we can't make any headway in eliminating these 60-some odd promotional sequences, then two years of rate retention, I agree with you, would not be long enough.

It even goes beyond that, I mean the inequities of that decree. We have now implemented in that plant, enforced upon the implementation committee by the government, by the industry and by the union, what is called an Audit and Review Committee, a three-step bidding process, where we were looking, in this plant particularly, for a two-stop process. Two-step meant you would bid within your unit. If a job was posted within that unit and no one in that unit wanted it, then you go on a plant-wide basis. They said no on our concept. They said that you first have to exhaust the unit, then you have to exhaust the department, then you go on a plant-wide basis. Well, you and I'll be old men before we see too much of that happening.

The only time that you'll see jobs in units that won't be bid upon by people in those units, are the lousy-ass jobs. So they really didn't correct the situation at all. It's a bad situation; they did very little if anything to correct it. And maybe in some respects, even made the damn thing worse than what it was before.

LT: What will you do as District Director and what kind of district do you see it becoming?

SADLOWSKI: The day after the election is going to be the hard thing. Going to have to start trying to break down attitudes that have developed for a long, long time, especially attitudes of people that are in leadership capacities, where they don't think they're obligated to provide services to people. I think the way you do that is one of, you sit down and you discuss and you try to see and recognize what the problems are as they really are.

There's no set answer to any of the questions you've asked. It's not like a question of you can draw something up and I know I've got to do this, and I know I've got to do that. That's not the case at all. You've got to make people that work for this organization conscious of the fact that they're working for working people. You've got to make the workers

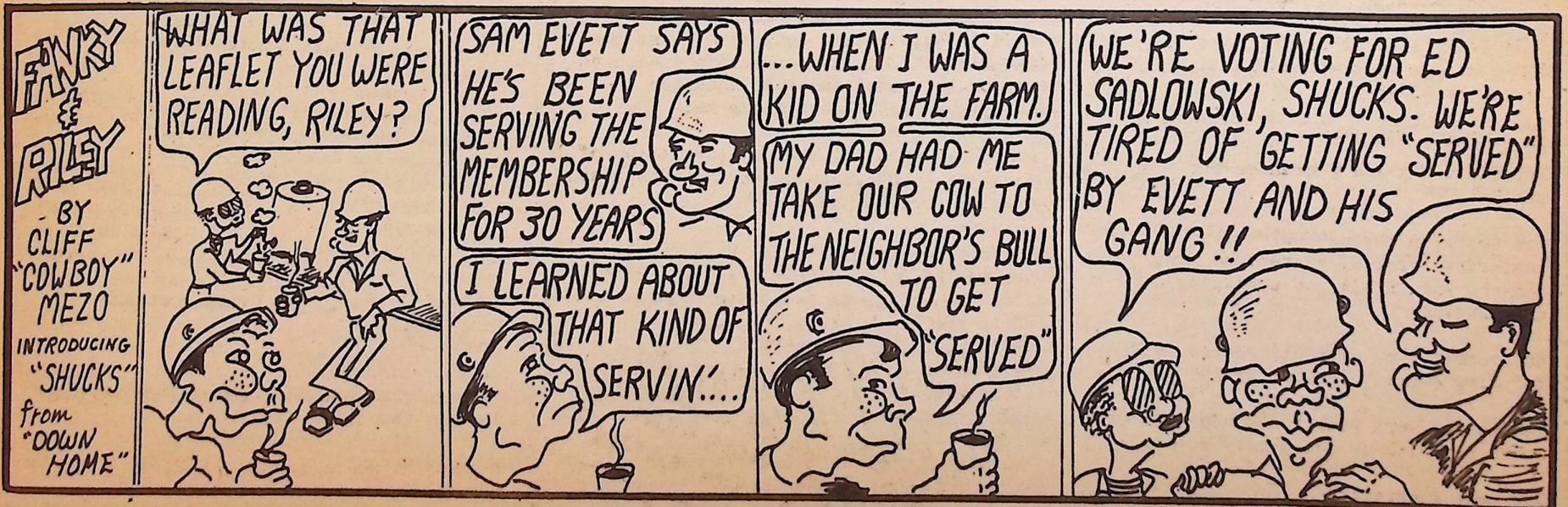


in the plant conscious of the fact that they do have a voice in the union. When they're conscious of that fact and when they're assured of that fact, then this union will be a workable tool for their benefit.

What's happened up 'til now is, in many areas of this union, that hasn't been the case. The guy really, in the plant, feels very frustrated, and feels that he's just locked out of any decision-making processes. He has no voice at all. There's a hundred and one little things there, that go into making up the big problem. What has happened for many, many years, is people would not even recognize that there's a problem, and I'm talking of leaders. I think the day after, its got to work where people sit down and explore--first of all recognize the problem, and explore how to solve them. That's how I found it worked on a local level.

"To advocate CHANGE and not be ABLE to change is not worth a dime."

Just to advocate change and not be able to change is not worth a dime, neither. There's a lot more to this. I know it sounds corny as hell, but there's a tremendous pent-up emotion in peoples' bellies, I think. When we get in the position where a person that works in the mill can't relate, then we're in a messed up, sorry state. And that's basically what we're in. You can't relate to this organization. He knows the union, he knows that there's a basic need for the union, he'll accept the union, he wants the union. But he just really can't basically relate. If you give people something to do and something to think about, they'll do it. And they'll become very actively involved in it, they'll become emotionally involved. But when you lock them out of the internal things and the decision-making processes and allowing their voice to be heard, then you or I or anyone else, you just feel--that's it. That's basically what the problem is.



EDWARDS, USWA CANDIDATE

Activist since 1942



George Edwards

Who is George Edwards, announced candidate for President of the United Steel Workers? A member of USWA Local 1104, Lorain, Ohio, Edwards is also chairman of the National Steel Workers Rank and File Committee (NSWRFC).

He went to work in the machine shop at U.S. Steel's Lorain Works in 1942 as a grinder operator, later becoming a machinist.

The first editor of The Lorain Labor Leader, the official CIO paper, he earned a reputation as a crusading editor for civil rights. The paper also blocked the expulsion of Dr. Loren E. Kerr from the Lorain Medical Society because of his support for National Health Insurance. Dr. Kerr is now medical director of the United Mine Workers.

Edwards also served as vice president of Local 1104 and as president of the Lorain

County CIO, with time out for a stint in the army.

Edwards was born in 1918 in South Dakota, the son of a homesteader and school teacher, where they lived in a sod house. Later, Edwards graduated from the University of Tennessee and spent two years in theological school at Oberlin College, where he explored the idea of starting a "labor church."

Edwards is married and has three children. He lives in an integrated neighborhood in East Cleveland. His chief hobbies are camping and photography. In the last few years, he has become a sculptor, welding artifacts out of scrap. His chess sets made of pipefittings, bolts and nuts have become a popular item among his friends.

..... AN EDITORIAL

No honeymoon with Ford

With the belated resignation of Richard M. Nixon, and accession to power of Gerald Ford, American politics has been shaken to its roots.

While advanced public opinion has been strong enough to topple two presidents, has failed to develop a movement strong enough to prevent "business as usual" politics from providing tweedledee and tweedledum alternatives.

That's why we need independent political action by labor.

A massive movement for Nixon's impeachment became irresistible as sordid details of corporation corruption piled upon details of an incredible Gestapo-style cover-up. Anger at the Nixon administration grew with every rise in the Consumer Price Index. Although Nixon's moves toward detente with the Soviet Union and China gained him some popularity, this could not outweigh the outrage at his anti-labor policies at home.

So, the departure of Nixon means the fall of the most racist, anti-labor administration in our history.

Yet, Nixon is not the first president whose career was ended by mass public outrage in this past 10 years. The first was Lyndon B. Johnson. Johnson's war policies made him totally unacceptable to masses of trade unionists and others.

But in getting rid of Johnson, we got Nixon.

In getting rid of Nixon, we got Ford--and maybe Rockefeller.

AFL-CIO President George Meany and others have called for a "honeymoon," a "moratorium period" with Ford during which he could get his feet on the ground, so to speak.

We don't agree. With a COPE voting record of 109 wrong and only 19 right, we hope Ford never gets his feet on the ground. With a record like that, who needs it?

Now, comes Ford's choice of Rockefeller for Vice President. In mining areas, the name "Rockefeller" is still spat out more as a curse word than a name. (Remember Ludlow!) If you were lined up in block-long queues for gasoline last winter, you were cursing Rockefeller and his phoney oil shortage too, although maybe you didn't know it at the time.

While Rockefeller tends to mind his "P's and Q's" in the U.S. political arena (if one can forget the Ludlow and Attica massacres for even a moment), our trade union brothers and sisters in other countries can tell hair-raising stories of the seamier side of Rocky's empire.

Comedian Dick Gregory once said that he sat in at a lunch counter for days, only to find when it integrated they didn't have anything on the menu that he wanted.

We feel the same way about Ford and Rockefeller.

We say: No honeymoon with Ford. Instead, step up the pressures for a real peoples' legislative program!

We say: No confirmation of Rockefeller the assassin!

.....

AT 1946 CONVENTION

Edwards for Black representation

Delegate George Edwards, Local Union 1104: We have a resolution on this section of Article IV. Since we are dealing with it I think this should be considered at the same time.

During the war Negroes in the steel industry did their part alongside their white brothers in providing the instruments of war. In our steel plants an attempt is being made to split the membership through discriminatory lay-offs. What our Local wishes to propose is that we create the office of Third Vice President, to be filled by a well qualified Negro Steelworker.

We feel that in an organization where the Negroes represent at least 25 percent of the membership there should be a represent-

ative of their race in a responsible position on the Executive Board of this great International Union. Under the present constitutional set-up on the Executive Board, for all practical purposes it is impossible for Negroes to be elected to that position. A person, to be on the Executive Board, must be elected either as a District Director or as one of the four International Officers.

We are all practical-minded men, we are men of affairs. We realize that at the present time it is impossible for us to elect to that position a Negro, no matter what his qualifications. So this provision is being promoted by our Local Union to provide that these Negro brothers of ours will have a member of their race to represent them on the Executive Board.

NSWRFC PROPOSES

R & F program for steel workers

The following is a draft program for National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee proposed by District 31 Rank and File Committee. We ask all our readers to write us with your ideas to add, subtract, or modify.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Repudiate ENA and guarantee the right to strike.

Job security through voluntary inverse seniority layoffs, guaranteed annual wage, and the end to all job combining and eliminating.

End cooperation with all company speed-up and crew-cutting (productivity) schemes.

Reduce the work week to 30 hours at 40 hours pay with no compulsory overtime.

One-year contracts.

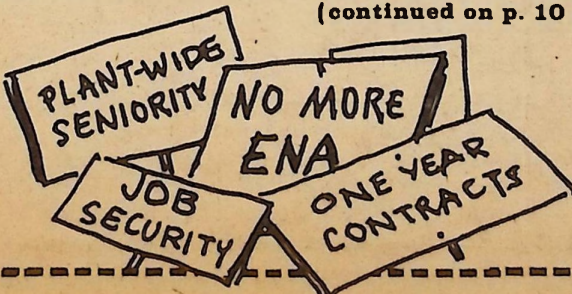
UNITE THE MEMBERSHIP

End accommodation with company discrimination. Repudiate the consent decree. Implement full plantwide seniority with no strings attached and full back pay to victims of past discrimination.

Guarantee proportional representation of minorities and women on the International Executive Board.

Support Canadian autonomy so that Canadian steelworkers can decide their own affairs

(continued on p. 10)



RANK AND FILE URGES

Resolutions for a fight-back in steel

● PRODUCTIVITY

WHEREAS: The leadership of USWA, not content with the disastrous effect of the Productivity Committee in the former contract, has added insult to injury by renaming them "Committees on Employment Security and Plant Productivity," and

WHEREAS: The real purpose of the productivity campaign of the steel industry is to cut down the number of steelworkers, and

WHEREAS: The membership has throughout the years struggled to maintain working conditions that are being lost through job combining, job elimination, speed-up, disciplinary sanctions, disregard of safe practices, etc., now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we call upon the 17th Constitutional Convention of the USWA to condemn the productivity committees and demand that they be removed from operation, and also

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That a real policy of employment security, including the elimination of lay-offs and a guarantee of employment be demanded from the steel industry.

● DUES INCREASE

WHEREAS: A large percentage of the membership of USWA is now paying the maximum dues of \$10 per month, and

WHEREAS: There are reports that under the guise of restoring the principle of a graduated dues according to earnings the leadership of USWA will attempt to raise the dues of the membership, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we call upon the 17th Constitutional Convention of the USWA to reject a dues increase in any size, shape, or form.

● SHORTER WORK WEEK

WHEREAS: The Basic Oxygen Furnace, Q-BOP, automation, and other technological advances are rapidly reducing the man-hours needed per unit of production, and

WHEREAS: Economic forecasters are becoming increasingly skeptical about the possibility of maintaining the current high level of production in the steel industry, and

WHEREAS: The first sign of an economic downturn would result in massive layoffs in plants under contract with USWA, and

WHEREAS: Now is the time, when the industry can easily afford it, to obtain relief in the form of more jobs for the members,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we call upon the 17th Constitutional Convention of the USWA to make the fight for the 6-hour day, 30-hour week at 40 hours'



pay the top priority for the next contract negotiations.

● DISCRIMINATION

WHEREAS: The steel industry and the International Union have been found guilty by a federal court of practicing discrimination against Black, Puerto Rican, and women workers in hiring and seniority practices, and

WHEREAS: The union leadership has not allowed these steelworkers or other minority workers to have a decision-making voice in union policies, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we call upon the 17th Constitutional Convention of the USWA to instruct the officers to call a special meeting of the Basic Steel Industry Conference, and to include one minority representative chosen by each local union, for the purpose of re-negotiating compliance with the federal law, and also

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That this Convention create another office of Vice-President to be filled by a minority member of our union.

● ENA AND RIGHT TO VOTE

WHEREAS: The right to vote and right to strike are the pillars upon which the union is built, and

WHEREAS: Without a vote of the membership we have been saddled with an ENA contract which provides that even should the Basic Steel Industry Conference vote against the company proposals an arbitrator could still impose that contract upon the members of this union, and

WHEREAS: There is no effective method under our present Constitution to curb this abuse of power by the steel industry and the International Executive Board, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we call upon the 17th Constitutional Convention of the USWA to state that restoration of the right to strike be the official policy of USWA, and also

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the membership has the right to vote on any restriction of the right to strike and on the final ratification of all contracts.

● CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

WHEREAS: President I.W. Abel was first elected on a pledge to "return the union to the members," and

WHEREAS: While some improvements have been made in methods and procedures in the affairs of the union, no basic changes have been made in the union structure or the Constitution to insure that the union is returned to the members in reality, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we call upon the 17th Constitutional Convention of the USWA to bring about the following changes in the Union Constitution:

1. Structural Reform of the Union
 - a. Each industry conference meet every two years. Special conferences to be called in preparation for contract negotiations when necessary.
 - b. Delegates to be elected to Industry Conferences from each local union in the conference on a basis comparable to election of delegates to constitutional conventions.
2. A provision which holds racism to be incompatible with the interests of working people and akin to strike-breaking and union-busting and to be so treated.
3. A provision to insure that 75% of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention and Industry Conferences shall be made up of working-on-the-job union members.
4. A provision to return to the members the right to vote on contracts.
5. A provision to give the members of local unions the right to approve or disapprove of the selection of staff representatives, the right to demand the transfer of a staff representative or to veto his transfer when the membership wants him to remain.
6. The elimination of the provision which proscribes members' rights as to political beliefs or affiliations as a violation of Supreme Court decisions which have found such proscriptions to be unconstitutional.



NSWRFC resolutions (from page 1)

while maintaining close ties with the International Union.

● UNION DEMOCRACY

Right to ratify all contracts and any other national agreements with the companies.

Require only 15 local nominations for International office.

Elect all staff men.

Right to full union membership regardless of political belief--eliminate the anti-Communist clause.

All delegates to conventions must be working, on-the-job union members. No staff men as convention delegates.

● POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

No cooperation with government boards or committees that freeze wages or increase speed-up.

Support and money only for candidates for political office who have demonstrated their support for the needs of the rank and file.

● POWER ON THE JOB

Resolve all grievances in 30 days, with the right to strike locally on unresolved grievances.

One grievance man for every 25 members.

Issues before steel convention

by GEORGE EDWARDS, CHAIRMAN
NAT'L STEELWORKERS RANK AND FILE COMM.

The 17th International Convention of the United Steelworkers of America is upon us. Election of delegates will take place in the local unions in the latter half of July and August. The convention opens in Atlantic City, New Jersey on September 23.

The rank and file is in better shape to make an impression on the union leadership than it has been in years. Organized caucusses, groupings around anti-administration candidates, whole sections of the union that are disenchanted with the Abel leadership--these can all merge into a challenge to the company-oriented IEB.

RESOLUTIONS

Issues around which the delegates can unite are National Steelworkers Rank and File resolutions to the convention.

Currently, the issue that Abel and the International Executive Board are trying hardest to duck is the court-ordered compliance with the federal civil rights laws. The answer of the union leaders, along with the industry and the administration, is to get the minimum plan by which they can get the court off their backs. The job of the rank and file is to get full compliance with the law.

Abel's administration will no doubt try to put the convention on record in favor of ENA. With the 700 to 800 automatic votes of staff men, he may well succeed.

However, it is essential to show that the membership as a whole does not want it. The vote in Sharon Steel, which ran 11 to 7 against ENA, is the only test that has been permitted up to now and has been causing Abel fits. We need resolutions from all the big basic steel locals asking that ENA go. Local unions in other sections of the union should let the convention know they do not want it either.

The changing of the name of the Productivity Committees does not change their

main aim, which is the elimination of jobs. This issue is the key to Abel's philosophy of union--that we should cooperate with the companies rather than fight them. It separates the real from the company unionists. The membership should let the convention know which kind of union they want.

The shorter work week is the positive response to the desire for job security by the steelworkers. In order to provide jobs that are being phased out under the program of productivity, we need shorter hours. If we go from 40 to 30 hours, a whole new shift will have to be hired. How many people do we know personally who need these jobs!

The resolution on democracy in the union provides the changes in organization and structure this union needs to make it more responsive to the members.

Finally, the question of a dues increase has again arisen. Before every convention the International Union sends up a trial balloon. This time it is coupled with the phony issue of ability to pay. To get more dues money, they are arguing that \$10 for the high- and low-pay steelworkers is not fair. To remedy the inequality they propose that the higher paid pay more. We feel there is no need to throw more money in the pot to be divvied out to \$60,000 salaries plus expenses.

The consent decree

The "Consent Decree" sneaked into court by the steel industry, the USWA leadership, and the Nixon Administration has been successfully challenged by the National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee, by NAACP, and by NOW. All three were accepted as interveners by the judge.

The judge has ruled that the decree may stand but that it does not have final status. The interveners can appeal to vacate or modify the decree and individuals may enter the courts with other

private litigation. Lawyers for the rank and file are studying what further legal steps to take.

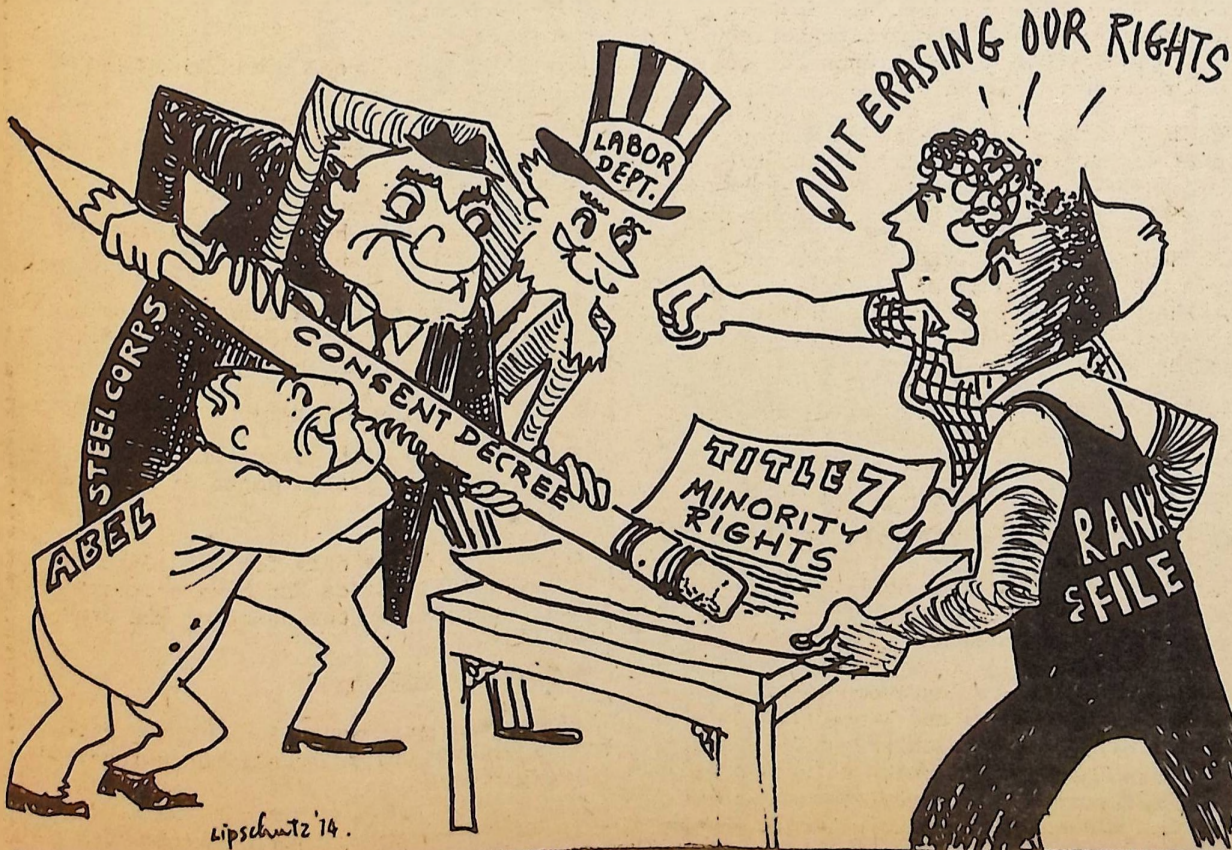
Meanwhile the fight for a fair seniority system will be carried on.

The consent decree was the attempt by the three parties involved in the violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act to minimize their responsibility and to subvert the law.

NSRFC agrees with NAACP and NOW in their contention that the decree is illegal in that it forces Black, Spanish-surname, and women steelworkers to waive their rights under the federal law in order to obtain back pay. NSRFC has come up with a long list of other ways in which the decree hurts both minority and all other members of USWA.

Rank and file demands

1. As noted above, nobody should have to sign away any rights under the federal law in order to receive back pay as a result of past illegal discrimination.
2. An independent representative of the federal court should have primary responsibility for enforcement of the court's decree, instead of leaving it up to the "good faith" of those who have been found guilty of bias in the past. The top enforcement committee should be under the direction of this representative.
3. Representatives of the three interveners should be named to the same top committee.
4. Provision should be made to appeal violation of the consent decree to local federal courts instead of having to go all the way to Alabama to seek relief.
5. Since it is the companies who have primary responsibility for discrimination in hiring, they should have to foot the bill. The union, while guilty of permitting these practices, should not have to pay back pay. Otherwise steelworkers will be paying themselves out of their own dues money.
6. A two-step plantwide seniority system should be imposed that would allow anyone with plantwide seniority to bid on any job in his department. If no one bids on that job, it should be posted at the plant gate to be filled by plantwide seniority. Once the most senior worker takes that job, he should be able to bid for any job that opens up in his (or her) department. He should receive his old wages, plus incentive, until he is able to reach that rate on his new job, with no time limitation.
7. No new lines of progression should be instituted and where they do exist, the company should be made to justify them, since they limit the use of plantwide seniority. It is our information that all over the industry, the company has begun a drive for lines of promotion, and this must be resisted.
8. All jobs must be posted. Even in the past, there has been a practice of resistance on the part of the companies to full use of job posting. From now on, each and every job should be posted and made available as outlined under point 6 above.



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by JIM WILLIAMS
CO-EDITOR, LABOR TODAY

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