

the rank and file in action

Labor Today

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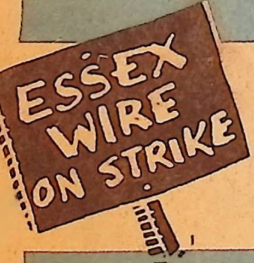
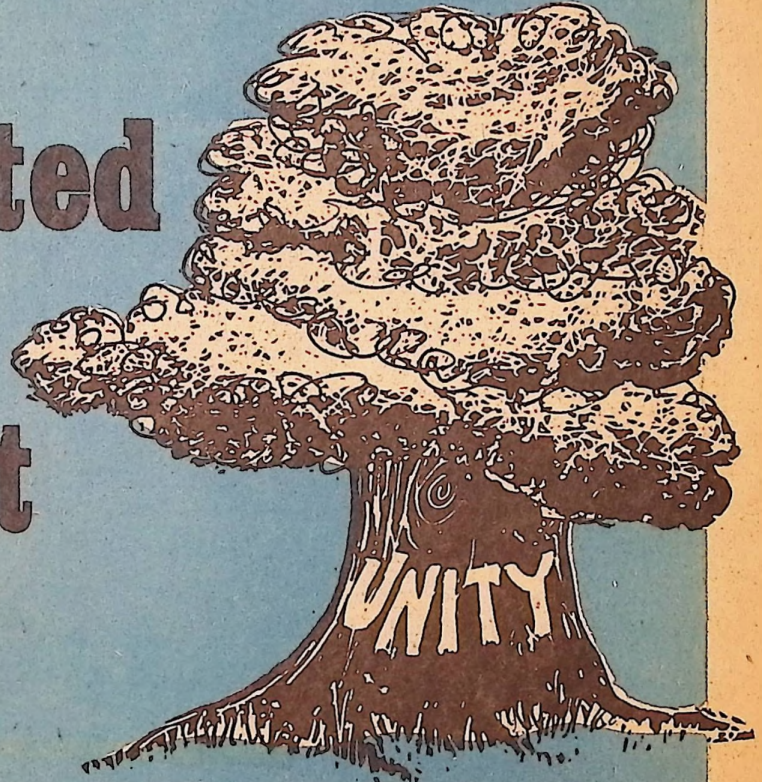


Volume 16, No. 9

July-August 1977

For a united labor movement

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



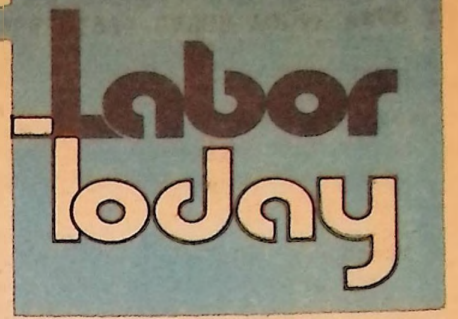
UAW woman striker shot

Iowa R & F launch
shorter hours drive



UNPRECEDENTED STATE-WIDE PARLEY

Iowa labor off & running for a shorter work week



by JOHN SUTHERLAND, President
UAW Local 858
Bettendorf, Iowa

Nearly 70 Iowa trade unionists braved torrential downpours and flash floods Sunday, July 24, to meet in Cedar Rapids at the IBEW Hall for the purpose of kicking off a state campaign for a shorter work week.

A dozen different international unions (AFL-CIO and independent) were represented at the conference, including official delegates from various AFL-CIO central labor bodies and some state leadership. The "Iowa Union Conference for Shorter Hours" was organized by a relatively small group of trade unionists, but with some legwork and letter-mailing, they were able to get the endorsement of a broad contingent of Iowa labor, both rank and file and elected leadership.

The conference was an all-day affair. A lunch concession was operated in the hall for the convenience of the conferees, under the auspices of the State PEOPLE Committee (the political arm of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees). Lots of LABOR TODAY reprints on Shorter Hours were made available, and buttons advocating the shorter work week were sold for \$1.50. Registration for the conference was \$4.00 apiece, which covered the expenses of putting the thing together and left a little for the ongoing campaign. Lunch was a dollar.

The conference was the first of its kind in Iowa, and considering the lousy weather and the fact that some people had to drive over 200 miles, it was generally agreed to be a tremendous success. Everybody who attended was just plain excited about the idea of shorter hours with no cut in pay. The conference served to collect that excitement and give it form and direction.

We began the day with a telegram of support from Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), who is drafting legislation for Congress which would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act to provide for a 35-hour week at no cut in pay. Conyers pledged his support for the goals of the conference and endorsed the initiation of the Iowa campaign.

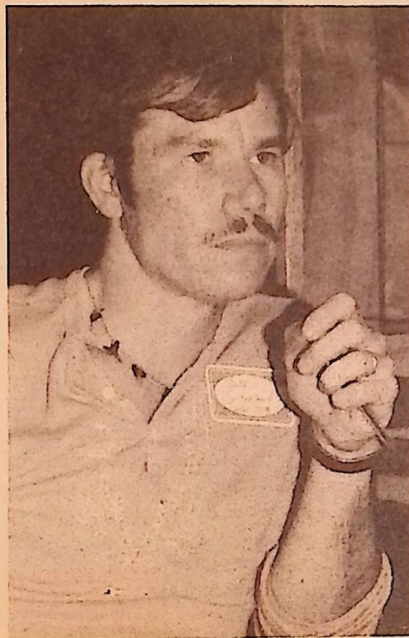
The keynote address was then given by Frank Rosen, UE District 11 President. The purpose of the keynote was to arm the conferees with solid economic analysis showing the urgent necessity for shorter hours. Printed materials furnished by UE were distributed and read.

Following a coffee break, Fred Gaboury from TUAD, gave us a historical overview of the fight for shorter hours in the U.S., 1791 to the present. Then several representatives from various Iowa unions gave presentations about how the fight for shorter hours related to the conditions in their respective jobs.

Having loaded up on lots of useful information, we proceeded to gird our loins for the workshop sessions with food from the PEOPLE committee. Lunchtime was filled with animated discussion. Many who were present had never had the economic and historical arguments put together for them before, and there was a general feeling that this conference really meant something for our struggles as union members.

The workshops were organized according to

occupational groups. After meeting for about an hour, the workshops reported back to the whole group their ideas and resolutions. Among these were the mobilization of laid-off union members to take a major



role in the campaign. Other resolutions included one agreeing to struggle for the 35-hour week now, in accordance with the proposed legislation, with a priority to carry the fight further to 30 hours, once the 35-hour week had been achieved. And the four-day, 10-hour week was roundly condemned as a trap for workers which would fail to create a single new job.

In the end, a main resolution was read and adopted which called for an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act providing for a 35-hour week at 40 hours pay, no compulsory overtime and double wages for time worked in excess of 35 hours.

A statewide steering committee was recommended and unanimously elected, which

represented a good cross-section of those present, AFL-CIO and independent, men and women, Black and white. Plans were discussed for bringing the shorter work week demand to the State Federation of Labor Convention. A mailing list was prepared of all those present, and the steering committee has made arrangements to meet soon and to mail copies of the main resolution to all the unions in the state and to the media.

There was general agreement that another conference be held in the future to check up on progress in the campaign.

Iowa is one of several states having a so-called "right-to-work" law, which keeps wages at a level generally lower than in states where unions are able to negotiate union shop agreements. This is openly flaunted by the Iowa Development Commission and the Chamber of Commerce as a means of attracting "runaway" industry. Ads are published in such magazines as *Forbes* and *Business Week* stressing the low wages and opportunities for high profits which can be found in Iowa. But the Iowa Union Conference for Shorter Hours showed that workers out here aren't going to take that crap lying down.

If the enthusiasm of the assembled unionists on July 24 is any indication, the Iowa campaign for shorter hours is going to be a very *together* operation. The first steps have been taken: We called a meeting, organized a statewide committee, and got a lot of publicity (four TV stations and assorted radio and newspapers. P.S. *The media really ate this up!*). Now begins the fight to make the shorter work week more than just a slogan--to make the issue part of every union's educational program, to place it on every bargaining table and to mobilize for implementation on the national level.

Iowa is off and running! We hope to hear of more actions around the country in the future!

JUSTICE DELAYED IS JUSTICE DENIED

Free the Wilmington Ten

by CHARLENE MITCHELL, Executive Secretary
National Alliance Against Racial
and Political Repression

The National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to the task of protecting the peoples' right to organize.

It was entirely fitting for Governor Michael Dukakis to restore the good names of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. It is a tragedy that this action had to wait until a half-century had passed after their execution by the State of Massachusetts. And, isn't it somewhat ironic that Sacco and Vanzetti have been declared the victims of official murder during a year that has seen the death penalty restored after a decade without executions?

While they were the first to be exonerated, Sacco and Vanzetti were not the only innocent workers who have been victims of capital punishment. There were the Molly



Sacco & Vanzetti by Ben Shahn

Maquires. There was Joe Hill. And in our time there were Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and Willie McGee.

All were victims of legal lynchings--and in time all will be "rehabilitated".

(continued on page 4)

LABOR LEADERS PROTEST

Soviet rank & filers denied U.S. visas

by LABOR TODAY Staff

A delegation of rank-and-file Soviet trade unionists, invited to the United States by the National Co-ordinating Committee for Trade Union Action and Democracy, has been denied entry visas by the U.S. State Department.

The delegation, which was scheduled to arrive August 9, included Andrei Gatsenko, a coal miner; Maria Sadova, an auto worker; Ludmilla Semenova, a school teacher and Victor Zhlovski, a steel worker.

Spokesmen for the U.S. State Department said the visas weren't actually denied, but the Department has simply declined to issue them! This is not the first time that Soviet trade unionists have been barred from the United States. As a matter of fact, our government has never granted visas to a trade union delegation from the Soviet Union. TUAD had hoped that a rank-and-file delegation of ordinary workers would not be barred. TUAD had been encouraged by President Carter's statements on human rights and the freedom to travel.

In the meantime, a bill has passed Congress which would override vetoes against admitting delegations or visitors from Communist countries. The bill is now on Carter's desk. U.S. law prohibits granting of visas to Communists and persons from Communist countries--but the State Department is empowered to grant waivers "in the national interest." They have never granted a waiver to Soviet trade unionists.

TUAD National Field Organizer Fred Gaboury told the press "We consider the denial of visas to our guests to be a denial of our rights as U.S. workers and trade unionists. But more than that (workers in the U.S. have a lot of rights denied them), this arbitrary action by our government is a violation of the Helsinki Accord that guarantees free travel and exchange between individuals and organizations from different nations."

The denial of visas to the delegation invited by TUAD has sparked a flurry of protest. In a telegram to the U.S. State Department, Patrick E. Gorman, Chairman of the Board of the Amalgamated Meatcutters, said, "As an American citizen, a trade unionist, and a prominent leader therein, I wish to express my solidarity with the efforts of the National Coordinating Committee for Trade Union Action and Democracy to secure entry visas for a group of trade unionists from the USSR.

"I can see no value in denying visas to informal delegations such as this, nor for that matter, to official delegations from the Soviet Union. I say this since our own union is attempting to create, through détente, a mutual friendship between our great nations. In my opinion, the United States should remove all bars to friendly exchange between workers in the U.S. and the Soviet Union. To do so would go far toward guaranteeing peace and friendship between our two countries."

Gorman was joined in his statement by Abe Feinglass, an International Vice-President of the Meatcutters. Feinglass, in a letter to prominent trade unionists, said, "This position of the State Department is a hangover from the era of a Joe McCarthy or a McCarran. It denies American workers the opportunity to listen to these trade unionists and judge for themselves their integrity and effectiveness. Moreover, it denies representatives of Soviet labor the right to come here and observe our working and living standards and make their own independent judgment on American life. Labor is singled out for such treatment. In all other areas--cultural and business--exchanges are permitted and even encouraged by the Administration."

In reply to Brother Feinglass, UMWA President Arnold Miller wrote, "The United Mine Workers has also encountered this unjustifiable discrimination in arranging an exchange of delegations and I share your frustration with State Department policy.

"Several years ago a member of our International Executive Board visited the Soviet Union at the Soviet Mine Workers' request and was treated with the utmost courtesy and kindness. The information he brought back concerning safety and related matters in the Soviet Union was quite helpful to us. I think that it is a tragedy that the State Department's arbitrary policy has precluded labor unions in this country from reciprocating in kind."

In a separate letter to the State Department, Miller said, "On behalf of the United Mine Workers of America, I wish to express my support on behalf of the efforts of the National Coordinating Committee for Trade Union Action and Democracy to reverse this arbitrary and discriminatory policy."

Marion Calligaris and Rayfield Mooty, National Co-Chairmen of TUAD said, "We are heartened and appreciative of this support.

Labor Today's statement of principles

LABOR TODAY is an independent labor publication, written for trade unionists, by trade unionists.

LABOR TODAY seeks to unite the labor movement from top to bottom, leaders and rank and file, in a struggle to defend our unions, our jobs, and our standards of wages and working conditions.

OUR PROGRAM:

JOB...

- Renew the struggle for shorter hours
- Ban compulsory overtime

WORKING CLASS UNITY...

- Outlaw racist practices on the shop floor--end accommodation to racism on the union floor
- End all discrimination against women and youth

POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE...

- Elect workers and trade unionists to public office
- Build a labor-community electoral and legislative coalition

PEACE...

- End the arms race--build homes, schools and hospitals
- Expand peaceful trade with all nations
- Establish relations with the world labor movement

MILITANT, DEMOCRATIC UNIONS...

- Protect and extend the right to vote on all contracts
- Establish the right to elect stewards, bargaining and grievance committees, officers and convention delegates
- Guarantee the right of all members to participate in the conduct of union affairs--remove all clauses from union constitutions which discriminate on the basis of political belief and affiliation.



When we sent this invitation last March, we did so in good faith and with the expectation that our guests would receive visas. We will continue to press for visas because we are still convinced that the surest guarantee of peace in the world is to help build bridges of friendship and understanding between working people in our country and workers in the Soviet Union."



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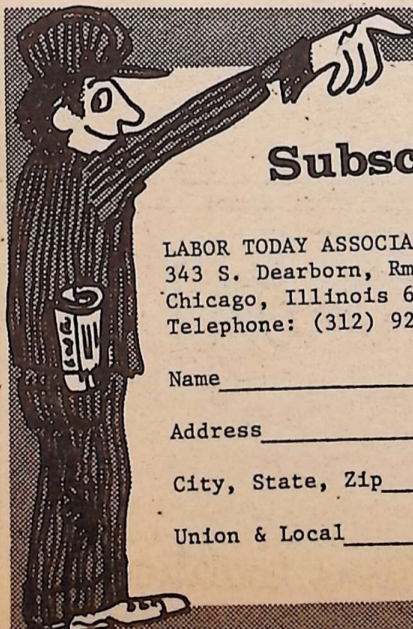
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"THERE ARE POLICE EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK"

Women strikers hold on

by A.J. LINDENBORG
Special to LABOR TODAY

Over 200 workers, about 85 percent of them women, began a strike against the Essex Corporation in Elwood, Indiana on April 6. The strike soon spread to Essex plants in Michigan and Ontario, Canada. By July 11, striker Carol Frye, a 25-year-old mother of two children and a member of UAW L. 1663 had been shot in the back outside strike headquarters. By mid-August, the strike still held solid as members of Local 1663 voted 140 to 8 to continue their strike in the face of Essex's threat to replace them with nonunion strikebreakers.

Company-inspired violence and intimidation have become a way of life in Elwood, a town of 12,000 in central Indiana. It has become a way of life now for Essex strikers in other communities. As Georgia Ellis, publicity director of the UAW L 1663 strike committee said, "Sure, there are Indiana State Police everywhere you look, but out brothers and sisters in Ontario face the Royal Mounted Police."

The Essex strikers face a one-sided battle. Essex is not a two-bit shop, but one of the world's largest corporations--standing 35th of FORTUNE magazine's top 500 US corporations. It is a subsidiary of United Technologies, a multi-national conglomerate with sales of more than \$5 billion last year. UT also owns Sikorsky Helicopters and Pratt & Whitney Engines, both large defense contractors. In 1976, UT admitted sweating profits of more than \$157 million out of the hides of 133,000 employees.

The base wage rate at Essex' Elwood plant is \$2.76 an hour. In April, the company offered a 62¢ an hour increase spread over three years. In Ontario, where the present rate is \$2.88, the



company offered the predominantly Italian workforce 50¢ over three years, thus "equalizing" wages to \$3.38 by 1978!

Besides its paltry wage offer, Essex also offered only \$35 a week in sick benefits and a \$600 deductible maternity plan--to a plant that is 85% female!

A sign posted near the UAW strike headquarters in Elwood says, "Never have so few that have so much, offered so little to so many." According to strike leader Georgia Ellis, the President of United Technologies raked in \$1.66 million in 1976, "and he got it out of people like us."

Rank and filers everywhere have a stake in the Essex strike. The 200 workers in the Elwood plant, like the other 3.6 million workers who work in small shops around the country, are special targets of an antilabor drive that is being pushed everywhere.



Sister Ellis told LABOR TODAY: "Essex never did plan on negotiating a fair contract. They always planned on busting the union. They hoped to be able to divide us up; to take advantage of us because we are in a small plant in a small town that nobody ever heard of. They refused to make a decent offer because we are women--and they thought we wouldn't be able to fight back."

"Even if we are women," Ellis continued, "this is everybody's strike. If we go down, the whole UAW will suffer a defeat. Then Essex and other-multinationals will be able to call the shots as they please and the whole union will be a token labor organization."

"Essex decided to make this a battleground," she added. "If that's what they want, that's what it will have to be. Our battle is the battle of working people everywhere. It's like a forest fire -- only the grass is burning now. But once the fire gets going, the big trees will burn also. Unless the fire is put out now, even the biggest trees may fall. And that goes for the unions in big cities too."

Sister Ellis asks LABOR TODAY readers to send messages of support to UAW L. 1663, 828 N. 11th, Elwood, Indiana 46036.

But even more is needed, especially from UAW members and members of the International Association of Machinists who work at Sikorsky and Pratt & Whitney. They should make a special effort to get their local unions to send strike donations to UAW Local 1663.

Carol Frye, wounded July 11, is home now--bullet and all. She has lost her sense of feeling on one side of her body and this damage may be permanent. Ellis says, "She's home--but she can't pick up her children, even her two-year-old." LABOR TODAY urges that individuals and local unions make special donations to help defray Sister Frye's medical costs. Send these donations to: Carol Frye Fund, Security Bank, Elwood, Indiana 46306.

LABOR DAY GREETINGS

Rank & file
PAPER WORKERS
NEW YORK

For Working class Unity!
GREETINGS

from

National Black Communications Coalition

JEWELL RYAN-WHITE, President

DENNIS L. SERRETTE, National Organizer

Labor Day
Greetings

FROM A FRIEND

UMW re-elects Miller, girds for negotiations

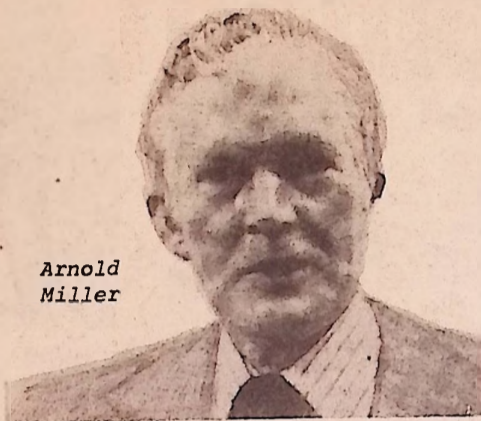
by JIM WILLIAMS, Editor

Arnold Miller won re-election as President of the United Mine Workers on June 14 in a hotly fought three-way race that saw defeat of Leroy Patterson, a supporter of former UMW President Tony Boyle. Miller won re-election with about 40% of the votes--making the re-building of rank and file unity a major task before the present bituminous coal contract expires in December.

Miller won with 55,236 votes or 39.8 percent, while Leroy Patterson came a close second with 49,035 or 35.3 percent and Harry Patrick, the current Secretary-Treasurer, got 34,512 or 24.9 percent. The election results have been approved by the UMW's International Executive Board, but Leroy Patterson has indicated he will challenge the results with the U.S. Labor Department.

Harry Patrick, who ran with Miller in 1972, has called upon miners to unite behind Miller and to stand together for the upcoming contract negotiations. Patrick ran on a rank-and-file based program which called for shorter hours and for the right of miners to strike over grievances. Miller ran on the achievements of the rank and file in restoring democracy to the UMW and on the gains won in the 1974 contract. Patterson ran on a platform of red-baiting and slander, urging a return to the iron-fisted days of Tony Boyle. Patterson's support dropped sharply when it became known that he was receiving support from Steelworkers' Union leaders I.W. Abel and Lloyd McBride. Patterson at one point said he favored merger with the Steelworkers Union--a position that was not popular with miners who have only recently won the right to vote on their contracts, a right steelworkers don't enjoy.

The combined Miller and Patrick vote was 89,748 or 64.7 percent. This was a higher percentage than the rank and file got in 1972 when they ousted Boyle. Until the very last minute, attempts were still being made by rank and filers to get Miller and Patrick to put aside their differences and



Arnold Miller

present a united front. But despite this division in the rank and file, it is clear that healthy, rank and file unionism remains the decisive trend within the UMW. The election marked a hearty rebuff to the coal operators who had put their hopes on a Patterson victory.

A danger sign, however, is that about half of the miners didn't vote in this election. Clearly, President Miller and the rank and file have a good deal of fence-mending to do before contract negotiations begin.

Harry Patrick entered the race late, at the urging of younger miners and former UMW staffers whom Miller had fired. Patrick's program was the strongest of the three--but he did not have an organization in the field. Patrick managed to win only in Southern Ohio, District 6 and Illinois' District 12.. However, a report by Brophy Associates, a Washington D.C. think-tank staffed by former UMW staffers, said Patrick got about 39% and Miller, 29%.

But Western Pennsylvania's District 5, headed by progressive Lou Antal, went solidly for Miller as did most of the major West Virginia coal districts. Many solid rank and file forces in these districts, while sympathizing with Patrick's program, felt it was necessary to support Miller against the main enemy--Leroy Patterson. Another area of Miller support was found

among pensioners who gave him 46% of their votes as compared to 34% for Patterson and 20% for Patrick.

Despite President Miller's troubled leadership in recent years, his inability to respond creatively to outbreaks of rank and file strikes, and his inattention to the details of running the union, miners found much in the 1974 contract to be happy about. Yet Miller, in bringing the union together for the upcoming negotiations, has to face the fact that three out of five working miners voted against him--a tough challenge.

On balance, despite all the problems, the miners election has to be considered a victory for the rank and file.

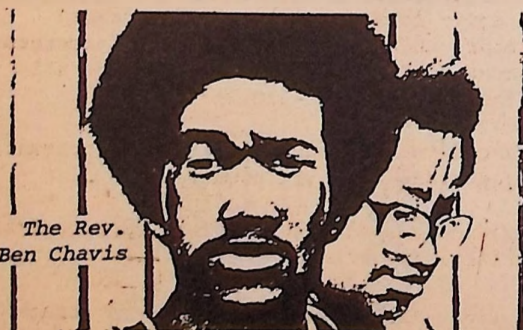
The coal operators wanted desperately to elect Leroy Patterson and bring about a return to the corrupt, class-collaborationist bargaining practices of the past. That is why they enlisted the help of the USWA leaders I.W. Abel and Lloyd McBride, whose no-strike, "Experimental Negotiating Agreement" has proved a profit bonanza for the steel corporations, and tough times for steelworkers. Many steel corporations own captive mines--which they would like to rid of troublesome strikes.

Still, the question remains: Why, after five years of rank and file leadership, did the rank and file come so close to losing? (Patterson came within only five percentage points of winning the plurality.) The problems stem from 1973, when the newly-elected leaders dissolved Miners for Democracy, the rank and file formation that swept the old Boyle machine from power. By dissolving the MFD, the UMW leaders were no longer accountable to the rank and file in quite the same way, and many rank and filers began to feel cut off. On the other hand, when Patterson and the remaining Boyle forces on the International Executive Board began to paralyze the functioning of the union by their factional tactics, the rank and file leaders, Miller and Patrick, had no effective alternative force to rally in support of the union. The future of healthy rank and file democracy in the UMW will lie in the re-establishment of an organized rank and file. There are no short cuts, no "better ways."

Wilmington 10 (continued from page 1)

While the labor and people's movement can draw strength and satisfaction from the exoneration of Sacco and Vanzetti, there are still many victims of injustice and frame-up in the prisons of our country.

Perhaps the most notorious case is that of the Reverend Ben Chavis and his co-defendants. Known as the "Wilmington 10," they are serving prison terms totaling 282 years on conspiracy charges that stem



The Rev. Ben Chavis

from their leadership of struggles for human and civil rights in Wilmington, North Carolina in 1971.

Ben is a former organizer for the American

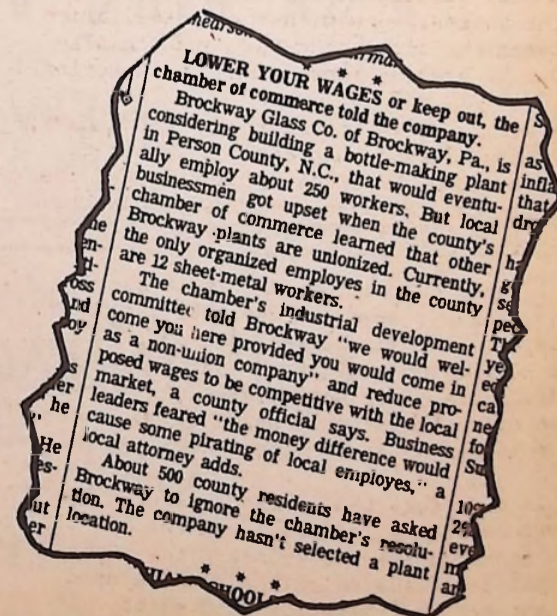
Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and helped organize the first successful strike of sanitation workers in Charlotte. By 1971 he had become the leading "movement" organizer in North Carolina. As such, he was a marked man, by Nixon's Justice Department and by the textile and tobacco barons who control the State of North Carolina.

Now, five years after mass campaigns in defense of the Wilmington 10, the facts have revealed themselves: All of the major prosecution witnesses have testified in federal and state courts that they were bribed, coerced and threatened into perjury against Chavis and his co-defendants.

One would think that this would be reason enough for exoneration of the Wilmington 10--but not in North Carolina. While millions around the world stand aghast at this fundamental denial of human rights, the persecution of the Wilmington 10 continues.

Retroactive justice is fine, but we must win justice for the Wilmington 10 today! Resolutions from local and international unions and letters from individual trade unionists should be sent to President Carter. The message is simple: Free Ben Chavis and the Wilmington 10--now!!

OPPRESSION & LOW WAGES GO HAND IN HAND



From Wall Street Journal August 16, 1977.

TUAD calls

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

for a UNITED labor movement



The debate in the ranks of the UAW over the question of reaffiliation with the AFL-CIO has sparked interest and discussion throughout the labor movement. The issue has immediate urgency for UAW members, but the task of building a united, fighting labor movement goes far beyond the question of whether, and on what terms, the UAW decides to reaffiliate with the AFL-CIO.

Trade union unity and labor solidarity are the backbone of a fighting labor movement. One need not look very hard to see the stark contrast between the strength of today's divided labor movement and the united power of the large corporations on the economic, political and legislative fronts. It matters not whether the fight takes place at the bargaining table, on Capitol Hill, in the halls of Congress or in the Legislatures of the 50 states--Corporate America, united in organizations like the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, has been able to whip-saw a divided, poorly organized and sometimes misled labor movement for a quarter of a century.

MAXIMUM TRADE UNION UNITY

The National Coordinating Committee for Trade Union Action and Democracy (TUAD) stands for maximum trade union unity. We support the Auto Workers Action Caucus and others in the UAW who call for reaffiliation with the AFL-CIO on the basis of struggle. But the debate doesn't end



there. The time has come to ask: "Why stop with the UAW--why not affiliation for the United Mine Workers, for the National Education Association, for the Teamsters, for the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union and for the United Electrical Workers?"

That is the path to labor unity, to maximum "clout" at the bargaining table and on the legislative-political-electoral front. Affiliation--in a sense, reaffiliation for the ILWU and for UE, would wipe out remnants of one of the most disgraceful events of the McCarthy period. (cont. on page 7)

AUTO RANK & FILE STATEMENT

AWAC supports reaffiliation

Auto Workers Action Caucus
Detroit, Michigan

The merging of all unions is an action that union members will need to take sooner or later.

The Auto Workers Action Caucus says we ought to start now with the reaffiliation between our union, the UAW, and the AFL-CIO. The present facts demand such action.

The auto corporations already function as a single unit that works together to keep us down. This has helped to make them the richest and most powerful corporations in the world, at our expense.

We in the UAW can't hope to beat this giant monster by ourselves. The same is true in other industries. The corporations are ganging up against the interests of all workers. This has resulted in the erosion of every worker's standard of living. We must all unite to fight back!

It is true that the present policies and programs of the leadership of the AFL-CIO are conservative and self-serving. Some principled trade unionists have refused to support reaffiliation because of these conditions.

We have no illusions; we know that changes will occur in the AFL-CIO only by the militant actions and pressures from the rank and file. We know that the job won't be easy. But, it's a job that must begin now. We can't wait until Meany retires or some other miracle occurs.

Important unions within the AFL-CIO have already begun the fight to improve it's policies and change its hidebound leadership. The Auto Workers Action Caucus believes that the UAW should become a part of this struggle. We must join with the Machinists, the Meat Cutters, AFSCME and other more progressive forces within the AFL-CIO that are trying to make it better serve the Interests of American workers.

Lasker
Smith



Together, we can work to make the AFL-CIO develop a program that has real meaning for rank and filers! The kind of program that will stop big business in their attack on our standard of living.

This program won't come automatically, even if reaffiliation takes place. It will only happen with a lot of rank and file pressure and action.

The rank and file in the UAW must begin now to push a program that will give reaffiliation some teeth. We need such things as:

A campaign to organize the 80 percent of the American workers who are unorganized.

A fight for the shorter work week to end unemployment.

A drive to bring in all of organized labor, such as the Miners, the Teamsters, the United Electrical Workers, and all others to the AFL-CIO.

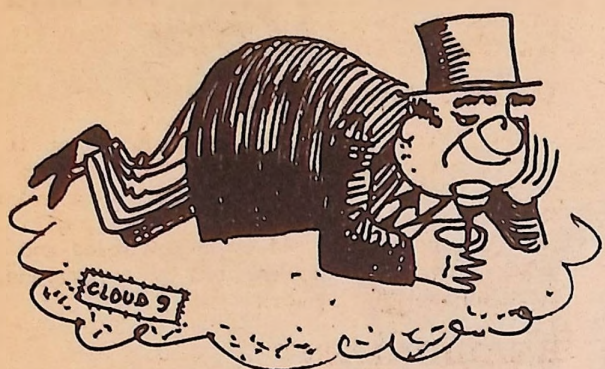
An end to cold war policies that prevent free trade with all countries.

An end to racism and sexism: support for affirmative action programs.

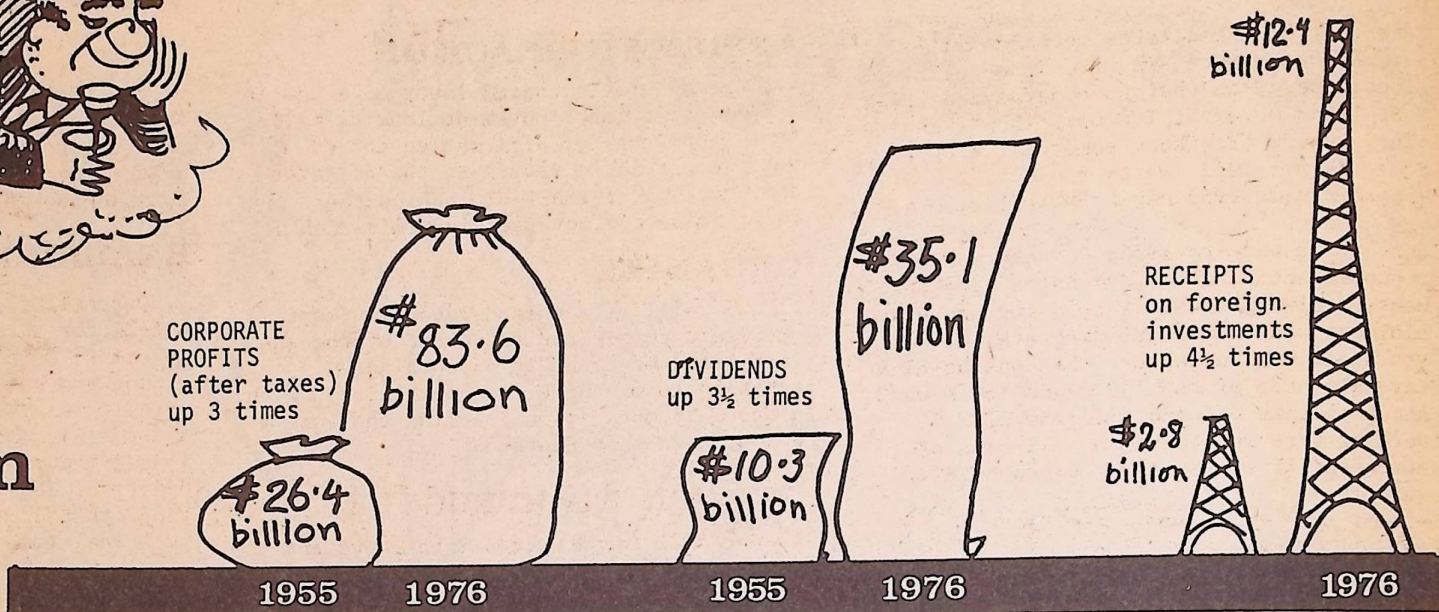
A fight-back against the bosses' attack on our standard of living.

For further information contact: AWAC,
P.O. Box 29802, Ecorse, Michigan 48229.

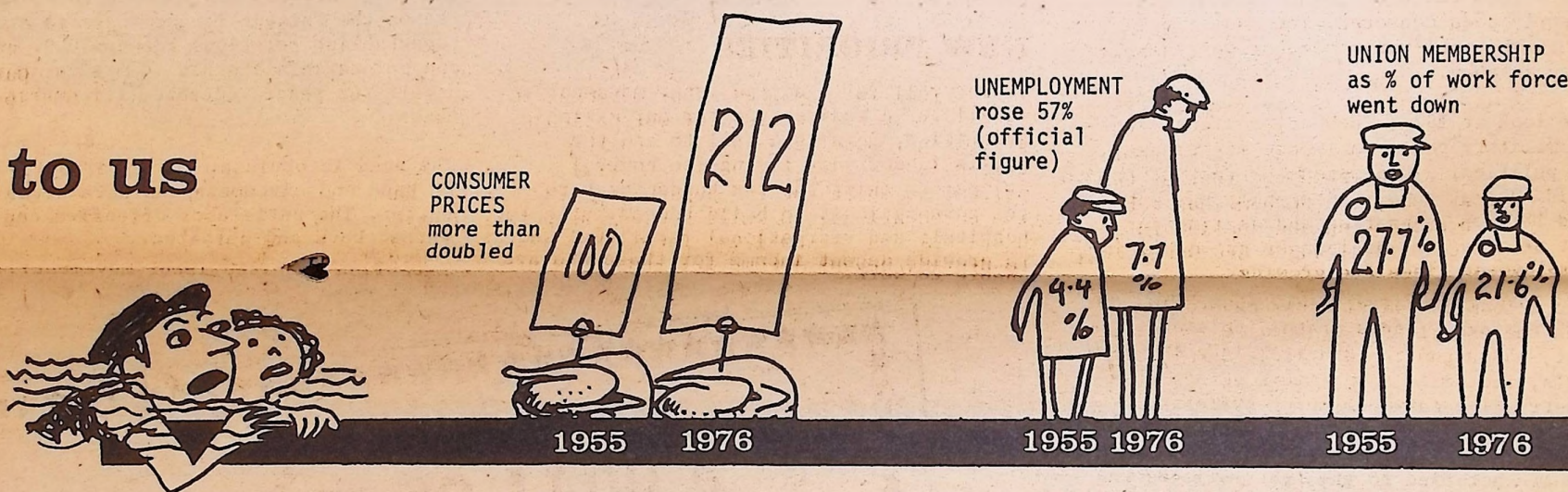
Take a look at what's happened since 1955...



...to them



...to us



Here's why...

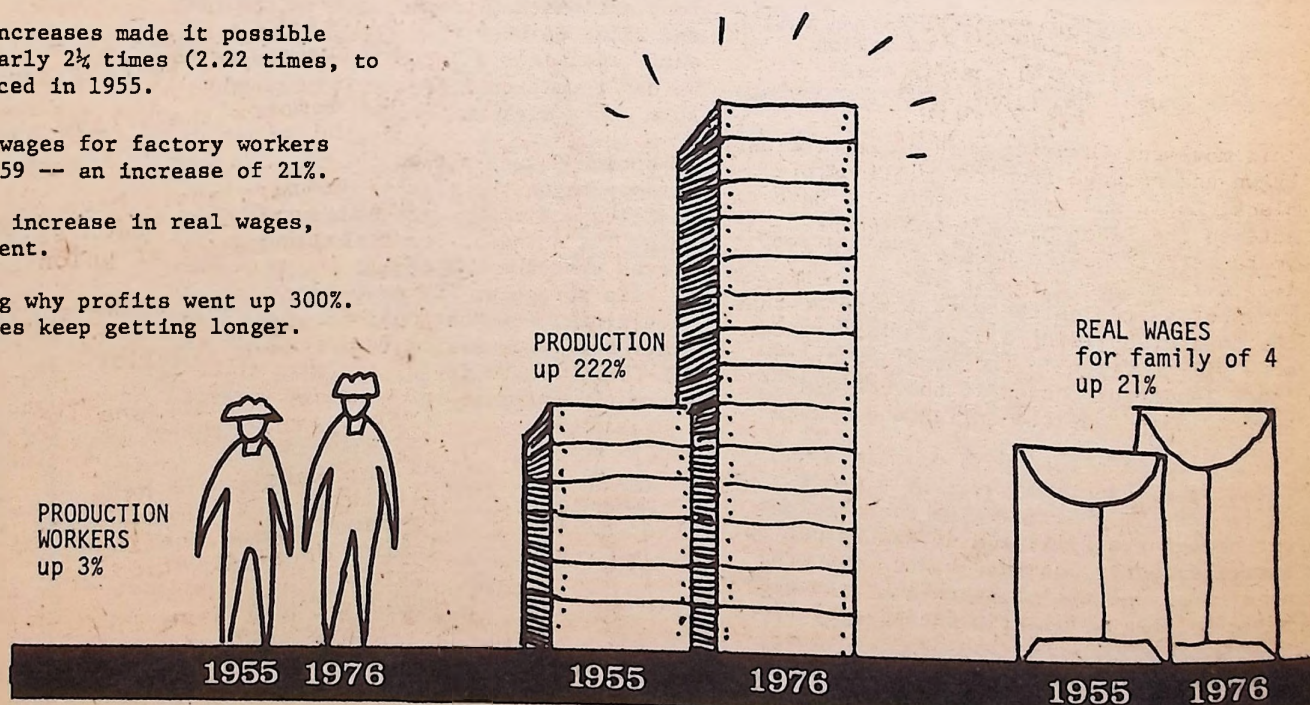
In 1955, production workers in manufacturing numbered 13,288,000. By 1976, there were 13,625,000 -- an increase of less than 3%.

Between 1955 and 1976, productivity increases made it possible for the 1976 work force to produce nearly 2½ times (2.22 times, to be exact) as much goods as were produced in 1955.

During the same period, average real wages for factory workers climbed from \$87.02 per week to \$107.59 -- an increase of 21%.

In other words, for every one percent increase in real wages, production increased by over ten percent.

That goes a long way toward explaining why profits went up 300%. It also explains why unemployment lines keep getting longer.



... we need a united labor movement!

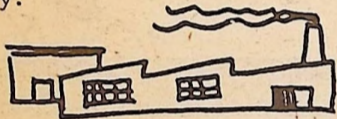
United labor movement (continued from page 5)

THIS IS NOT 1955

Some of our friends in the labor movement question the wisdom of our position and speak of some very serious weaknesses of the AFL-CIO. They point to the 1955 merger of the CIO and the AFL and ask, "What about that--was that progress?"

We at TUAD know that there are no guarantees that a united labor movement will automatically move away from the policies of collaboration that have paralyzed the U.S. labor movement for more than a generation. But we also know something else: *Today is not 1955. What proved to be impossible in 1955 may be possible in 1977.*

Just think back to 1955: On the world economic scene, the U.S. was top dog. At home, real wages were increasing and unemployment was a national disgrace but not yet a national disaster. The housing-highway-auto boom of the '50's and '60's was about to take off and millions of U.S. workers were lulled by the illusion of never-ending prosperity and economic security.



Remember 1955: U.S. military and political power dominated the globe. Domestic tranquility seemed assured. The labor movement had pulled its own teeth by expelling 11 unions from the CIO. McCarthy had only recently been censored. The mass civil-rights and anti-war movements were nearly a decade away.

Then look at 1977: The U.S. no longer has the military power to impose its economic and political dictates on the rest of the world. And at home, the economy has wobbled between stagnation and decline for most of a decade. Real wages are declining, unemployment lines are growing.

Take a look at today: A new generation, with the experiences of the '60's under its belt, has begun to take its place in mines, mills, factories and offices across the country. The anti-communist hysteria of the '50's is no more. In a number of unions, forward-looking leaders have come forward who are not tied to the past policies and mistakes of many in the ranks of the labor leadership.

THE REAL DIFFERENCE

All of this makes the world of 1977 different than the world of 1955. *But the clearest distinction between today and yesterday is the existence and continued growth of a militant rank and file movement.*



This movement, drawing much of its brains, brawn and courage from the millions of Black, Latin and women workers who have entered the labor movement in recent years, serves as the best guarantee that 1977 will not be a repeat of 1955. This movement serves as the best guarantee that the task of building a united labor movement will not remain the province of the labor leadership, even if there are a growing number of the enlightened among them.

UNITY FOR WHAT?

Our call for affiliation of all unions to a single center does not blind us to the need to change the class-collaborationist policies that still grip decisive sections of the AFL-CIO leadership. *To the contrary.* We advocate reaffiliation precisely because we think the fight to replace class-collaborationist policies with class-struggle policies--and leaders who sit back with leaders who will fight back--can best be conducted by taking the fight to the highest bodies of the AFL-CIO. We think

this is the best way to fight it out and to ask (and answer) another question: "Unity for what--and around what?"

JOBS

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call to end unemployment and create jobs. Ours is a call for the labor movement to launch a campaign for shorter hours and an end to compulsory overtime.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call for a labor movement leading militant campaigns for affirmative action. Ours is a call to repudiate the policies that have put the AFL-CIO behind the false issue of "reverse discrimination".

ORGANIZE

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call to commit the resources of the entire labor movement in a coordinated campaign to organize the unorganized, with a special emphasis on cracking the anti-union, open-shop South.

RETURN TO STRUGGLE

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call to end labor participation in government agencies that serve to weaken the independence of the labor movement. Ours is a call for the resignation of all labor leaders from the Labor Management group and a return to struggle rather than cooperation with the employers of our nation.

NEW PRIORITIES

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call for a redirection for our nation's priorities. Ours is a call to end the crisis in everyday living--to control prices; to shift the tax burden back to the corporations; to build houses, schools, hospitals and recreational facilities and to provide decent income for those who are unable to work.

POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call for the labor movement to establish its political independence. Ours is a call for the labor movement to run working people and union members for public office and help build a labor-community coalition to elect them.

UNION DEMOCRACY

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call for the recognition and protection of the rights of all union members in order to guarantee the re-birth of strong, militant unions controlled by an informed and organized membership and led by courageous, forward-looking leaders.

REALIGNMENT

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call for a re-alignment within the labor movement. Ours is a call for a Metal, Mining and Manufacturing Department of the AFL-CIO in order to maximize the economic and political power of the unions in basic industry who are faced with the responsibility of dealing with the giant corporations that dominate the economic and political life of the United States.

PEACE

...Our call for a united labor movement is a call to reverse the policies which have put the money and the prestige of the AFL-CIO in the service of the CIA and the cold-warriors who make up the Committee on the Present Danger. Ours is a call to establish relations between U.S. unions and unions in all other countries. Ours is a call for peace, detente, friendship and trade.

The need is obvious. The opportunity is at hand and circumstances have never been better. The anti-labor offensive can be turned back and defeated.

Establish a united labor movement!!!

A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR UNION MEMBERS

- 1 All members shall have the right to secret-ballot vote for stewards, bargaining committees, local union officers and convention delegates.
- 2 All members shall have the right to vote on contracts and working agreements.
- 3 All members shall have the right to call and to end strikes.
- 4 All members shall have the right to vote on dues, establish union salaries and control the expenditure of union monies.
- 5 All unions shall take special steps to guarantee representation by Black, Latin and women members on all policy-making bodies.
- 6 All union members shall have the right to respect the picket lines of other workers.
- 7 All workers shall have the right to join and participate in union affairs without regard to race, creed, national origin or political belief or affiliation.
- 8 Members shall have the right to all union documents in his/her own language.

WEST COAST LABOR LEADER SAYS:

'Labor must build its own political party'

by WILL PARRY, Legislative Representative
Assoc. of Western Pulp & Paper Workers

Seven years as a union lobbyist at the Washington State legislature have convinced me that independence from the Democratic and Republican parties is absolutely crucial to labor progress in the political field.



Will Parry

Our labor movement should stop thinking and operating in a framework of accommodation to two parties, both of which are dominated by the big employers. We should start thinking instead about political power and how to achieve it.

I believe we must begin to lay the foundation for a new political party with organized labor as its backbone and with a platform designed to challenge and curb the big banks and corporate giants that run the show in Washington D.C. and the state capitols.

This is no abstract conclusion, arrived at after silent meditation in an ivory tower. It is born out of seven years' experience in the marble halls at Olympia, trying to make the two-party system responsive to the minimum needs of working people.

In the current session of the Washington State legislature, the Democrats have a massive majority in the House and Senate.

They have the governorship. If labor's traditional political action methods have any validity at all, we should have made some progress in basic programs like workers' compensation and unemployment compensation this year.

Instead, we got kicked around. The Association of Washington Business--the political arm in this state of the corporate power structure--ran the show, operating coolly and comfortably with the Democratic leadership.

My conclusion is that reliance on the Democratic or Republican parties, or on the handful of honest legislators within them, will never solve the problems of working people. Nor is it possible to transform them gradually into vehicles for progress. It is important to single out the worst anti-labor legislators and organize the forces to defeat them. But we must not harbor the illusion that replacing individuals will change the system in a basic way. The corrupting and co-opting process is built into a system where both parties are beholden to the big money.

Labor needs its own political vehicle. Its own platform. Its own candidates. Its own power blocs in Congress and in the state legislatures.

We can learn from the work of the Black Caucus in Congress. Its clout is far greater than its number would suggest. Why is this so?

It is so because the Black Caucus is based on and responsible to a specific constituency: The Black people and poor people generally. Where the interests of that constituency conflict with narrow party interests, the constituency usually prevails. Thus, we have in the Black Caucus a degree of independence from the Democratic party



as such. This enables the Caucus to attack the real problems of the people more effectively.

I have sense enough to know we can't establish a broad, labor-based new party overnight. But we need to launch a process of breaking the chains that have bound labor to the Democratic party for so many years.

I believe we can begin by electing a few legislators from labor's own ranks, chosen by labor, and committed to labor's program. This approach places the needs of working men and women ahead of the needs of either of the two existing parties.

A labor caucus in Congress, or in the legislature, would be nominally Democratic, but in practice independently dedicated to workers' interests--just as the corporation bloc in our state's legislature is nominally Democratic but in practice dedicated to the corporations' interests.

A labor caucus would act as a political magnet, drawing to it the many honest liberals who want to serve the people but who today wobble and waver because they lack a clear working class understanding of the issues--and because they are not clearly accountable to an organized working class constituency.

A labor caucus would be a first step toward political power. And we must think, not in the old terms of ingratiating ourselves with the existing power structure, but in new terms of creating our own power base.

What is required to take these first steps toward labor's power base?

First, a conscious political and programmatic independence from the two-party system, even as we nominate and elect within that system. (I don't see anything wrong with labor running independent candidates where the circumstances call for that approach.)

Second, the active involvement of our own rank and file in the political process. Our strength lies in our numbers. All the lobbying expertise in the world is no substitute for the organized pressure of workers.

Third, we need a conscious policy of developing alliances and coalitions on common issues. All such alliances should have one common denominator: In one way or another they should marshal people's power against the corporate power bloc. Many of these alliances will be transitory, one-issue affairs. But a conscious policy of building alliances will lay the foundation for the new broad people's party, with labor as its backbone, that must be built in our country.

ON POLITICAL ACTION...



There is a difference between political action and playing politics. When we fought the politicians and won that legislation we did, we didn't play politics; we engaged in political action. We didn't rub bellies with politicians.

James J. Matles
UE General-Secretary-Treasurer
1962-1975



We have only one political party in this country -- the Money Party. And it has two branches -- the Republican branch and the Democratic branch.

Arnold Miller, President
United Mine Workers of America

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World Federation of Trade Unions.

new york committee for

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MARION CALLIGARIS

Co-chairmen

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George Meyers
Sam Zeletan
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Milwaukee, Wisc.

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LABOR DAY GREETINGS

FROM

ELM Joint Board

AMC & BW of NA, AFL-CIO

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Bernard J. Woolis, Sec. Treas.

109 W. 26th Street,
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Best wishes & continued success
to Labor Today —

The EXECUTIVE BOARD and MEMBERSHIP of the
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UE Local 1111, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

FOR LABOR UNITY

Harry Bordis, Cedar Rapids, Ia.

LABOR DAY GREETINGS

*In solidarity and
struggle...*



DISTRICT

11

Chicago, Illinois



Greetings!



*from a
paper worker*

GREETINGS TO LABOR TODAY

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LABOR DAY GREETINGS

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Hotel, Motel Service Workers, Drug Store, Sports
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greet
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auto workers
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•
LASKER SMITH, Chairman

For SHORTER
HOURS

and a longer life! A FRIEND



Circulation tops 1,000!

by ALTHERNA HUNTER
LABOR TODAY Business Manager

Altherna
Hunter



Did you ever try to enter the names of more than 1,200 new readers to a subscribers' list? It's a big job, but that's exactly what we've done since our Special Subscription Campaign began in April.

Brother Williams and the Staff at LABOR TODAY send their congratulations to all of our readers who made it possible.

Space doesn't permit us to list all of our

circulation builders but special congratulations are in order for the 44 individuals and local unions who sent in at least 12 new subs. The Akins'--Brother Kevin and Sister Margie--topped the list with 52 and we are publishing Kevin's letter in recognition of all 44.

Kevin and Marge Akin show the way

I decided to put some real effort into selling LABOR TODAY subscriptions when the Sadiowski slate lost the USWA elections. Everybody at Kaiser who read LABOR TODAY actively supported the Fightback slate. They had a real understanding of the issues they knew how important democracy in the union is to the strength of the union, and LABOR TODAY had inoculated them against the barrage of baiting and lies used against the Fightback slate. But there were only about a dozen subscribers at Kaiser. Despite our efforts we lost the mill.

After the election, I realized that one real need here was some kind of action to combat the general ignorance of basic unionism among the members. And what better tool to use than LABOR TODAY? LT has good background stories on the bigger unions, fine "how-to" articles showing men and women how to be effective in their own unions, and basic facts about the importance of strong, democratic unions to every worker. The way I figure it, the most LABOR TODAY readers a union has, the stronger and more effective that union will be.

So, I started selling subscriptions as soon as the "Dollar-A-Sub" drive started. My wife, Margie, helped out, and really deserves credit for some of the subscriptions sold to people in other unions, but I'm most pleased about new subscribers at Kaiser Steel.

I found considerable resistance to the idea of subscribing to anything, even at a dollar a sub. I had to ask about 200 people to sell twenty subs. I paid for a few myself, when I couldn't get in touch with somebody I knew would read and enjoy the paper, or when I ran into someone who wanted to subscribe but just couldn't lo-

cate a dollar at the moment. Some other LABOR TODAY readers gave me a buck or two and told me to send subs to particular people in their departments. The biggest help I got was from a retired steamfitter who bought a sub himself and four more for some active steelworkers.

I hope we'll be able to involve most of the new subscribers in the rank and file



Kevin
Akin

push to strengthen our local union. My wife and I hope to get some of them active in support of the Conyers Bill for the shorter work week--we may be able to form a multi-union committee locally to support the Conyers Bill.

I think LABOR TODAY is a bargain at the regular price, and I'm setting my sights on 25 more subscriptions at the mill before the end of the year. Perhaps some of the other old and new readers will sell a few subs, too. It's well worth the effort for a stronger union!

Miscellaneous notes: I'll be 27 by the time the next issue is printed. I'm a Waste Heat Boiler Tender, and I serve as an assistant safety committeeman. Margie and I have two kids. I was secretary of the local Sadiowski campaign committee.

Kevin Akin