

Ferment in the Ranks of Labor

★ **Forty Years After WW II
Lessons Learned and Unlearned**
Editorial Comment

★ **Trade Union Program
(A Draft)**
Communist Party, USA

★ **The San Pedro
Waterfront Strike, 1923**
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★ **Reagan Confronts Labor—
The Record**
George Morris

★ **The Wisconsin Action Coalition
New Direction for Labor**
Sandra Jones

★ **In the Perspective of History
7th Congress of the Comintern**
Jim West



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Forty Years After WW II: Lessons Learned and Unlearned

Forty years have passed since the anti-Comintern axis of Germany, Japan and Italy was defeated on the bloody fields of war. More than fifty million perished in this struggle, which was so basic to the freedom of mankind. At least one-third of the painfully accumulated wealth of Europe—its homes, schools, factories—went up in flames as well.

When the Nazis, soon followed by the Japanese warlords, laid down their arms in 1945, it was clear to everyone that mankind had won a great victory. But the reason for that victory seemed equally clear: it was due to the unity of the allied forces, which had managed to overcome their mutual contradictions and united against the common enemy.

In fact, based on that general understanding of what had guaranteed victory in war, the Allies agreed to set up a world assembly, the United Nations, that would carry out into the future of peace the same logic which had united them in war.

Though there were admittedly ambiguities during the waging of the war—strains, even betrayals—nevertheless the monumental drive for victory over fascism overwhelmed all inner contradictions and generated an objective momentum for unity that proved to be greater than all the forces of divisiveness. But in the same year of victory the appearance of two sinister columns of smoke, over where Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been, cast an uneasy shadow over the future.

The first outward signs that important differences existed among the Allies which could not be reconciled surfaced at Nuremberg. There it proved to be less difficult to mete out punishment to the men in the dock than it was to mete out justice to the millions of

their victims. The men were punished—most were hung—but what were they punished for?

To decide that, the Court was forced to confront the meaning of fascism itself, and this is where the difficulty, which haunts the Western world today, arose. The Western prosecutors tried to confine the question of guilt within narrow limits of proven criminal *deeds* of individuals. *Men* were evil. The Soviet prosecutor tried to show that the *class* was evil, and the individuals, though guilty in themselves, merely represented the class. The Soviet position had already prevailed to the extent that, unlike World War I, which also had its post-war trial, this time the General Staff itself was put on trial. But more. At Soviet insistence, political and financial leaders were also charged with complicity. This was new.

And it created a serious dilemma for the Western prosecutors, like the chief American prosecutor, Robert H. Jackson, later to become U.S. attorney general and then justice of the Supreme Court. He found himself in the unhappy position of helping to forge the moral and legal basis for judging a *policy*, which was a class policy, and which he knew already was the policy (though still "underground") of the dominant forces emerging in the United States. That policy had as its aim the complete suppression of the working-class and democratic movement, and the elimination, by war if necessary, of socialist states anywhere in the world, the Soviet Union first of all. Jackson, for instance, who, in Nuremberg, sat in judgement of the Nazi killers of Communists and sent them to the gallows, would later himself prosecute American Communists and then sit as a Supreme Court judge on their guilt!

This was the "dilemma" to which Joachim von Ribbentrop, Hitler's Foreign Minister, re-

ferred with such sympathetic identification when he noted the plight of the allied prosecutors as he stood before them at the bar in Nuremberg, awaiting the sentence at their hands that would send him to the gallows. "I hope," he said, "with all my heart *for my country* that in the event [when the two allies, British and American, would have to confront the Soviets in their turn] you may be more successful." (Italics added.)

And there is the root of the reason for the extraordinary agonizing that has been going on for 40 years in the West over the meaning of the victory over German (and Italian and Japanese) fascism. Never have we seen a similar situation, where the victors so often express regret over their victory, even mourn the "tragedy" of it—decry having fought the "wrong war"—been so reluctant to hunt down and eliminate the real source of their own people's suffering, as we do now.

Why the despair over *victory*? Because it was a people's war, a people's victory. But the logic of a people's victory, which was embodied in the vow the Allies swore in Potsdam, to root out fascism forever, collided with the (then secret) class aims of the two Western allies in the triumphant triple alliance.

Ribbentrop hoped that the class essence of the Germany he knew, "my country," would be preserved and protected by the Allies. He was right. Like calls to like. After 40 years Reagan finally openly answered him, and in no uncertain terms, when he said that "our staunchest allies . . . are the countries that were our enemies during World War II." (April 10, 1985.)

It was in this same spirit of "reconciliation" with German fascism that he announced, with such blind complacency, his intention of commemorating the dead in the German cemetery of Bitburg in which SS troops are "honorably" buried.

What subsequently surprised, and even shocked, him and his advisers was not the obscenity of the proposed act itself. They were blind to that. What shocked them was the world's reaction. He had not anticipated that this barbaric gesture would stir the profound

antifascist feelings of millions of people in whom the memory of German fascism in particular had not died.

Those millions, including the younger generation which had been raised with a moral loathing for fascism, saw in Reagan's move an attempt to revive the past, not as memory, but as *present*. They understood that to forgive and forget the criminality of Nazism is to accept it.

Those who want to turn back the clock, as the Reagan gang does, to the social relations of the eighteenth century, when a worker came to his boss hat in hand, Afro-Americans waited on master's table, when women lived and died on the endless treadmill between kitchen and bedroom—know nothing about history, understand people only in the mechanistic-behavioral way, like Coca Cola ad writers, and perceive their class interests in the most primitive sense—as nothing but crass wish fulfillment. In the century of space flights and computers in kindergartens they want horse-and-buggy class relations.

The Reagan clique's attempts to harness the world to the American wheel is not only repugnant as an idea but it is unworkable as a plan. The objection to it is not only that it is immoral. It isn't feasible. The Reaganites do not have the strength to impose their plans on the world today, to reshape a dynamic reality the way a Hollywood director shoots and cuts film footage according to a prepaid script, any more than Hitler was able to mold the world into the image of his mad dreams four decades ago. The working class, formerly colonized peoples, everyone who wishes to live in peace—the majority of mankind—are not content with the lines on Reagan's script, and are speaking their own piece.

What were some of the consequences of the defeat of Hitlerism?

It plunged the capitalist world into an even greater crisis, and forced on it an even more hopeless chore—its "dilemma"—of convincing the peoples of the world that the aggressive schemes of imperialism are in their interests. Lying has become a massive industry.

But it proved more. The Soviet Union bore the brunt of the fascist onslaught and turned it back. The war proved that socialism is capable of defending itself against capitalism even in its most aggressive form.

The antifascist struggle proved that the role of Communists is not incidental, but crucial. It was the Communists who first raised the warning that fascism meant war and organized the first resistance to it, even at the price of filling the concentration camps in those early years of Nazism with their cadres. It was George Dimitrov who, as head of the Comintern, in 1935 outlined the strategy of the united front, which eventually proved to be decisive in mobilizing all the disparate forces toward the same aim—the defeat of German fascism.

And it is precisely this strategy of the united front—the necessity that all forces, no matter how they differ on specific issues, unite against the common enemy—that is so important to us now.

Faced with the historic threat of genocidal war, in which even dandelions would perish, the overwhelming majority of mankind has every reason to unite behind one strategy, and the urge to do so is there. That is what is behind the cry that rose at Reagan's proposal to commemorate the SS dead, and why it became a roar.

World War III can, and must, be prevented now, before it breaks out. Normal relations between the United States and the Soviet Union can be reinstated. Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU, was right when he pointed out that hostile relations between the two countries is abnormal.

In the face of the nuclear threat, the natural, instinctive drive toward peace, toward reaching an understanding on disarmament, toward making Geneva a success, is worldwide, crosses class lines, national boundaries, and is the deepest expression of humanity itself.

Peace will be because it must be. The masses are awake and in motion as never before. The rebuff to Reagan must be extended to a full repudiation of his war policies and he must be forced not merely to sit down with the Soviets at Geneva and fake it—he must be forced to come to an agreement which really reflects the will to peace which is certainly what the American people—as the people of the world—want.

- Make the Geneva meetings successful.
 - No to Reagan's Star War plans.
 - Hands off Nicaragua.
 - Forward to detente.
 - Peace.

In the Perspective of History Seventh Congress of the Comintern

JIM WEST

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. While it was destined to be the last of the congresses of the CI, its deliberations exert a powerful influence on the course of development to this day.

The Comintern (as it came to be called), in the 16 years from its foundation in March 1919, under V.I. Lenin's direct leadership, until the Seventh Congress, left an indelible mark on history.

It decisively helped to develop and bring to maturity Communist Parties in scores of countries. It generalized the experiences of the various countries, updating and enriching the science of Marxism-Leninism and arming the affiliated parties with knowledge vital to the struggle against opportunism, dogmatism and sectarianism. Its guidance was indispensable in assisting many Communist Parties to become mass parties of the working class.

The Communist International arose in the wake of the collapse of the Second (Socialist) International, brought on by rampant opportunism and by its support of the imperialist World War of 1914-1918. The fall of the Second International left a dangerous void in the international working-class movement at a time when the Great October Revolution was sweeping Russia and revolutionary upheavals were occurring in Europe and elsewhere.

It was a moment when, as Karl Marx said in his Inaugural Address of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International) in 1864, "disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles

for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts."

Lenin, the foremost continuer of Marx's work and leader of the October Revolution, saw most clearly the urgent need for a successor to the First International, one that could inherit the best traditions of the Second International. He took the lead preparing for it and working out the ideological, theoretical, organizational and practical foundations of the Third, Communist, International.

When delegates representing 65 parties and fraternal international organizations convened for the Seventh Congress in Moscow on July 25, 1935, the lengthening shadow of war had begun to black out the sunrises of peace, and the fascist menace had perceptibly grown.

Japan had occupied Manchuria in 1931 and was preparing new aggressions for the partition of China and the seizure of Mongolia and the eastern territory of the USSR. Mussolini was preparing to march his fascist legions into Ethiopia. The German monopolists had put Hitler in power in January 1933 and fascist movements were making big strides in France, Austria, Greece, Spain, the Baltic states and incipient fascism was raising its ugly head in the United States. Two-thirds of the world's Communist Parties worked underground, targets of unremitting terror.

The Nazis had polled 13,800,000 votes in the Reichstag elections of 1932, more than any other political force, having made the most of the split between the Communists and Social Democrats, who had polled 5.4 million and 8 million votes respectively. The split in the ranks of the working class and the consequent loss of its power of attraction for the middle strata and nonfascist forces played into the hands of the Nazis.

Jim West, chair of the Central Review Commission of the CPUSA, was a delegate to the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International.

Once in power, Hitler began the feverish rearmament of Germany with the announced goal of world conquest to establish the dominance of the "pure Aryan super-race." The Soviet Union repeatedly called for a policy of collective security of the capitalist and socialist democracies to prevent fascist aggression. This proposal to safeguard peace was spurned by the capitalist powers, which were maneuvering to encourage Hitler to attack the USSR.

At the same time, in the seven years since the preceding world congress, the world Communist movement had grown into a powerful political, social, cultural and moral force. The number of Communists in the capitalist countries had risen from less than half a million to more than 780,000. Socialist industrialization had secured the triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union, making for a further shift on a world scale in favor of socialism to the detriment of capitalism. The attitude of the Soviet people towards its accomplishments was expressed by D. Manuilsky when he said in his report to the Congress that the achievements of the USSR "belong to the toilers of the whole world irrespective of nation and race, language and color, to all those who are fighting exploitation and oppression."

This noble, internationalist concept deeply moved all of us. The delegates could see the remarkably rapid advance of the Soviet Republic from a backward country to one with a powerful industrial base. I saw this for myself in the mighty new steel center at Magnitogorsk and in other new industrial giants. These achievements inspired greater confidence among working people in the capitalist and colonial countries in their fight against fascism, imperialist reaction and war.

Such was the setting when the 513 delegates came together in the Hall of Columns of Moscow's House of Trade Unions to work out an orientation which could overcome sectarianism and splits in the working class and broad masses and unite them for victory over fascism and to advance the cause of peace.

For me, a young man of 21, an apprentice in the class struggle, so to speak, the Congress was a tremendous, concentrated learning experience, just as millions worldwide were soon to undergo a great schooling based on the Congress reports and resolutions.

And how could one not learn, listening to such seasoned, tried-and-tested, mature Communist and labor leaders as George Dimitrov and Vasil Kolarov (Bulgaria), Klement Gottwald and Antonin Zapotocky (Czechoslovakia), Marcel Cachin and Maurice Thorez (France), Wilhelm Pieck and Walter Ulbricht (Germany), Harry Pollit (Great Britain), Bela Kun (Hungary), Palmiro Togliatti (Italy), Sanzo Nasaka (Japan), J. Lensky (Poland), Jose Diaz and Dolores Ibarruri (Spain), Khalid Bagdash (Syria), Tim Buck (Canada), Otto Kuusinen (Finland), Joseph Stalin and Dimitri Manuilsky (Soviet Union) and our own William Z. Foster!

The Congress opened on a solemn and militant note by unanimously electing Ernst Thaelman, leader of the German Communists who was in a Nazi prison, as honorary chairman.

The main report, given by George Dimitrov on "The Fascist Offensive and the Tasks of the Communist International in the Fight for the Unity of the Working Class Against Fascism" was the centerpiece of the Congress.

German fascism, Dimitrov said, was the mailed fist of the international counter-revolution, the main force of world fascist reaction, the main instigator of a new imperialist war, the mortal enemy of the Soviet Union.

He gave the classic characterization of the class essence of fascism in power as the undisguised, terroristic dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, most imperialist elements of finance capital—a definition which today, 50 years later, retains its validity.

This characterization refuted the harmful Social Democratic view which regarded fascism as a petty-bourgeois movement. This concept covered up the basic class function of fascism as the instrument of monopoly capital against the working class and all democratic forces, and thus tended to minimize the fascist danger. Today we still encounter attempts to hide the class

nature of fascism and fascist movements.

The Congress dispelled such notions as the fascist danger arising only when a country was approaching the socialist revolution, and fascism as simply the succession of one bourgeois government by another. It pointed out that fascism aimed at delivering a fatal blow to the organizations of the working class before masses embraced revolutionary goals; that it was necessary to recognize both a gradual fascization of a bourgeois government as well as a head on attack by the fascists; and that fascism represented a substitution of one form of class rule by the bourgeoisie—bourgeois democracy—by another form, open terrorist dictatorship.

These were the most important conclusions because they made possible the recognition and utilization of the contradictions between fascism and bourgeois democracy. They provided the theoretical basis for developing the broadest unity of all antifascist and nonfascist forces against the chief enemy. They underlay the strategy which brought democratic people's governments to power in Spain and inspired Communists and other antifascists to come to the defense of that Loyalist government, in the International Brigades, against the Franco fascists. The victory of the Popular Front government in the French elections of 1936 was another early confirmation of the soundness of the Seventh Congress decisions. The Congress gave great impetus to the rapid growth of the antifascist movement everywhere. In the United States, the Communist Party projected a policy of democratic front of all antifascist forces, which included critical support of some of President Roosevelt's policies.

The Congress stressed that fascism menaced not only the Soviet Union, Communists and other adherents of socialism, but all who stood for democracy, peace and social progress. Accordingly, it pointed up the need to win the middle strata to antifascism, expose the social and nationalistic demogogy of fascism to prevent it from gaining a mass base in the middle strata. It warned against the danger of mass infection of fascist ideology, an ideology of racism and hatred of people.

Isn't this a timely warning for our times as well, when ideological, racist brutalization runs rampant and engenders contempt for human life and indifference to the suffering of others; when the President himself feels no compunction about paying tribute to Nazi murderers rather than their victims before the whole world?

As Gus Hall says, while fascism is neither imminent nor inevitable in the U.S., we must not underestimate the danger.

The Seventh World Congress set as a paramount task the establishment of antifascist working-class unity—a united workers' front.

"Unity of action of the proletariat is the mighty weapon which renders the working class capable not only of successful defense, but also of successful counterattacks against fascism, against the class enemy," Dimitrov declared. Among other things, this meant trade union unity and united action with the Social Democrats whenever possible. In promoting the policy of the united front, Communists do not for a moment give up their independent class position and the struggle against the ideology and practice of class collaboration.

The Congress put forward only two conditions for trade union unity: conduct of the class struggle in defense of the class interests of the workers, and inner-union democracy. It was strongly critical of sectarian mistakes which regarded the reactionary-led trade unions as instruments of the capitalist state, an erroneous idea which resulted in poor participation of Communists in trade unions and strike struggles under reactionary or reformist leadership.

The conditions under which political-organizational unity of Communist and Socialist Parties could be advanced were also debated. Among the conditions projected were: complete independence from the capitalist class; preliminary implementation of unity of action; recognition of the need for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist rule and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat; no support to one's own bourgeoisie in imperialist war, and

building the party on the basis of democratic centralism. These conditions were subsequently met in a number of countries and, in these cases, one unified party of the working class was established.

The workers' united front was the bedrock on which the policy of antifascist alliances—the Popular Front policy—was based. The efforts of the working class alone, even if united, were not enough to defeat fascism. The policy of the Popular Front was solidly rooted in the Leninist concept of the interdependence of the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism.

Lenin had written:

It would be a radical mistake to think that the struggle for democracy was capable of diverting the proletariat from the socialist revolution or of hiding, overshadowing it, etc. On the contrary, in the same way as there can be no victorious socialism that does not practice full democracy, so the proletariat can not prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie without an all-around, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy. (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 454.)

Decisive in implementing the strategy of the Popular Front was concentration on the immediate demands of the working class and defense by the working class of all the demands of the middle strata and democratic forces which did not conflict with its own interests. The anti-fascist Popular Front strategy aimed to prevent the ruin of the middle class, prevent their slide into the ranks of the working class or even the lumpenproletariat.

Confident of the possibilities of the success of this strategy, the Congress also defined the conditions under which the establishment of a Popular Front government could become possible: the capitalist state machine was thrown out of gear and could not do anything to prevent such a government from being formed; the working-class movement was in ascendancy but the masses were not yet ready to fight for a socialist revolution; the political parties in the Popular Front demanded the strongest measures against the fascists and were ready to enforce such measures together with the Communists.

Problems of national liberation in the colo-

nies occupied a great deal of attention by the delegates. The Congress repudiated the view that national liberation was possible only by way of proletarian revolution or following a socialist revolution in the imperialist countries. It held that national liberation could not be kept in abeyance until conditions were ripe for a workers' and peasants' government. It sharply criticized the idea that the national bourgeoisie was wholly pro-imperialist and that its organizations should be the main target of attack.

The Congress called for establishment and building the anti-imperialist front of all who were capable of fighting imperialism, including the section of the national bourgeoisie which had taken up anti-imperialist positions.

To unite the liberation struggles with the revolutionary movements of the working class, the Congress affirmed, it was necessary to educate working people in the spirit of internationalism and irreconcilability to chauvinism.

There is no doubt that the anti-imperialist strategy laid down by the Seventh Congress met with a great response in Asia and Africa, leaving a deep imprint on the liberation struggles which put an end to colonialism in the wake of the Second World War.

The clouds of war were on the horizon as the Seventh Congress met. The fight for peace, against the danger of another world war and anti-Soviet intervention, played an important role in the Congress deliberations. Palmiro Togliatti, working under the name of Ercoli because of fascism in Italy, made the special report on "The Fight Against War and Fascism, Preparation for Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communist International."

The Congress declared that the central slogan of the Communist Parties must be the struggle for peace.

In his report, Togliatti placed the fight for peace in a revolutionary perspective in the sense that for Communists, peace and the struggle for socialism were inseparable. This was a clear repudiation of the infamous slander that Communists favored war as the only way to create conditions for a socialist revolution.

This calumny, fed by the Leftist-Trotskyite view which alleged that war cleared the way for revolution, was heard again during the Vietnam War when Trotskyite groups opposed the fight to end the war on the grounds that it should continue until U.S. imperialism was overthrown. These "superrevolutionaries" were ready to fight to the last Vietnamese!

The Congress rejected the view that war was fatalistically inevitable. The fight for peace could not be regarded as hopeless because of the changed alignment of forces in the world, the growth of the USSR's political, economic and military might and the strengthened ranks of the world revolutionary movement. Today, the world balance of forces is still more favorable for winning the fight for peace, due to the existence of a stable and strong socialist community of nations, the anti-imperialist nonaligned movement of former colonial countries and the much stronger revolutionary workers' movement in the capitalist world and the worldwide peace movement. The concerted action of all these forces could guarantee the success of the Geneva arms reduction talks, prevent U.S. intervention in Central America, compel divestiture from apartheid South Africa and win a just peace in the Middle East.

The Seventh Congress also rejected the "Leftist" contention that equal responsibility fell on all capitalist states for unleashing war. Taking the Leninist guideline of a concrete approach to given situations, the Congress centered its attacks against the fascist warmongers, Germany, Japan and Italy. German fascism was described as the chief enemy of peace.

Recalling that Lenin had indicated the possibility of national liberation wars even in Europe, the Congress pointed out that this was directly applicable at a time when Nazi Germany was out to enslave many European countries.

The Seventh Congress thus raised the banner of the widest possible peace front of the working class, all working people and democratic strata, as well as countries threatened by fascist aggression. The realization of the strategy of collective security against fascist aggression was the means of averting war.

One of the sources of the victory over the Nazis in World War II is in this very strategy worked out by the world Communist movement at the Seventh Congress ten years earlier.

The final world gathering of the Communist International produced a new strategic policy arising from the changed alignment of class forces in the world and the sharpened contradictions of monopoly capitalism. It was an orientation which opened new possibilities for revolutionary advance.

It enriched Marxist-Leninist theory, and armed the Communist movement with a clear strategy for the struggle against fascism and war. It spurred the constructive work of U.S. Communists, clearly identifying Nazi Germany as the chief instigator of war, heightening antifascist consciousness and action, building the broadest coalition movements against war and fascism. It gave tremendous stimulus to the drive to organize the unorganized into industrial unions (the CIO), which gave muscle and determination to the whole antifascist upsurge in the country.

It is indisputable that this tremendous organizing and educational work of the CPUSA, inspired by the epoch-making decisions of the Seventh Congress, was a very weighty factor in helping to overcome the influence of the pro-Nazi, America First cabal, and in guaranteeing that the might of our country would come down on the side of democracy, against fascism in World War II.

The U.S. delegation listened with deep attention as Dimitrov spoke of the fascist danger in the United States:

Incipient American fascism is endeavoring to direct the disillusionment and discontent of these masses into reactionary fascist channels. It is a peculiarity of the development of American fascism that at the present stage it appears principally in the guise of an opposition to fascism, which it accuses of being an "un-American" tendency imported from abroad. In contradistinction to German fascism, which acts under anti-constitutional slogans, American fascism tries to portray itself as the custodian of the Constitution and

"American democracy." It does not yet represent a directly menacing force. But if it succeeds in penetrating to the broad masses who have become disillusioned with the old bourgeois parties, it may become a very serious matter in the very near future.

These words are especially relevant today when, as Gus Hall said after the Republican convention last year, "a coordinated network of fully mobilized, disciplined, sophisticated and well-financed ultra-Right and fascist forces . . . took over the Republican Party itself."

The interests of the American proletariat [said Dimitrov] demand that all its forces disassociate themselves from the capitalist parties without delay. It must at the proper time find ways and suitable forms of preventing fascism from winning over the broad discontented masses of toilers. And here it must be said that the creation of a mass party of toilers, a Workers' and Farmers' Party, might serve as such a suitable form. Such a party would be a specific form of the mass people's front in America that should be set up in opposition to the parties of the trusts and banks and likewise to growing fascism. Such a party, of course, will be neither Socialist nor Communist. . . .

It goes without saying that such a party will fight for the election of its own candidates to local offices, to the state legislatures, to the House of Representatives and the Senate. . . .

The question of forming a Workers' and Farmers' Party, and its program, should be discussed at mass meetings of the people. We should develop the most widespread movement for the creation of such a party, and take the lead in it. In no case must the initiative of organizing the party be allowed to pass to elements desirous of utilizing the discontent of the masses which have become disillusioned in both the bourgeois parties, Democratic and Republican, in order to create a "third party" in the United States as an anti-Communist party, a party directed against the revolutionary movement.

It is in full awareness of the need to take the kind of initiative that Dimitrov spoke of and to forestall any ultra-Rightist or phony Left attempt to mislead and abort real movement toward an antimonopoly party that the CPUSA takes the lead in projecting and helping to build

the All-People's Front against Reaganism and independent Left political formations today.

The deliberations and conclusions of the Seventh World Congress of the CI are rich in lessons for our work today. They must not be understood mechanically, but their approach must be studied and applied in light of new times and situations to arrive at concrete solutions to today's problems.

Seen in the perspective of history, viewed through the ordeal of the Second World War, in which the Soviet Union bore the brunt of fascist aggression and Communists worldwide were in the forefront of the struggle to defeat fascism, the Seventh World Congress stands out as prescient. The decisions of the Congress played no small part in the course of events that led to the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition of the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain, to the heroic antifascist role of the Communists in France, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and numerous other countries, including the United States.

In World War II, as in World War I, social democracy and other claimants to leadership of the working class were found wanting. At the same time, whereas prior to the Second World War, in 1939, there were in the world 61 Communist Parties with four million members, in 1947 there were Communist Parties in 76 countries and these had 20 million members. Today there are over 80 million Communists, and there are Communist Parties in 95 countries. In the capitalist countries alone, there were 1,200,000 Communists in 1939, more than twice as many as at the time of the Seventh World Congress; today their number approaches 5 million.

In observing the fiftieth anniversary of the Seventh Congress, it is especially pertinent to recall the composition of the leadership of that historic Congress.

A Bulgarian Communist, Dimitrov, made the main report. An Italian Communist, Togliatti, delivered the special report on the struggle for peace. A German Communist, Wilhelm Pieck, reported on the activities of the CI between

the Sixth and Seventh Congresses. A Ukrainian Communist, Dimitri Manuilsky, reported on the building of socialism in the USSR. Joseph Stalin, a delegate, found it unnecessary to take the floor, thus expressing his confidence and the confidence of his Party in the leadership of the aforementioned comrades. At the same time, the Congress was a tribute to the Party of Lenin, which had done so much to help the various Communist Parties come to maturity through the exchange of experience in the Communist International.

The reports were collectively prepared over a period of a year through comradely give-and-take, penetrating analysis and diligent research into all world experience. No one held up any one country as a model for all to imitate. The Congress, its preparation and aftermath were all vibrant expressions of mutual respect and confidence among equals, irrespective of the size of any given Party. It was proletarian internationalism personified.

It was the successful, living embodiment of what Lenin called for 20 years earlier, in 1915, when he said: "Giving effect to united action on

an international scale calls for both clarity of fundamental ideological views and a precise definiteness in all practical methods of action." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow, p. 372.)

The Congress itself, in keeping with the maturity of the Communist Parties, called for greater independent initiatives by the Communist Parties, for their assumption of still more responsibilities for the destinies of the class struggle in each country, ruling out stereotyped and mechanical application of forms and methods of work in one country to other countries where the conditions were different.

Thus, international and national interests worked hand-in-hand to produce an effective, truly international policy which saved the world from fascist enslavement.

To save the world from the danger of nuclear annihilation requires, all the more today, the essence, if not the form, of the same principled Leninist proletarian internationalism and cohesiveness which was so nobly and effectively demonstrated by the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. □

Reagan Confronts Labor— The Record

GEORGE MORRIS

The Reagan Administration has waged an intense war against the labor movement—from the summer of 1981, when a leader of the striking air traffic controllers was publicly displayed, prison-bound in leg irons and handcuffs, to the notorious advertisement seeking “nonunion, cleancut, all-American” entertainers for the lavish second-term inauguration. And this marked only the first phase of Reagan’s antilabor plan. His agenda for the coming years calls for a step-up of the drive to reduce organized labor to impotence. Labor is the major target because its strength and objectives are key to sustaining the living standards of all working people, minorities, senior citizens and others. But the U.S. labor movement has suffered a long period of virtual stagnation and even decline in some of its major sectors.

This is frankly acknowledged by the AFL-CIO leadership in a report issued on January 21, 1985. Entitled “The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions,” it comes from a commission, set up in 1982, which included a score of top labor leaders and some academic advisors. It examines changes of recent years, the sad experience of U.S. labor laws and economic policies, sentiment among union and nonunion workers, the crisis in labor and the “seeds of resistance to resurgence.” Half of its 27 pages are devoted to recommendations. The document admits that “unions find themselves behind the pace of change,” and stresses the need for correction.

Actions in the past year by the AFL-CIO leadership show a response to the pressures for change. The pre-Democratic Convention endorsement of Mondale was a step towards greater independence from traditional tailist electoral policies. The federation’s statements favoring cuts, albeit most modest, in the military budget was a step away from subservience on matters of foreign policy. The call for nation-

wide demonstrations and picketing at South Africa’s embassies and consulates, and the active personal participation of AFL-CIO leaders in anti-apartheid protests, is a significant advance over past inaction or mere formal gestures on such issues.

Spurred by Reagan’s election, the federation has come closer to the sectors of the population gathered in the Solidarity Day coalition. This was clearly shown by the support for the massive demonstration that marked the 20th anniversary of Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Twenty years before, the AFL-CIO had rejected endorsement of the great civil rights mobilization in Washington led by Dr. King and A. Philip Randolph, a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

Workforce Grows—Unions Decline

The study notes that in the sixties 1.3 million new workers were added annually to the workforce, and in the seventies 2.1 million, while “the labor movement’s membership remained static as gains made in organizing were offset due to job losses in basic industries.” And in the eighties, “union membership has shown a decline in absolute members . . . Using the measure of percentage of the entire workforce, the decline has been 35 per cent to under 19 per cent since 1954.” Some days before the February 21 Executive Council meeting, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that membership of the union movement fell during Reagan’s first term from 23 per cent of nonagricultural workers to 18.8 per cent. Union membership fell during that period from 20.1 million to 17.3 million.

The decline was not only due to Reaganism. The development had been under way for some years and was clearly apparent under Carter. Reagan intensified the antilabor attack and wrecked much that was won by labor and peoples’ struggles over 50 years. The AFL-CIO’s

study shows that the conditions affecting workers and labor unions have been deteriorating due to a combination of circumstances: "the U.S. has become a society with persistently high levels of unemployment" charges the AFL-CIO. Weak recoveries from cyclical crises; the revolution in science and technology, changes in world trade and markets, especially in the role of the multinationals and their exploitation of developing lands; massive permanent shut-downs of U.S. plants and transfers to non-union, low-wage areas in the U.S. or abroad, usually to underdeveloped lands, are among the factors. The result is the weakening of some of the strongest unions, which had led labor standards upward.

Under Reagan, the government departments and agencies which in any way affect unions and working conditions have been stacked with personnel who use every law and loophole to cut into the rights and protections of labor, unemployed, minorities, seniors and government employees. The Labor Department, under construction millionaire Raymond Donovan, turned itself into an adjunct of business. He initiated a return to homework exploitation, softened rules restricting child labor, curtailed or halted safety inspection. At this writing, Donovan is awaiting trial on charges of racketeering.

The National Labor Relations Law was put under the chairmanship of John Van de Water, whose qualification for the post was his prominence as a consultant to employers on ways to get rid of or evade unions. He wrote a guidebook on the art of union-busting. Even the Reagan-controlled Senate didn't have enough votes to confirm his appointment. So, after a year without Senate confirmation, he was shifted to Donovan's department and replaced by an aide, Donald Dodson, once attorney for the viciously anti-union "National Right to Work Committee." Packed with Reagan appointees, the National Labor Relations Board has used every conceivable deception against unions. It has slowed the handling of cases until decisions on complaints or election applications remain unsettled for months, even years. This

gives an employer time, with the help of "consultants," to dismiss active unionists on flimsy grounds. Often when a union wins an election, certification is frustrated by phony claims of ballot irregularities.

The 'Consultant' Menace

In 1980 a Congressional committee, hearing evidence on the fast-rising "consultant" epidemic, found that the unionbusting practice is both a menace to labor rights and an obstacle to peaceful settlement of disputes. The "consultants" work to defeat a union, or even prevent balloting for representation. If a union wins an election by a narrow margin, the "consultants" use every trick in the book to delay and prevent certification. In this situation the "consultants" are likely to advise provoking a strike. When such efforts fail, they prevent agreement by protracting negotiations.

With Reaganite encouragement, the NLRB has become a happy hunting ground for the "consultants." The AFL-CIO's above mentioned document says:

A study of organizing campaigns in the private sector shows that 95 per cent of employers resist unionization, and 75 per cent of all employers hire so-called "labor management" consultants to guide their efforts to avoid unionization at an estimated cost of over \$100,000,000 annually.

As a consequence, says the report,

Even when workers opt for unionization, unions often face massive resistance in securing a contract; the rate of employer refusal to bargain has been rising twice as fast as even the rate of unlawful discharges.

But that is only part of the story. In scanning the NLRB report listing plant elections for 1983 and 1984, I was struck by the blossoming of a large number of "associations" as the rivals to unions in NLRB elections, especially evident in elections of 100 or more employees. A rough count for 1984 showed more than two-thirds of the larger elections went against unions. Where "associations" were the winners, it is obvious that in many cases they were employer-favored. In some cases where workers were induced to

buy out a plant or purchase stocks to "save" their jobs in exchange for heavy cuts in wages, a phony union has been set up or existed previously.

The growing number of new "associations" (not to be confused with such real unions as the National Education Association or the International Longshoremen's Association) casts some doubt on the NLRB's periodic statistics on wins or losses by "unions." Usually, the NLRB lists the vote for AFL-CIO unions, Teamsters, "other national unions" and "other local unions." It is the last that has been showing significant increases in the recent period.

Another tactic that has come into greater use in the Reagan age is decertification of a union after a long strike. By law, if a strike passes a year, the employer can press for an election, ostensibly to test whether the employees still want to be represented by the striking union. *But only the strikebreakers, classed as the "employees," vote.* It is not surprising, therefore, that a decertification vote at the Phelps-Dodge plant of Morenci, Arizona, registered 1,908 votes against the union and only 87 for the striking affiliate of the United Steelworkers. The NLRB decertified the union. Northwest lumber workers and others have faced a similar fate.

Other Reagan Stratagems

The Reagan perspective counts on a packed Supreme Court to approve many more steps against unions, minorities and others. But during the first term Reagan was able to name only one Supreme Court justice—Sandra Day O'Connor. This was "helpful" to an extent, but not sufficient to give Reagan the sweeping service he hopes for.

The court has, however, ruled that in the case of companies which file for reorganization under Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy law, a bankruptcy court judge can scrap a labor contract if he or she finds that its terms are "too burdensome." Jurisdiction under the extremely business-minded bankruptcy judges can drag on for years, as in the case of Bildisco Company of New Jersey and the giant Johns-Mansville

Asbestos Corporation. No sooner had the decision been rendered by the High Court than many corporations announced they were threatened with bankruptcy if not relieved of "burdensome" labor costs. Some promptly declared 50 per cent wage cuts—major meat companies and Continental Airlines, for example.

Enlarging on the same theme, the Supreme Court also ruled that if employers find new locations that lower "burdensome" labor costs, they can ignore existing contracts and simply move, without even consulting the union. Many anti-labor decisions are being issued in lower court rulings, not reaching a high court test.

Other Reagan agenda items are being hurried forward in preparation for a potentially more favorable court in later years, and to beat the 1986 congressional election deadline, after which there may be a less favorable legislative situation.

One objective is to cut into the minimum wage law, the floor (weak as it is) under wages. The last increase, of 15 cents, was in January 1981, to \$3.35 an hour. This was about 5 per cent, to compensate for the whopping 12.5 per cent inflation in 1980. On top of that injustice came the four Reagan years and a further rise of the government's inflation index *totaling 23 per cent during which not a penny was added to the minimum wage.* In 1980 more than 10 million workers, two-thirds of them women, were on the minimum wage or lower.

Closely related is the fall of real wages in the three years of Reagan "recovery." The Labor Department reports that collective bargaining settlements averaged an increase of only 2.5 per cent in 1983, 2.4 per cent in 1984. Those increases were against an inflation rate of 3.8 and 4 per cent, respectively. Altogether in the period 1981-1984, wage increases averaged 18 per cent against 23 per cent inflation.

But that is far from the whole truth. Many unions were forced to take a wage freeze or cut. Other unions won close to usual raises due to strikes or other circumstances. Most unions were forced to give work-rule concessions as the price for evading a wage cut, concessions that have great impact on living and working

standards. There were cuts in vacation, paid holidays, sick time, overtime or night rates, and many other contract provisions won during years of improvements.

One concession forced on unions that is spreading widely is the two-tier wage system. The lower wage rate for new hires both divides the workers and becomes a heavy wage cut in the long run. It gives the employer an incentive to favor newer workers and eliminate experienced workers, to use every available opportunity to put the entire establishment on the lower scale.

There is a construction employer campaign to cripple the Davis-Bacon Act, which since 1931 has served as a standard regulator on government work. This is clearly designed to open the doors more widely to non-union contractors to underbid union scales in a given area.

Another plan in the works attacks labor conditions and rights through "regulatory reform." The consequence, as already shown in trucking, airlines and other fields, is the loss of many thousands of jobs and a drop in wage scales.

Racism Accentuated

Hardest hit were those at the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder. Prior to the 1979-82 depression, the unemployment rate among Blacks ran about twice that of whites. Through 1984, the second year of Reagan's "recovery," unemployment among Blacks generally ran 2.5 times the white rate. The term finished with unemployment officially at 6.2 per cent for whites and 16.3 for Blacks. The jobless rate for Black teenagers was 43.1 per cent compared with 15.2 per cent for white teenagers.

Data compiled by the National Urban League and released at its August 1982 convention featured the drastic drop of living standards among Blacks after a relatively short period of improvements that followed the struggles of the '60s and the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and application of affirmative action in many fields. Particularly noted then by the NUL was the loss of jobs in professions or occupations it referred to as "middle class." That was

an early evidence of the trend of Reaganomics. In the three years since, Black workers have suffered the full force of both recession and "recovery." They were the heaviest losers of jobs, particularly higher paid unionized jobs in steel, auto, rubber, copper and other manufacturing fields hit hardest by closings and job export. In these fields Black workers were more heavily represented by unions, held skilled jobs and enjoyed union-protected wage equality. The nearly 95 per cent anti-Reagan turnout of Black voters in the election and support for Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition give a measure of the bitterness among Black Americans over the betrayal.

Particularly shameful is the blatant racism of the Reagan Administration in seeking to kill affirmative action and wage equity, and to reverse the role of the Civil Rights Commission, which was set up to advance civil rights and combat racism.

No sooner had Reagan stepped into the White House than Assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds announced that his goal was to watch for an affirmative action case he would carry to the Supreme Court to seek its invalidation. Edwin Meese's first act as attorney general was the promotion of Reynolds to the Justice Department's third highest post in recognition of his campaign against school integration and other services welcomed by racists. Reynolds hasn't gotten the reversal he aims for, but he counts on a more substantial packing of the high court to kill affirmative action and the principles on which it is based.

The Pay Equity Issue

Another issue, up before Congressional hearings at this writing, is "pay equity," a new application of the generally recognized "equal pay for equal work" principle, usually included in union protection. The new element, however, is to demand equal pay for work of "equal worth" or "comparable worth" done by a woman. Work done by women may not be the same, but be on a comparable level to work done by men in skill, experience and other respects, and be lower paid.

The U.S. General Accounting Office, preparing materials for Congressional hearings on pay equity, reported that women get 63 per cent of what men earn working for the government, mainly because they are concentrated in low-paying jobs, such as clerical, and lack seniority. In state and local government employment, GAO found, women get 71 per cent of men's pay. "Pay equity" means real equality in payment for work. It would benefit minority and immigrant workers (especially women) whose abilities and skills are ruthlessly exploited through widespread discrimination.

Immediately after Reagan's second inauguration, Reynolds renewed his campaign with a blast at affirmative action and "pay equity" and attacked leaders of Black organizations. Reynolds' slanderous attack was quickly followed with another by Clarence M. Pendleton, Reagan's chairman of the Civil Rights Commission. Pendleton, a Black businessman, charged the Black leaders with being guilty of "new racism." Until 1983 such blasts by Pendleton were denounced by a majority of the CRC. Then Reagan packed the CRC with a majority willing to sing along with Pendleton.

Carl T. Rowan, widely known Black columnist, wrote an angry piece that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 1985, charging the CRC with "waging war on the civil rights movement. They have turned the Civil Rights Commission into nothing more than a propaganda organ for far-right ideologues." Consequently, Rowan observed, "every major Black organization in the civil rights field" has refused to testify before the CRC.

Affirmative action and wage equity have been singled out as major targets by the Reagan Administration, in line with the course of fostering division in the ranks of the working class, as on two-tier wages and subminimum wages for youth. Government data show women flowing into the workforce at a much higher rate than men. They are now employed in large numbers in many industries and services that traditionally employed only men—such as longshore, underground coal mining, steel, auto and other metal manufacturing, bus driving and even con-

struction. To employers, women are an attraction because they are paid less than men for the same work, and, it need hardly be added, much less for work that is of "comparable worth."

The pressure for pay equity has been rising as the inflow of minority workers increases. Also related is the heavy shift of employment to low-paid service industries in which women and minorities are numerous. It becomes especially important for the labor movement to place priority on four issues—*affirmative action, wage equity, opposition to two-tier and subminimum wages—to give unions more organizing appeal to women, Blacks, Latinos and unorganized generally.*

Few Jobs in High Tech?

There is nothing in Reagan's agenda that will cut joblessness. For almost the entire second year of Reagan's "recovery" the unemployment rate hovered around the 7.4 per cent—8.5 million—plus 7 million "discouraged" or involuntary part-time workers. The next recession is already casting a warning shadow. In 1962, the AFL-CIO Executive Council launched a "drive" for the 35-hour week, with publicity and a ringing resolution. The drive never lifted off the ground. But the resolution said, "We have been patient through a succession of recessions, each of which started from a higher plateau of unemployment." Unemployment was then 4 million, a 5 per cent rate. Twenty three years later, the coming eighth recession since World War II will likely start with a plateau of 7.4 per cent or more jobless.

Dismissed from smokestack industries, never to return, workers were advised to be patient and assured that the "new industrial revolution" would provide new jobs. The chips came and we have heard of the wonders they bring, of robotics and fantastic equipment, much of it taking the places of the men and women now out of work. At long last came the "recovery." Some workers were called back, but most of the unemployed stayed jobless.

The Reagan Administration and the Big Business interests it represents show neither sorrow nor concern over the permanent mas-

sive joblessness. The AFL-CIO estimated that in February 1985 unemployment was really at a rate of 12.9 per cent of the workforce. In addition to the official count, 1.4 million are termed by the BLS "discouraged," those who find it useless to even look for a job, and 5.6 million are on part-time because they couldn't find full-time work. These the federation counts as half-jobless.

The Administration and those it represents are overjoyed, joyous with what they call "recovery" and the deep crisis conditions for the workers. They thrive on the widespread hunger that helps cut wages, weakens unions, deteriorates working conditions and induces some workers to scab. They particularly relish permanent massive unemployment as a weapon for making U.S. industry "competitive," their remedy for bringing down the trade deficit.

What about the high tech jobs? Ironically, it is the very chips industry, which was the big promise so many waited for and even spent their diminishing savings to train for, that is currently in a crisis. It has been struck by bankruptcies epidemic and layoffs. It has become apparent that the semiconductor industry is not a source of anywhere near the number of jobs it displaces. And many hi-tech jobs are of low quality. Workers from now-closed steel plants find, if they are lucky enough to get a job in high technology, that their \$11 an hour sinks to \$5 or \$6. Their pension, vacation and other benefits turn to virtually nothing. Pride they had in accomplishments of their union and confidence in their job security turns to bitterness.

Some people do get jobs in high tech at relatively high wages in the technological and engineering offices. The majority are on the low-pay production lines. Work is also going at an increasing rate to workers of developing lands.

The law of uneven development of capitalism, stressed by Lenin in his analyses of imperialism, is also working today. Japan, which has stressed modernization, has surpassed the U.S. in quantity and/or quality in cars, steel, electronics, TV and much other production. The "solution" most heard in the U.S. is to mimic the Japanese style of strict worker discipline, longer

hours and lower wages to make American economy "competitive."

Peace and the 'Pace of Change'

The AFL-CIO study "The Changing Situation of the Workers and Their Unions" rightly stresses the urgency of building a more effective coalition with other sectors of the population. But has it not been well demonstrated in recent years that the majority of Americans are overcoming the anti-Soviet propaganda that saturates the air, demanding an arms freeze and Soviet-American detente? How strange to all people who value and welcome labor's leading role in a coalition against Reaganism that the President named Lane Kirkland to the Kissinger Commission to cover up the U.S. imperialist role in Central America! How strange that Reagan named Kirkland to a commission directing two CIA radio stations operating from West Germany!

The AFL-CIO's document on the "Changing Situation," self-critical on a number of problems, says that "the unions find themselves behind the pace of change" and are sorely in need of "resurgence." But in the 1984 election campaign, the AFL-CIO's leadership limited its criticism of Reaganism to socio-economic issues. That was one of the weaknesses of labor's campaign, considering that peace was among the topmost issues, and was prominently featured in the election work of the minority, church, youth, professional-academic and community organizations allied with the labor movement.

Most of the twenty-seven pages in "Changing Situation" deal with recommended changes in the work of the unions. Helpful as some of those changes could be, they will be inadequate if the key issue of the threat to peace is evaded. Looking toward the next test against Reaganism in 1986, a strong, truly consolidated coalition for peace, jobs and freedom is extremely urgent. It is high time the AFL-CIO's leadership, like many leaders of its major affiliates, get in line in this respect with "the pace of change," so they can more effectively contribute working-class leadership for a broad people's mobilization for victory in 1986 and 1988. □

The Wisconsin Action Coalition A New Political Direction for Labor

SANDRA JONES

The struggle against Reaganism has produced new, advanced forms of independent political activism within the working class and people's movements. These hold a unique potential for the future of American politics. Throughout the last four years, maturing developments in the labor movement and the Afro-American people's movement have established independent action as a serious factor in electoral politics.

In addition, the successful mobilization of people around various issues shows a growing understanding of the need for mass action to challenge, to influence and to shape policies on the electoral and legislative fronts. For example, in 1982, the Solidarity Day movement, built upon mass marches and protests, carried over into the elections. The 1984 Dump Reagan movement was intertwined with the fight against his foreign and domestic policies. Now the activity to stop Reaganism II helps to shape the issues for the 1986-88 elections.

The most important aspect of the heightened independent political activism is the emergence of organized forms outside the two-party structure. Developments during and since the 1984 elections show that these new organizations, coalitions and structures are here to stay. They confirm the analysis of the Communist Party, USA, which calls for an all-people's front against Reaganism and for building broad, labor-based independent political forms.

Wisconsin experiences in the movement towards independent political action provide an opportunity to examine an important new coalition—the Wisconsin Action Coalition (WAC). It is one of the most important such developments in the country. WAC is an advanced example of an emerging, labor-led independent movement, which has

the potential to become an independent antimonopoly party.

Through coalition action, it seeks to build citizen power, placing primary emphasis on legislative action and grassroots organizing "to win critically needed reforms at the local, state and federal levels."

WAC is made up of labor, senior citizen, religious and community organizations, with labor having the dominant influence. The establishment of this coalition is labor's attempt, with its allies, to build political clout in the state, and to influence national political developments.

WAC's third annual delegates' assembly convention, which was held in Milwaukee, January 1985, further established WAC as a definite factor to be reckoned with in Wisconsin and national politics. The speeches and the resolutions that were adopted reflect a more advanced direction in the labor movement. The theme of the convention was "Building the New Majority."

Gerald McEntee, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, delivered the keynote speech to the convention. He called for a continued fight against Reaganism II. He pointed out that the two overriding domestic issues for labor are the federal budget cuts and the new federal tax proposals. He connected these economic issues to opposition to Reagan's foreign policies and the need to cut the military budget.

Ed Garvey, Wisconsin's assistant attorney general and former president of the National Football Players Association, addressed the plenary session on plant closings. He suggested developing the use of the right of eminent domain in defense of the rights of workers and called for stronger laws to restrict plant closings.

The convention adopted many progressive resolutions that will determine WAC's work for the next year. The content of all the resolutions was more advanced than at previous conventions. For example, six resolutions on economic

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issues challenge many of the policies of the Reagan Administration, calling for trade with socialist countries to create jobs for Wisconsin workers; restructuring the tax system to shift the tax burden to the rich; developing real solutions to unemployment, including laws to prevent plant closings; a fight to save revenue sharing; and legislation to prevent mortgage foreclosures.

Three resolutions cover the fight for peace. They call for cuts in military spending and not in social programs; total divestment of state money from businesses that deal with South Africa; extending a hand of friendship to the people of Nicaragua and cutting out aid to the *contras* and withdrawal of U.S. troops and advisors from Honduras and El Salvador.

Other resolutions call for a National Farm Bill which creates long-term programs to save family farms; a campaign against toxic waste hazards; support for comparable worth; national action to provide health insurance for all Americans, a Wisconsin comprehensive health care system and no cuts in Medicare benefits.

In addition, important steps were taken to deepen and consolidate WAC's relationship to community, farm and church groups. Richard Presser, president of WAC and Directing Business Representative of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, emphasized, in his remarks, the need to build alliances with all progressive forces.

The convention elected key leaders from Black and church organizations to WAC's Board of Directors. Steps were also taken to bring the farm movement into WAC.

WAC is a part of a national citizen action network. Since 1979, this movement has grown to include organizations in 11 states. They are Connecticut Citizens Action Group, Illinois Public Action Council, Citizen Action Coalition of Indiana, Massachusetts Fair Share, Minnesota COACT, New Hampshire People's Alliance, Ohio Public Interest, Oregon Fair Share, Pennsylvania Public Interest Campaign, Virginia Action and the Wisconsin Action Coalition.

The national citizen action movement has

been shaped by Saul Alinsky methods of organizing, which are oriented towards grassroots community organizing, but divorced from electoral politics and mass struggle. Many of these groups are connected with Heather Booth's Midwest Academy, which trains community organizers in direct action organizing.

Some of the citizen action groups grew out of the national Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, which fought against the oil monopolies and the deregulation of natural gas. CLEC was very active on the national scene in the 1970s, sponsoring such campaigns as "Stop Big Oil" and the "Reclaim America" campaign. CLEC had more of a labor base than the Alinsky-oriented movements. Its national president was William Wimpisinger, head of the IAM. CLEC's program is also limited concerned mainly to energy issues.

In 1979, a change began as a direct result of the increased organization and activity of the ultra-Right and the candidacy of Ronald Reagan. The potential dangers of a Reagan election showed that attention had to be given to electoral politics. Many of the forces in the citizen action movement began to push for a multi-issue orientation, recognizing that restricting oneself to single-issue organization hampers the formation of an organized base to fight effectively against the Reagan Administration's policies. Thus between 1979 and 1982, many of the citizen action groups constituted themselves multi-issue organizations.

What was new and important was the stress on political action. The 1982 elections marked the first significant move into electoral politics for most of the citizen action groups. Their activity included fielding and supporting progressive candidates in local and national elections, registering new voters, extensive get-out-the-vote campaigns, mobilizing for mass demonstrations against Reagan's foreign and domestic policies, etc.

While the citizen action movement is an important development, it is not without its limitations. Its connection with labor and the Black movement is restricted. It begins to act independently from the two monopoly parties, but is still tied to the Democratic Party. It is still basically a reformist movement, and the Alinsky

influences keep it within these limits. But the potential to overcome some of these weaknesses can be seen in WAC's development.

The Wisconsin Action Coalition was founded in September 1982 at a convention of the Wisconsin Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition. One hundred twenty organizations were represented.

What distinguished WAC from other citizen action organizations was the leading role and extensive support of labor from the beginning. Although other groups had the backing of the labor movement, WAC represented the first time that labor had the decisive voice. Richard Presser was elected president of the coalition, and representatives from the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, United Auto Workers and the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees were elected to the Board of Directors.

A major reason for the formation of WAC was the recognition that national politics affect local areas and that the most effective way to influence national politics is to build electoral power and organize mass action of people in the state. Additionally, WAC recognizes the need to bring together the broadest coalition of forces to do this.

Another main reason was the impact of Reaganomics on Wisconsin's economy. The state suffered a drastic increase in unemployment, federal and state cuts in social programs and, for the first time, a budget deficit. The governor at that time, the staunch Reaganite Lee S. Dreyfus, invited Reagan to use Wisconsin as a testing ground for the "new federalism."

The new coalition's program emphasized the need to fight Reaganomics, and singled out as a priority goal defeating Dreyfus in the 1982 elections. It put emphasis on voter registration and education, and adopted the methods of the national citizen action movement.

Organized labor's initiating role in founding WAC was a response to the consequences of the structural and cyclical crises. In turn, it aroused other forces to concern themselves with the new social problems. Thus, the churches, a number of which are WAC affiliates, joined with the trade unions, shortly after WAC's

founding, to sponsor an annual "Religion and Labor Conference." This year's conference took place around the theme of "Preserving Human Worth in a Changing World Economy." The keynote addresses were given by Milwaukee Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, chief author of the Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on the economy, and Thomas R. Donahue, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO.

WAC is now a statewide organization with 183 affiliates. It has four regional chapters in Milwaukee, Racine, South Central Wisconsin and the Fox River Valley. It claims a membership of 500,000 Wisconsin residents. The main office is in Milwaukee and there are 8 full-time state organizers. Each region has a steering committee that has at least one delegate from all member organizations. The steering committees meet monthly to take up the implementation of WAC's program. Individual members can also attend the steering committee meetings.

There are three main components of WAC—labor organizations, senior citizens' organizations and community organizations. The strongest and most important of these is labor. A significant section of labor is affiliated to this movement, including the state AFL-CIO; nine Central Labor Councils; the IAM; the UAW; AFSCME; United Electrical Workers; Hospital Workers; Building Construction Trades Council; and the Wisconsin Education Association. There are also local unions from the United Steelworkers, transit workers, Boilermakers, Allied Industrial Workers, United Electricians, Operating Engineers, United Food and Commercial Workers, Teaching Assistants, General Drivers and Dairy Employees, Teamsters, International Longshoremens' Association, Carpenter's Union and Firefighters.

Senior citizens' organizations, which constitute a powerful movement in Wisconsin, are a second component. The groups involved are the Allied Council of Senior Citizens, Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups, Interfaith Program for the Elderly, Retired Workers' Council of the Milwaukee Metro Area, Racine Senior Action Council, Senior Action of Kenosha, Dane

County SOS Senior Council, Northwest Senior Action Council and many retirees' groups from the AFL-CIO, the UAW and others.

Community organizations make up the third component. Many different groups are involved, including neighborhood associations, Black and Hispanic groups, women's groups, church, student and farm groups, the Oneida Tribe of Indians, New Jewish Agenda, Wisconsin Committee for Peace and Justice, Milwaukee Committee for Soviet-American Friendship, etc. Left forces are among the recognized and welcome activists.

Each component has representatives on the Board of Directors, which is the main policy-making body of the organization between conventions. The Board is where labor maintains its control and influence. If only one of the four labor representatives dissents on any issue, it is automatically vetoed.

In its three-year history, WAC has recorded many accomplishments. The most important is bringing labor forward as a leader in the fight for economic justice and social progress—as a mobilizer of people around the important issues that face the working class and in the electoral arena. This means that labor and its allies can better act on behalf of themselves, independent of the parties of monopoly capital.

WAC fully participated in the Dump Reagan movement. WAC joined with Operation Big Vote, organized by Black community leaders, and the Milwaukee Voter Registration Coalition, composed in the main of peace and neighborhood groups. Together they were able to significantly increase voter registration and turnout in Milwaukee.

WAC twice brought a unitary oil tax bill to the state legislature and influenced most of Wisconsin's congressmen to vote against deregulation of natural gas. It conducts an annual lobby day that brings thousands to the state capital to press for its program.

It has set up a door-to-door canvass program capable of reaching 75 per cent of all Wisconsin households. This program is a major source of fundraising. Through it, during the 1984 elections, WAC talked to three-fourths of

all Wisconsin residents.

WAC won a multimillion dollar rebate for telephone subscribers from the Wisconsin Bell Telephone Company, and was able to win a three-year moratorium on local measured service, which would have drastically increased the cost of telephone service.

WAC has set up an Unemployed Discount Program, which solicits businesses to offer discounts to the unemployed. Nine thousand people have signed up for the program and 800 small businesses offer discounts of from 5 to 15 per cent in medical, dental, food, auto repair, hardware and other goods and services. The UDP won a half-fare rate for the unemployed from the Milwaukee Bus Company.

WAC has launched a campaign against foreclosures that includes a demand for state legislation. This has been important in bringing the organization closer to key farm groups.

These important accomplishments are indicative of WAC's potential.

WAC and the citizen action movement generally has the potential to become a strong working-class based third party movement. For that to happen, however, it must develop from simply a movement for partial reforms into a political movement with a strong program for deep-going antimonopoly, democratic, structural reform. It must also work to incorporate all the needed forces, especially labor and the Black people. It especially needs the progressive, Left forces in order to advance. The extent to which the Left becomes an influence will determine whether the great potential of this movement is fully realized.

In this respect, the independent Labor and Farm Party, which has gained ballot status in Wisconsin, but which needs a stronger labor base and leadership, can make a big contribution if it does everything it can to promote and aid the Wisconsin Action Coalition.

Wisconsin labor's independent political path has found its particular expression in WAC. It is an example with many lessons for all nonmonopoly, propeace and democratic forces across the country who are working to build the all-people's front against Reaganism. □

A Draft Trade Union Program

COMMUNIST PARTY, USA

Fresh winds are sweeping through the ranks of labor. Ferment and revitalization are beginning to replace the stagnation and decline that set in with the Cold War days of the 1950s. Powerful grassroots pressures are fueling a rising spirit of militancy.

Mass actions have become the order of the day. The half-million strong Solidarity Day March on Washington in September 1981 marked the return to mass demonstrations. Mass picketing and mass lobbying are once again part of labor's arsenal. Mass parades are restoring Labor Day to its rightful place as a workers' holiday.

The destruction of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) by the Reagan Administration taught the trade union movement a very hard lesson. Now, strike solidarity actions are on the increase. Workers forced out on long, hard strikes are no longer left to fight on their own. AFL-CIO support for the Greyhound strike marked a new beginning. Though belated, the national support now being given for the long strike of the heroic Arizona and Texas copper mine workers is another example. Mass strike support organized by local Central Labor Councils, as in the successful strike of UAW workers at the A.P. Parts Plant in Toledo, is becoming more and more common.

Organized labor emerged from the tactically difficult 1984 presidential elections with a renewed sense of confidence. While Ronald Reagan won reelection, "Reaganism" did not. The trade union movement began to clearly establish its political independence in both the primary and general elections. This trend continues to strengthen as labor prepares for the coming legislative battles in Congress and the 1986 Congressional elections.

There is a better understanding of the need for unity and cooperation between labor and its allies. Mass involvement of the AFL-CIO in the nationwide protests against apartheid South Africa and the support it receives from the racist Reagan Administration, coupled with the refusal of the West Coast longshoremens to unload a cargo from South Africa, are striking examples. The active participation of the UAW and other unions in the mass fight for survival by family farmers is another. Labor support for "comparable pay for jobs of comparable worth" is yet another.

The peace movement has sunk deep roots in the trade unions. National and international unions representing well over half the membership of the AFL-CIO are an integral part of the campaign for a mutual, verifiable nuclear freeze. Such independent unions as the National Education Association, United Electrical

Workers and the West Coast longshoremens' union are also active participants in the Freeze Movement. Many Central Labor Councils, local unions, and such labor groups as the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) are also important components of the Freeze Campaign.

"Jobs with Peace" has received important labor support, as has the demand for economic conversion from military to peacetime jobs. National trade union formations are vigorously challenging the Reagan Administration's military policies in Nicaragua, El Salvador and other Central American countries. For the first time, the AFL-CIO has begun to withdraw past unqualified support of military budgets. Important trade union contingents participated in the nationwide peace demonstrations on April 20.

Trade union publications are beginning to reflect the mood of the rank and file. Many are taking a more militant class attitude toward economic and political problems facing their members.

Very Critical Times

These are very critical times for the working people of the U.S. and the trade union movement. Unions in the basic industries are grappling with the problem of rapidly disappearing jobs. Transportation and communication unions strive to deal with the problems created by decentralization and decontrol. Public workers face a massive campaign to turn the functions of government over to private corporations for their private profit. New and difficult problems have been created by the introduction of chips, robots and the "technological revolution." The uncontrolled flood of mergers and the mushrooming of conglomerates are forcing a new approach to contract negotiations and other management relations. Millions of jobs are exported overseas as government policy encourages the transnational corporations to expand in countries controlled by right-wing military dictatorships where wages are low and unions and strikes are outlawed.

U.S. workers and the trade union movement are suffering from the impact of a triple-layered crisis of the capitalist system. This crisis is cyclical, structural and general, and can be briefly described as follows:

The cyclical crisis can best be compared to the ups and downs of a roller coaster. One cyclical crisis comes on top of another. Each "recession" is deeper than the last and each "recovery" is more shallow and unstable. Millions of workers are never able to get back on their feet between "recessions."

The structural crisis has hit the basic industries

with the force of a hurricane. The steel industry has been especially hard hit. Industries such as auto, machine tools, rubber, glass and textiles continue to decline.

The general crisis of capitalism is both national and international. Our own country, once proclaimed "the richest country in the world," is suffering a general decline in living standards. Over 35 million people are forced to live in conditions of abject poverty. Labor economists have clearly proven that the number of unemployed is nearly double the official figure of 8.5 million released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Millions more are forced to exist on part-time jobs.

The quality of life is deteriorating before our very eyes. This affects medical care; social services; public schools and colleges; housing; public transportation; the care of children and the elderly; the environment itself.

The erosion of the over-all living standard is a many-sided process:

- Continued decline in real wages.
- Millions laid off from basic industries and forced into lower—and in many cases, below minimum wage—jobs.
- An increase in sweatshops and "home" industries.
- Overall growth of non-union conditions where wages are 33 per cent lower than union shops.
- An increase in the number of longtime unemployed—as the hungry and homeless get hungrier.
- Cuts in "fringe" benefits.
- Cuts in food stamps, medicare and welfare payments.
- Continuing increases in the price of food, rents and other basic necessities, and in taxes.
- Poverty on the farms.
- Increased racism, discrimination and attacks on affirmative action programs.

This all adds up to a declining standard of living. It is downward economic mobility for the working people as a whole. An additional factor is the vicious element of Big Business racism. As a result, Afro-American and other nationally and racially oppressed workers suffer doubly from the effects of the triple-layered economic crisis. Black unemployment is more than double the rate of other workers. Afro-American communities are also suffering disproportionately from the rash of plant closures in basic industry.

The Antilabor Offensive

In their greedy search for maximum profits, Big Business has used the crisis to intensify its attacks on the working class and the trade union movement. The result has been a closely orchestrated, anti-working-class, racist, anti-union offensive.

Not content with huge concessions, corporations are replacing union recognition with corporate

union busting. Labor relations have been relegated to viciously anti-labor "consultants" whose specialty is to cut wages, break strikes and destroy unions. Two-tier wage systems are being used to permanently lower the wages of newly hired workers. The two-tier system is a time bomb designed to wreck the unity of younger and older workers, skilled and production workers. Once the two tiers are in place, in a short period the lower tier becomes the overall standard. "Contracting out" is sweeping the country like a plague.

Hard-won prolabor legislation began to erode with the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act at the height of the Cold War hysteria. This profascist legislation was put over on U.S. workers in the name of "fighting Communism." A few years later the Landrum-Griffin Act was put over in the name of "fighting union corruption." Today the figleaf is "making industry competitive." Using this phony cover, the National Labor Relations Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Civil Rights Act and other progressive legislation have been either destroyed or badly gutted.

The National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, the Committee for a Union-Free Environment, the National Right to Work (for less) Committee and outfits spawned by the ultra-Right such as the Heritage Foundation (financed by Coors Beers and the Mellon Bank) are pressing for new antilabor legislation. Hack lawyers in their employ have already prepared legislation designed to destroy the economic rights of labor and outlaw political activities by the trade union movement. The long-dormant Hatch Act has been resurrected in an attack on the political rights of the leaders of three unions of federal workers. A new tax program is already in the works designed to further shift the tax burden onto the backs of workers.

Corporate "think tanks" are heading a well-financed ideological campaign designed to denigrate, downgrade and besmirch the working class of our country and its trade union movement. Most of the press, the air waves, schools, colleges and universities, as well as Right-wing churches and leaders are actively participating in this anti-working-class ideological offensive.

A Search for Solutions

At this critical moment in the life of organized labor, rank-and-file workers are demanding more aggressive leadership. They want a more militant struggle against the mountain of unsettled grievances piled up at the shop floor level. They want an end to concession contracts supported by union officials influenced by "class partnership" concepts.

From rank-and-file members to the AFL-CIO Executive Council, trade unionists are probing and debating questions relating to the crisis facing the trade

union movement. There is a widespread search for more effective ways to defeat the antilabor offensive; how to launch an effective organizing drive; how to solve the many new and complicated problems facing organized labor.

The Communist Party welcomes this debate. It is a manifestation of the new positive trends emerging in labor. With this Draft Program, we formally enter the discussion. We do so as staunch, frontline partisans of the trade union movement. Our long history of active participation in and unswerving support of labor struggles is well known. Some of labor's most important advances have been made with Communist and other Left-Progressive leadership. We are proud of the fact that we have won the enmity of the enemies of labor.

The outcome of this debate will have a profound influence on the future of the trade union movement. The new, hopeful upsurge that is developing in labor can reach new heights. A great deal depends on a militant program that meets the needs of the times. A program that projects bold tactics to capture the courage, initiative and fighting spirit of the rank and file.

There is no easy way out. Fundamental changes in policy and structure are required to meet today's realities. Halfway measures will fail dismally. "Class partnership" concepts that have been dominant in top levels of the AFL-CIO will never check the antilabor offensive of the corporations and the government. Participation in Big Business conferences in White Sulphur Springs or serving on such reactionary corporate outfits as the Committee on the Present Danger, the Atlantic Council, the Foreign Policy Association, the Trilateral Commission and the "Endowment for Democracy" will never produce the answers needed.

Labor history has decisively established that the trade union movement only makes real progress when it is committed to militant, class struggle policies. The program which we present for your consideration is based on the conviction that the problems facing the trade unions today demand radical solutions.

A Program for Progress

Many fundamental problems in the trade union movement stem from the fact that little more than 20 per cent of those workers eligible for union membership are organized. This is the lowest percentage of any of the developed capitalist countries. The future of the trade union movement as a dynamic force in our society demands that the organization of the unorganized be given the highest priority.

There are some who claim that now is not the time. They say unemployment is too high; that the bosses are too powerful; that labor has a "poor image." Several academics have surfaced the thought that all we should work for now is some sort of loose

associations.

Such ideas are rubbish. The trade union movement must build its numerical strength in order to defend itself. The weaker the unions, the more arrogant the bosses. In the Great Depression of the 1930s, the rate of unemployment was the highest in our history. Yet labor made historic advances as it united with the unemployed in the fight for jobs. For the first time, the workers in basic industry were successfully organized. The false image of labor projected by the corporations very quickly dissolves in the basic need of unorganized workers for the protection and dignity provided by a union.

The question is not if, but how? Labor itself can help create the climate for a successful organizing drive. First of all, it must be a united campaign. Fragmented organization with a variety of unions competing among themselves regardless of jurisdiction is both self-defeating and a disgraceful waste of resources.

Every experience of the past proves that grass roots organization is the key to success. There must be: in-plant organizing committees among the unorganized; organizing committees in every local union and Central Labor Council; organizing committees in communities. Unemployed workers must become part of a combined drive for jobs and for the organization of the unorganized. The vibrant energy of young workers—organized and unorganized—of the student movement, is ready to be tapped. Another guarantee of success is the involvement of labor's allies from the very beginning. This includes the Afro-American community, the Hispanic community, peace movement activists, women's organizations, churches, environmentalists. The participation of retirees is an invaluable asset.

An organizing drive must be militant, committed to the use of strikes and boycotts, if and when the situation demands. Union organizing drives are most successful when labor champions the needs of the people as a whole. For example, in the 1930s it was the fight for jobs, for the 40-hour week, social security, unemployment insurance, the right to vote, and against lynching, the poll tax and other acts of racism.

Today the fight for full employment remains a major issue. Labor must take its place in the leadership of this fight. The linkup between antilabor trends and racism makes clear the need for joining the struggle against racism and for affirmative action with a militant struggle to organize the unorganized. Black workers have proven to be most receptive to union organization. The influx of women workers into the work force and the trade unions makes it essential that labor be in the forefront of the fight for women's equality and rights.

The desire for peaceful negotiations between the USA and the USSR, for an end to the arms race and a

sharp reductions in the military budget, is uppermost in the thoughts of the overwhelming majority of the population. The trade union movement must be clearly identified in the eyes of the nation as the leading force in the struggle not only for jobs and against racism and discrimination, but for peace.

Jobs and Job Security

High unemployment and the fear of a loss of a job have cast a pall of uneasiness over U.S. workers. Millions who thought their jobs were secure found them wiped out over night. Workers, looking forward to retirement, have seen both their jobs and pension rights vanish. Millions of first-time job seekers vainly search for steady employment at a liveable wage. Gloating corporations seek to recruit desperate unemployed workers as strikebreakers. They see the jobless as a vast reservoir of workers who can be forced to take jobs at low wages. Corporations daily use the threat of plant closings, runaways or lay-offs to bludgeon workers into accepting wage cuts, speed up, loss of vacations, health benefits and other fringe benefits.

Therefore, the fight for jobs and job security is another item high on the agenda of the trade union movement. This fight has many sides.

Our nation is badly in need of repairs. Taking care of these alone will create millions of jobs. A report in the Chicago *Sun Times* claimed that the steel needed to repair the roads and bridges of the country would keep the mills going for ten years, and put 100,000 steel workers back on the job. We sorely need a vast low-cost housing program. Public transportation is a problem in all parts of the country. Floods continue to ravage large areas of land. Our environment needs a good facelifting.

We need a federal public works program of the scope that would guarantee a decent-paying job at union wages for all who are willing and able to work.

New technology has dramatically increased the productivity of U.S. workers. While the profits of the corporations have gone through the roof, all that most workers are getting out of it are layoffs, wage cuts and insecurity. The fight for the six-hour day with no cut in pay has become a must. It will increase jobs by nearly 20 per cent. At the same time, contract loopholes that permit forced overtime must be eliminated. Let's make it too expensive for the corporations to benefit from forced overtime. Outlaw it altogether.

The six hour day with no cut in pay, an end to forced overtime, triple time for overtime must become common demands of the unions at the bargaining table and in the halls of Congress.

In such basic industries as steel, public ownership under democratic controls has become the logical way to save the industry. We advocate national authorities to take over basic industries such as steel,

mining and auto. These authorities should be composed of representatives of the unions, communities and management. Representatives of the banks and corporations must be barred. Existing facilities should be taken over without compensation. They have already been paid for, many times over, in the form of huge profits, fat tax rebates and a whole variety of government subsidies.

We have to put an end to corporations closing plants and running away to low wage areas either at home or abroad. The same goes for corporations which shift their money from one industry to another in search of maximum profits. We need a federal law to bar corporations from shutting down plants or curtailing work without warning the union and the workers. Federal, state or local governments should invoke the right of eminent domain to take over such plants and facilities in order to save jobs and keep them in operation.

The fight for jobs and job security requires the trade union movement to take the lead in organizing the unemployed. Every local union and Central Labor Council should have a committee on unemployment. It is in the self-interest of labor to lead in organizing unemployed first-time job seekers. Unemployment compensation from paycheck to paycheck and for first-time job seekers is an important part of the struggle for job security. Laidoff union members should be able to retain their membership at nominal cost.

The fights against contracting-out, speedup, job combination, forced overtime are all forms of the fight for jobs and job security.

United We Stand, Divided We Fall

Unity is the great strength of the working-class and trade union movement. Unity is labor's answer to the power, wealth and greed of the monopoly corporations and banks. Economic, political and social justice can only be won with mobilization of the united strength of our multinational, multiracial, male and female, young and old working class and its trade unions.

Big Business also understands the meaning of working-class unity. For them it is something to fear, to be destroyed. Racism, redbaiting, male supremacy and appeals to false patriotism are used to hinder the efforts of workers to secure a better life.

In our country, a virulent instrument of division is the corporations' use of racism against Afro-Americans. Therefore the fight against racism, for unity of Black and white workers and between Organized Labor and the Black community is the key to winning the unity of the whole class. Workers of all races, nationalities and religions were organized in the basic industries under the historic slogan, "Black and White, Unite and Fight." Innumerable labor struggles have driven home the lesson that the trade unions

must lead the struggle against racism and for working-class unity in the unions' own self interest.

Affirmative action programs have emerged as the most effective way to end discrimination against Afro-American, Hispanic, Native American Indian, Asian-American and other specially oppressed workers and against women of all races. Affirmative action programs with quotas help rectify past corporate hiring and promotion policies based on racism and discrimination. They help prevent the recurrence of these divisive policies.

Concrete affirmative action agreements need to become a permanent feature of every national and local contract. We need affirmative action committees in every local union and central labor council.

The fight to end discrimination against women workers needs to be elevated. While some progress has been made, the demand for "Equal Pay for Equal Work," has not been fulfilled. Women are rapidly approaching half the workforce and are entering the trade unions in growing numbers. As with Afro-American and other racially-discriminated-against workers, affirmative action programs are the key in the fight for women's equality. At the same time, the principle of "equal pay for equal work" must be applied in reevaluating jobs held primarily by minority and women workers.

On the political front, the trade union movement has joined with the Afro-American community and other democratic forces in support of concrete affirmative action programs at all levels of government. It is not accidental that the Reagan Administration, the most antilabor administration in modern times, is at the same time an adamant foe of affirmative action.

Seniority systems are again under heavy attack by the corporations. These systems have the purpose of protecting militant workers from abuse and discrimination by the boss. To preserve them they must be strengthened. Anything that smacks of racism or discrimination weakens them and must be eliminated. Corporations invariably attempt to use seniority systems to perpetuate racist and discriminatory practices. "Last hired, first fired," is still a problem that weakens class unity.

As first steps toward equality for all workers, we would like to offer the following proposals:

- Adjust seniority systems to compensate for the many years the seniority of Black and other discriminated-against workers have not been counted. This can strengthen the seniority system.

- Special seniority provisions for older workers, entitling them to retire with full benefits.

- Make the corporations pay for their racist and discriminatory hiring and promotion policies. All costs for affirmative action adjustments should come out of their profits.

- Link the fight for a six-hour day with no cut in pay to affirmative action hiring policies.

- In the fight to end forced overtime, affirmative action must be a yardstick in filling the jobs created.

- Incorporate affirmative action demands in the campaign for a national jobs program.

- By union contract and by federal and state legislation, affirmative action must be a factor in filling new jobs and in promotions.

The process of trade union revitalization requires that Labor put its own house in order. Only a bare start has been made in most unions to advance Afro-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American and women workers into policy-making positions of leadership. While organized labor has adopted a much more favorable position toward affirmative action, the top leadership of the American Federation of Teachers and of some building trades unions remain in adamant opposition.

Redbaiting

The fight against redbaiting is an inherent part of the fight for working-class unity. Historically, anti-Communism has been used to attack militant trade unionists who fight for the rights of the members, regardless of their political persuasion. It is a weapon constantly used by reactionaries to attack organized labor and other people's movements. It has taken thirty-five years to even begin to overcome the enormous damage done to the entire trade union movement by the anti-Communism that permeated the cold war years of the 1950s. Anti-Communist clauses befoul the constitutions of a number of unions. Most were injected during the cold war under pressure of the corporations and the FBI. They are held as threat over militant trade unionism. They have never saved organized labor from attack, but have only encouraged labor's enemies. The fact that the national AFL-CIO and some of its affiliates still retain remnants of McCarthyism in their constitutions is a national disgrace.

The explosion of U.S. transnational corporations on the world scene has made international trade union unity and cooperation more essential than ever. This unity can only be built on foundations of mutual trust. Corporate propaganda that blames "low paid foreign workers" for loss of U.S. jobs must be rejected with the contempt that it deserves. It is the policies of the transnational corporations and banks that are the source of the problems, not our exploited sisters and brothers abroad.

U.S. workers have nothing in common with U.S. transnational corporations. Our best interests lie in building strong fraternal relations with unions in other countries, regardless of political orientation. They lie in helping to strengthen the ability of the workers, particularly in the newly developing countries, to build strong unions that will be able to fight for better wages and working conditions.

It is a grave misfortune that this is virtually im-

possible under the present policies pursued by the top leadership of the AFL-CIO and the AFL-CIO International Department. Since the very founding of the AFL, the International Department has been a willing tool of the transnational corporations—the very corporations that are exporting abroad the jobs of U.S. workers. The International Department gives lip service to the building of strong unions in Central and South America, Africa and Asia. In reality, its policies have worked to benefit Right-wing military dictatorships which have destroyed trade unions, broken strikes with bayonets and jailed and murdered thousands of union leaders. These same reactionary policies continue in Central and South America, South Korea, Taiwan and other new countries of Asia and Africa. In such countries as Chile, El Salvador and South Africa, the name of the AFL-CIO has been besmirched by the role of the International Department.

AFL-CIO international policy has helped put an iron curtain around the U.S. trade union movement. Refusal to encourage fraternal relations with Communist and other Left trade unionists has cut U.S. labor off from some of the most important trade unions in Western Europe, as well as from the world's largest trade union center, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

AFL-CIO refusal to have fraternal relations with the trade unions in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries is a disservice to the cause of international peace. It has severely impaired possibilities for cooperation on such questions as industrial health and safety and other matters of mutual concern. The International Department, as presently constituted, should be immediately dissolved and reconstituted as an instrument for honest international trade union relations. Fortunately, a growing number of trade union leaders are beginning to reject the reactionary role of the International Department, the American Institute for Free Labor Development, the Asian-African Committee and their ties with the CIA, whose only objective is to serve the U.S. transnational corporations.

Political Independence

The old labor maxim, "What you win on the picket line, you can lose at the ballot box," has more meaning today than ever before. The economic and political struggles of workers have become inseparable. Events have proven that the trade union movement dares not leave its future to the two-party system of Big Business. The building of an independent antimonopoly political formation led by labor has become a historical necessity. Among all the developed capitalist countries, only in the U.S. does the trade union movement lack an independent political party to which it gives leadership.

The trade union movement took important steps

in the direction of political independence in the 1984 elections. Labor's entry into the selection process for the presidential candidate in the Democratic primary elections drew cries of outrage from Big Business and the leaders of both the Democratic and Republican Parties. However, the most important expression of labor's political independence came from its political activities conducted through local unions and not within the framework of the Democratic Party machine. To all intents and purposes, the Democratic Party literally folded after the primary election campaign was concluded.

The trade unions ran their own phone banks, assembled membership mailing lists, put out quantities of election material on their own, raised money and worked in close alliance with Black and Hispanic communities, with women's organizations and other allies to register workers and get out the vote. The building of grassroots political action committees during the course of the elections was blunted when Senator Gary Hart charged that the political action committees (PACs) were illegal and organized labor was a "special interest." Mondale refused to rebut this false accusation, which was picked up by President Reagan.

There were important lessons learned in the 1984 elections. The first is that organized labor can be a powerful political force. Second, political harmony with the Afro-American community and other of Labor's allies is key.

A strong surge of political independence emerged in the Afro-American community around the candidacy of the Rev. Jesse Jackson. This converged with the political activity of the trade unions to guarantee a setback for Reaganism on election day.

The 1984 elections and what has transpired since have clearly established that organized labor and the people's movements can not rely on the Democratic Party. In the 1984 elections the Democratic presidential candidate refused to offer a program around jobs and other economic issues despite pressure from the trade unions and Afro-American leaders. He went to the Right on the peace issue. Since the elections, major Democratic Party leaders have openly sought to reject any electoral role for organized labor other than fundraising and providing foot soldiers.

Labor's great political strength lies at the grassroots. It can effectively be tapped through political action committees at the local union and central labor council level. The strength of labor PACs is their ability to politicize the membership, to mobilize the rank and file for: on-going voter registration drives; membership involvement in mass lobbying and demonstrations; lobbying members of Congress and other politicians; letter writing campaigns; getting out the vote on election day. Labor PACs can build the mass base on which trade unionists can win political office. We need a great many more trade unionists in Con-

gress and other political offices. Why depend on self-proclaimed "friends of labor"?

In 1946 the CIO adopted a program that had wide national appeal. In this period of labor upsurge, it's time to revive and update such a program—a program around which labor and its allies can rally:

- A federal jobs program to provide work for the jobless.

- Extension of unemployment insurance from layoff to recall. Unemployment insurance for first-time job seekers.

- The 6-hour day with no cut in pay. Outlaw forced overtime. Triple time for all overtime.

- Repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and the Landrum-Griffin Law. Outlaw injunctions and other restrictions on the right to strike (without excluding public school teachers and federal, state and municipal workers).

- Strong federal laws that guarantee all workers the right to organize and bargain collectively without interference from the company. Illegalize all antilabor "consultant" outfits.

- A national health act guaranteeing free adequate health care for all.

- A national pension program guaranteeing the right of all to a secure old age.

- A graduated income tax to be the base of all tax legislation. End tax breaks for corporations and the rich. End the sales tax.

- The public school system is under intense attack. Only the trade union movement has the organizing strength and capabilities to lead a broad democratic movement to defend and strengthen public education.

- An end to the arms race. Peaceful negotiations with the Soviet Union, leading to the reduction and elimination of nuclear arms. End restrictions on trade with the Soviet Union, Cuba and other socialist countries. Strengthen the UN in the interests of peace.

Trade Union Democracy

Strong shop steward systems were among the first victims of the cold war. In one industry after another, the number of shop stewards was cut drastically. Reliance on arbitration replaced union representation on the shop floor.

Revitalization of the trade union movement means revitalization of the shop steward systems as the key to democratic trade unionism. Workers need again to see their union representatives fighting for them on the shop floor. To begin with, this means more shop stewards—one to every 25 workers or to every boss. It means the right to strike over a company's stubborn refusal to settle grievances.

Reliance on arbitration has been costly in more ways than one. Arbitration costs have virtually broken many local union treasuries. Almost invariably, arbitrators base their decisions on self-styled

"company prerogatives." In a period of massive technological development, this has been very costly to workers both in wages and jobs. Grievances have piled sky-high as foremen refuse to settle even minor grievances. Workers are told, "take it to arbitration."

Other democratic trade union practices essential to revitalization are: the right of union members to elect all officers and committees with the right to recall; right to vote on concrete demands and negotiated contracts; the right to vote to strike and to end a strike.

Union Fragmentation

The present fragmented state of the trade union movement poses a serious threat to its growth and development. Jurisdictional lines are virtually nonexistent. As many as five or six national unions compete for members in a single industry. A number of unions which have suffered severe loss of membership due to plant closures, technological changes and the economic crisis have sought to fill the gap by recruiting new members regardless of jurisdiction.

"Jurisdictional conglomeration" is severely weakening the ability of many unions to represent their membership either at the shop level or in contract negotiations. Consolidation along more clearly defined jurisdictional lines would strengthen the trade union movement immeasurably. Some recent mergers have been helpful, but mergers, in themselves, are not adequate.

Craft unionism is outdated. New technologies are rapidly destroying the old craft structures. Most "craft" unions are now made up primarily of industrial workers. Isn't it time to consider building an industrial union in the construction industry? A Building Workers Industrial Union would greatly strengthen the hand of building trades workers in an industry where the old crafts are disappearing and the unions are under heavy attack.

In spite of hesitations, craft unions in the printing trades and on the railroads are moving in the direction of industrial unionism. The slogan of the U.S. trade union movement should become, "One Industry—One Union!"

Fragmented contract negotiations have seriously damaged labor's strength at the bargaining table. Industry-wide bargaining has been virtually destroyed. Three-year contracts, or even longer, are the pattern. The trade unions have been cleverly maneuvered into a situation where major contracts expire in different years over a three-year period. And in each year, contract expiration dates are staggered over a twelve-month period. Some companies have contracts with twelve or more unions, many with different expiration dates. The energies of the trade unions are continually sapped by endless rounds of contract negotiations. Valuable time and resources are consumed which could otherwise be devoted to organizing and

other union activities if there were a more cohesive bargaining pattern.

Federation Bargaining

In many countries, union strength is consolidated through the organization of federations. This form of organization reduces jurisdictional disputes and greatly consolidates union strength in dealing with the corporations.

For example, in the U.S. a Metalworkers' Federation would include such unions as the Steel Workers, Auto Workers, Electrical Workers, Machinists and other related labor bodies. As a federation, these unions would have a common contract expiration date with the companies. They would enter contract negotiations with a common set of demands. They would have a common strike deadline.

A federation form of organization helps prevent individual unions from being picked off one by one. It has helped the unions in Western Europe resist the kind of "concession contract" that became prevalent in the U.S.. In West Germany, the Metal Workers Federation won a partial victory in a militant strike to save jobs by cutting the work week.

One of the greatest contract victories in U.S. history was won in 1945-46 when the unions in steel, auto, electrical and packinghouse struck simultaneously around a common set of contract demands. This strike resulted in a historic victory that raised the wages of workers—organized and unorganized—across the nation.

The federation principle can also apply to unions in transportation, communication, the service trades, "white collar" and government. Federations in other countries have proven far superior to the loose structure that exists in our country.

Communists and the Trade Unions

The entire world is in the throes of a tremendous transition from one society to another—from capitalism to socialism. This historic revolutionary process follows earlier revolutionary changes from slave society to feudalism, and from feudalism to capitalism. Like the earlier systems, capitalism is no longer capable of solving the urgent problems facing mankind—unemployment, poverty, declining living standards, the growing chasm between the rich and the workers. Like its predecessors, it has had its day and is in the process of being replaced. Already, socialism is a living system for a third of mankind. It is impossible for trade unions in any country to cope with the problems of today without understanding this historic reality.

Failure to recognize this fact is at the root of many problems the unions face. The U.S. is one of the few remaining capitalist nations where trade union officials still dare to extol the capitalist system

as good for workers. From this have grown the "class partnership" concepts that have led U.S. labor into one corporate trap after another.

Organized labor needs the Communist Party for many reasons. The trade unions need more members who are Communists. Because of our working-class policies, we are sparkplugs of the trade union movement. Our science, Marxism, has clearly proven the irreconcilable conflict between capital, in search of maximum profits, and the working class, in search of a decent life.

As adherents of this science, we have consistently rejected such schemes as concession agreements, profit sharing, Quality of Worklife Circles and employee stock option programs (ESOPs), as illusory solutions to such problems as plant closings and layoffs. In all relations with the corporations, we advocate a class struggle position, be it fighting grievances on the shop floor, at the negotiating table or in the political arena.

The trade union movement makes its greatest strides when Communists and other Left forces work in harmony with socialists and other Center forces around programs of common agreement. We strongly advocate this path as most essential to trade union advancement.

We Communists support the building of rank-and-file committees inside of and in harmony with the trade unions, in support of more advanced union leadership. Rank-and-file committees emerge naturally as the frontline shock troops around such issues as public ownership, the fight for the shorter work week, affirmative action programs and independent political action, including support for trade union candidates for public office.

Members of the Communist Party expect no special treatment as union members. We expect to be accepted on our merits and elected to union office based on our program and our leadership ability. Anti-Communist clauses in some trade union constitutions are an aberration and a threat to the democratic rights of all members to elect leaders of their own choosing.

Fellow workers, sisters and brothers, this is the Draft Trade Union Program all members of the Communist Party are now discussing. We heartily welcome workers and trade unionists who are not Party members to join us in this discussion. We value your proposals and suggestions. This Draft Program indicates the direction that guides the work of Communist trade union members. For you who are not members, we hope you get to know us better. We most sincerely want you to join us and help build a new and better society for all. □

The San Pedro Waterfront Strike, 1923

ART SHIELDS

I was bound for the waterfront strike in San Pedro in an ancient Ford. The car was driven by a grain-sacker on his way to the wheat harvest. He had invited me in but I wasn't a real guest. His Model-T was constantly breaking down and my host expected me to pay the bills. "I'm dead broke," he pleaded. I was broke, too, when we reached Los Angeles.

In Pedro I needed no money. I slept in an empty cabin provided by my Wobbly [members of the Industrial Workers of the World—*Ed.*] friends and breakfasted at the strikers' food counter, then climbed a hill overlooking the harbor. A gorgeous strike panorama was spread out before me. Eighty one ships were lashed to the wharves or rolling at anchor. There were ninety nine a week later.

Vessels from a dozen lands were strikebound together. The Japanese flag—a red ball on a white background—fluttered from the masthead of a Pacific Ocean liner. The red bars of Britain's Union Jack flew over six or seven ships. Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, France, Portugal and other maritime nations were represented in the captive fleet. The Stars and Stripes flapped over twenty steam schooners piled high with Northwestern lumber. Twenty five or twenty six U.S. cargo and passenger ships were strikebound as well. The *Horace Luckenback* was among them.

"That's my ship," I told a young sailor beside me.

I was seeing the IWW at its best. All the harbor workers—thirty five hundred men—were out. Longshoremen, seamen and towboat men were striking together. This had never happened on the Pacific Coast except during the Seattle General Strike.

The following is based on a chapter from the second volume of an autobiography-in-progress by veteran labor journalist Art Shields. The first volume was *My Shaping Up Years*, International Publishers, New York, 1982, \$4.95.

"We're united in the IWW's Marine Workers Industrial Union," the young sailor said.

I never visited an official IWW headquarters in San Pedro. The Wobblies' former headquarters had often been raided and no longer existed. I met strike leaders in their "floating headquarters" instead. This floating headquarters was on the street. Here leaders collected dues and issued strike instructions while strolling to and fro.

The outstanding leader was H.C. Duke, a tall, slim Wobbly. "We've got two simple demands," he told me. "The first is 'Abolish the Fink Hall.' [This was the shipowners' hiring hall, which the workers hated.] It not only discriminates against union men. It is run by crooks. The hiring boss will feel a longshoreman's muscle. But a big muscle isn't enough. To get a job the worker must kick back part of his pay.

"Our second demand is a bigger one," Duke said. "We're telling the shipowners and the bankers behind them to kill California's Criminal Syndicalism Law. They can do it. Their lawyers wrote it. This rotten law has one purpose: to keep workers from fighting. It makes membership in the IWW and the Communist Party a penitentiary crime. A hundred Wobblies are in Folsom and San Quentin already."

I left Duke to follow a crowd to the busiest corner on San Pedro's main business street. Here hundreds of shoppers were listening to the strike demands. They were coming from an eloquent IWW orator, whom the cops couldn't shut up. He had shackled himself with a heavy chain to a telephone pole in front of the biggest store.

Many shoppers were applauding the IWW speaker. When a cop shoved his fist into the Wobbly's nose a big woman screamed: "Don't you dare hit him. I want to hear him."

The police lieutenant in charge of the squad

was sweating. He broke a sawblade on the heavy chain. He then tried to cut the thick links with a blow torch. But that didn't work; the flame was burning the wooden telephone pole. Three-quarters of an hour passed before the cops found a blade to bite through the steel.

Meanwhile Leo Stark, the orator, was denouncing the fink hall and the syndicalism law to hundreds of people. I had known Leo in Chicago. He was a professional Wobbly agitator of forty five to fifty years of age. When *Industrial Solidarity* asked "all footloose Wobblies" to join a picket line or a free speech fight in some town Leo Stark would jump on a freight train and come to the scene no matter how great the distance.

The cops got a lusty booing when Leo was taken away. Most of the shoppers in this port town were working-class wives. But one well-to-do widow was in the shopping crowd. She was so moved by Leo's appeal that she gave the Wobblies a splendid field for their meetings. It was on a hill overlooking the harbor; we named it "Liberty Hill." It was filled with two thousand seamen and longshoremen the next day, the most dramatic strike meeting I had ever seen.

This was a singing strike. There was more singing than speaking in the meetings on Liberty Hill. The speaker would sing the first lines of a song by himself. Then he would repeat the lines while hundreds of veteran Wobblies joined in. Nearly all the striking maritime workers were singing together by the third round.

Our songs were about the power of Labor. And power wasn't an abstract thing on Liberty Hill. The power of labor shone in the strike-bound ships below. I remember the joy with which the strikers sang these lines by Joe Hill:

If the workers take a notion
They can stop all speeding trains;
Every ship upon the ocean
They can halt with giant chains.

Duke, the song leader, pointed with pride at the tied-up ships when we sang the last two lines. The tied-up ships were on everyone's mind as we sang another Joe Hill song:

There is power, there is power
In a band of working men
When they stand, hand in hand
In one industrial union grand

One song followed another. I've heard *Solidarity* on many picket lines in the last sixty two years, but I've never enjoyed it as much as I did on Liberty Hill. *Solidarity* became the theme song of millions of U.S. workers during the battles that built the big industrial unions of the CIO in the 1930s. But I never forget that it came from the IWW.

Then came the *Internationale*, the beloved revolutionary anthem, with its pledge of worldwide solidarity. The chorus had been altered a little to fit the IWW's syndicalist ideas. I noticed this when the song leader chanted these lines—

'Tis the final conflict, let each one take his place,
The industrial union shall be the human race.

No song was more popular than *Hold the Fort*, the British transport workers' battle hymn. It was loved by Wobblies everywhere. It's a promise to fighting workers that reinforcements are coming. It was brought to our meeting by the crew of a coast-to-coast freighter that joined the strike.

These new strikers had just disembarked. I heard them singing in the distance before I could see them. Forty sailors, engine room workers and stewards were singing together as they started to climb Liberty Hill. Every line was a crash of triumph. The welcome we gave them was too enthusiastic to describe.

A dozen rank-and-filers denounced the shipowners at the meeting. I was too overwhelmed by the singing to pay much attention to speeches, but I well remember an old Japanese fisherman who mounted the soapbox, however. He had come to tell us that his crew was donating two tons of fish to the strike commissary. "We are your brothers," he said.

"This meeting would make a wonderful story," I told Duke that night. "I wish you would write it up for the IWW press," Duke replied. "And I'd like you to help Fellow Worker Hines, who has charge of publicity. I'll take you to him now."

But Hines was not around. We couldn't find him in the floating headquarters and no one had seen him for some time. "He's a funny fellow," said Duke. "He's often out of sight."

These absences raised questions in my mind. My doubts deepened when I inquired about Hines. The Wobblies first met him in a poolroom they used as San Pedro headquarters before the raiding began. Hines had a red card and claimed to have worked on many ships. But none of the striking seamen had ever sailed with him. He talked a lot at meetings, got on the strike committee and volunteered for publicity. "But he doesn't know anything about publicity," an old sailor told me. "All he does is post the names of struck ships in the windows of friendly merchants."

My suspicions became active when I met with Hines next day. I had spent years as a crime reporter, and knew how cops talked. Hines slipped into police jargon several times during our chat. I'll give one example: "We may all get collared," he remarked. "Collared" was police lingo.

I told Duke I was worried about Hines. He assigned a sailor to investigate the publicity man. The sailor was clever. He quickly discovered that a small automatic was strapped to Hines' thigh near the crotch. He also found that Hines was spending much time with three young seamen. Duke asked the three what Hines talked about. "He wanted us to plant a bomb on a dock," they said.

"I'm glad you spoke to us," one of the sailors told Duke. "We didn't like the idea, but we might have done it if he brought the bomb. He was urging us very hard. He said an explosion would scare the shipowners and make them settle the strike."

That finished Hines as a spy and provocateur. He was punished very lightly, however. In another union he might have gotten a manhandling that he'd have felt all his life. All the Wobblies did was to throw this pistol in the sea and run him out of Pedro. But they hadn't seen the last of him. He appeared in a courtroom in the uniform of a Los Angeles cop several months

later as a witness against IWW strike leaders who were being railroaded to prison on charges of criminal syndicalism.

Hines was a backward, ignorant man. Nevertheless the press described him as an "expert on Reds." His promotions began. He became captain of the Los Angeles "Red Squad," and was soon known far and wide as "Red Squad Hines" who beat up strikers, Communists and IWWs.

I was given responsibility for all strike publicity by unanimous vote of the strike committee. My office was an empty pineboard cabin on the outskirts of the little harbor town. I worked there with Dick, an old Wobbly, whose memory I cherish. I owe much to Dick. The sound of my old typewriter could be heard a hundred feet away as Dick kept watch for me while I hammered out news releases at night.

Many strikers were being arrested and Dick and I had no doubt we would be pulled in if the cops knew what we were doing. So Dick dug a hiding place under the cabin where I could dump the typewriter and papers if the cops came close. It was covered with a sliding board.

Dick's memory was full of fascinating labor history. He had been with the Wobblies from their beginning in 1905, coming in with the Western Federation of Miners, the militant union of copper, silver, zinc and lead miners. His heroes were Big Bill Haywood and Vincent St. John. But he liked St. John, who led the IWW for five years before Haywood took over, best of all.

Dick was proudest of the Saint's early victories in Goldfield, Nev., which he saw for himself. Goldfield was a booming goldmining town in 1906. It also became a national sports center when Tex Rickard, the gambler, staged a fight between Battling Nelson and Joe Gans, the Black lightweight champion. "The Saint was a perfect organizer," Dick said. "When he finished his campaign every Goldfield worker had a red card and the eight hour day. There were no exceptions. Even Tex Rickard's gamblers became IWW members. They had no other choice."

"The Saint was afraid of nothing," Dick continued. "A Goldfield gangster shot him,

crippling his left forearm for life. He jumped the next thug who threatened him and beat him with his right hand."

I saw St. John take similar action against two New York hoodlums who had slandered him. He jumped them both outside a trade union office. I grabbed one hoodlum and held him while the Saint whipped the other man.

That was in 1921. St. John was out of prison on bail, appealing a ten-year sentence imposed during the wartime IWW trials. We often met in Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's defense office, where I was a volunteer worker. He was an ardent admirer of Elizabeth. They had worked together as IWW leaders for years.

San Pedro was filling up with cops. A hundred bluecoats from Los Angeles were reinforcing the harbor town's strikebreaking force. Mass raids on the floating headquarters began; the entire strike committee of twenty one seamen and longshoremen was picked up in one swoop. The Wobblies were prepared for this. A substitute committee had been elected in advance, and strike activity continued in an organized way.

The raids grew bigger day by day. I escaped arrest in the biggest raid in an odd way. I had left the floating headquarters to mail a letter to my wife Esther in the post office some blocks away. When I returned I found an empty street. The local retail stores were empty as well. There was no one in the Greek restaurant where strikers were fed. The proprietor had been dragged out from behind his counter and booked under charges of "blocking traffic." More than two hundred men had been hauled away to sleep on the iron floorplates of the Los Angeles prison. San Pedro's jailhouse was full.

The only free spot left in San Pedro was Liberty Hill. The IWW had the owner's written permission to use it. Our meetings were bigger than ever. The cops were still afraid to violate property rights. But our rights were thinning. I was warned to expect more violent strikebreaking. This warning came from Upton Sinclair, the author of *The Jungle*, the Chicago meatpacking novel that shook the country with its expose of

rotten meat, dirty stockyards and oppression of labor.

Sinclair, an active Socialist, lived in Pasadena near by. I telephoned him and asked him to come to Pedro to help us. I had interviewed him in 1914 when he was picketing John D. Rockefeller after the massacre of Colorado miners, women and children at Ludlow. He remembered me well and promised to come. He said he had already begun an investigation of the strikebreaking employers. The investigation took him to the Los Angeles headquarters of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association, where shipowners, manufacturers, merchants and bankers came together.

The M&M headquarters was in an uproar when he sat down in the lobby, Sinclair told me. Hammond, the multimillionaire lumberman, was bellowing like a madman in the office a few feet away. He was losing millions of dollars in the harbor strike, he screamed. His steam schooners were loaded with lumber he couldn't sell. And he was roaring threats against the municipal authorities, who allowed the strike to continue.

Other capitalists chimed in. "I think," warned Sinclair, "that the next move of the police will be to take over Liberty Hill."

The attack on the hill came two days later. We were holding an international meeting. Many seamen from foreign ships were attending. An Englishman, a Frenchman, a Portuguese, a Norwegian were among the speakers. The banners of many maritime lands flapped on an overhead line. We bought them at a store that catered to foreign seamen.

The flag of the Soviet Union was missing at first because it wasn't on sale in the little store. An English seaman, who was handy with needle and thread, offered to make one. But no member of the strike committee could describe the Soviet flag exactly. All they knew was that it was red. The problem was solved by a Swedish fireman. He pulled out his red handkerchief, cut out a seven by twelve inch strip the shape of a flag and pinned it to the overhead line.

The cops had been massing below. They began forming a column, a lieutenant barking

orders. Some eighty or ninety men—armed with clubs and guns—were about to start climbing when Duke interrupted the meeting:

Remember, Fellow Workers, we're conducting a peaceful strike. We're not breaking any law. We're simply withdrawing our labor power from the ships. If the bulls interfere with our meeting remember what Bill Haywood said: "Fold your arms, Fellow Workers, don't use them."

The attack was led by Captain Plummer, the commander of the harbor town's police. Plummer was a big, overweight man with a bulky automatic in each pocket on his fat rump, which bounced up and down as he walked. "The first thing I want is that red flag they told me about," he said to the sergeant as he went by me. Then his eye fell on the Swedish fireman's red strip. "I guess this is it," he said. Then he turned to the crowd:

"This meeting is adjourned," he bellowed. "We don't allow meetings under the Bolshevik red flag. That means rioting and murder."

"The meeting is not adjourned," Duke shouted back. Then he began singing: "Hold the fort, for we are coming." Hundreds of voices were with him in the second line: "Union men be strong." And more than two thousand seamen and longshoremen joined in singing: "Side by side, we battle onward; Victory will come."

Duke was pulled off his box but the singing went on. "Arrest the songleader," Plummer was shouting. But there wasn't any song leader. The maritime strikers were singing together. I've never seen such frustrated cops.

But they found a victim when the singers stopped briefly and a longshoreman climbed on Duke's box. He was a native of Yugoslavia and an active rank and filer. "Look at those ships, Fellow Workers," he cried. "They will stay there till we win our demands. Down with the Fink Hall and the Syndicalism Law."

His arrest didn't frighten anyone. One maritime worker after another began shouting strike slogans until they were pulled down. They couldn't use the speaker's box any more; the cops held it tight. They spoke from different

parts of the big crowd, making it hard for the cops to shut them up quickly. Sometimes a speaker had time to shout fifty or seventy five words before he was pulled down.

I remember one youthful voice that seemed to come from the sky. "Don't worry about the bulls, Fellow Workers, they can't move the ships." I located the source of the voice at last. It came from a young seaman who was sitting astraddle on the gable of a two-story building on the edge of the field where we were meeting. How he got there I don't know.

Two cops who went after him had an easier route. The house was closed, but they broke a window into the first floor, went up a stairway, climbed out of a second story window and inched themselves up the edge of the roof to the gable.

"Don't worry, Fellow Workers, the bulls won't get me," the young sailor cried. "Let's sing 'Solidarity' to him," someone shouted down below. "Solidarity forever, solidarity forever" went up from the crowd as the young seaman slid down to the one-story roof of the kitchen on the other side of the house, leaped to the ground and got away from the cops, who were taken by surprise.

This was our last union meeting on Liberty Hill. By this time almost everyone on the second strike committee had been arrested. But the strike went on and the following message came from Duke in the harbor jailhouse: "If you can't meet on Liberty Hill why not meet all over town?"

Why not? This was our town. San Pedro had only one basic industry and its workers were on strike. We'd carry our message from door to door to everyone in town. And the biggest and longest parade in San Pedro's history began with a seaman, a longshoreman and a tugboat man in the van.

We started with two thousand or more men. In two hours our numbers had swelled to five thousand as doors opened and housewives and children joined the march. We wound through the streets and alleys of the seaport town singing our labor power songs. We tram-

ped back and forth in front of the shipowners' offices shouting: "Down with Fink Hall!" And we cried out, "Thank you, thank you" to the Japanese fishing boats we passed on the waterfront. The Japanese continued to supply us with succulent fish all through the strike.

We were inspired by a fighting message from our imprisoned fellow workers as we circled the Pedro jailhouse again and again. The message came in song through the jailhouse windows:

In San Pedro's darkest dungeons
for the OBU
Remember you're outside for us
And we're in here for you

The OBU was the Wobblies One Big Union.
And we sang back to them:

Remember you're inside for us
And we're out here for you.

We sang these pledges to each other many times as we circled the waterfront Bastille again and again. Our song was adapted from one written by Harrison George, the IWW poet, as he lay in "Chicago's darkest dungeons" awaiting trial with a hundred other Wobblies during the World War.

The demonstration was still at its height in late afternoon. We were singing "Solidarity" as we were tramping the main street when someone whispered in my ear: "This is great, Art."

Big Slim Carl, a Wobbly I knew in New York, was by my side. I was surprised to see him—he was one of the few Wobblies who had turned to crime. "No one is going to exploit me any more," one of these few told me. "I only rob the rich, never the poor."

Big Slim stuffed a bill in my pocket as we walked along. "That's all I got on me," he said. "I'm on the lam. I broke out of jail. I shouldn't be here but I couldn't keep out of it."

Big Slim joined in the singing. His face was shining with joy. The demonstration was overpowering. He was a Wobbly again. But his worries came back when we turned into the next street. He whispered the latest details of his life into my ear. "They got me," he said, "in a little Illinois town. I expected to get five or ten years

in Joliet Penitentiary when I went on trial. But I have a wonderful wife. She's a Finn. She smuggled a little sawblade into the cake she sent in. That's how I got out."

I pleaded with Big Slim to give up this way of life. "It has nothing to do with the class struggle," I said. "You haven't a chance."

"I know you're right," replied Big Slim. "But they'll get me if I settle down. They have my fingerprints."¹

The demonstration was a magnificent success. Nevertheless our troubles increased. The members of the third strike committee were pulled in one by one. It was hard to organize relief. A housewives' committee was feeding many dockworkers. But the Greek restaurant owner was afraid to run the strike kitchen after coming out of jail. Many seamen were hungry.

I felt better after phoning Upton Sinclair again. "I'm coming tomorrow with three friends to speak on Liberty Hill," he said.

I passed the news along. A huge crowd of strikers welcomed Sinclair's party when it drove in. The party included Sinclair's young brother-in-law, an English writer and Prynce Hopkins, a tall, slim California millionaire in his thirties, who had spoken out against police persecution.

I lunched with the visitors in a cafe while the crowd swelled. A half dozen reporters accosted Sinclair when he stepped outside. "We're testing the right of police to suppress free speech and assemblage," he said. "You'll hear what I say if you climb Liberty Hill."

Captain Plummer heard this and thundered: "I won't allow any meeting on the hill and no reporter is permitted to go up." The captain's order was meekly obeyed by representatives of the reactionary *Los Angeles Times*, Hearst's *Examiner* and three other papers. But the sixth reporter, Rube Borough, was a bold, progressive journalist who wrote for the *Los Angeles Record*, the only one of these papers supporting the strikers.

Rube Borough and I caught each others' eyes. We lock arms together and pushed through the wall of cops at the foot of the hill. A police hand clutched at my shoulder but slipped off as we started up.

The Sinclair party reached the summit before us. Captain Plummer had let the free speech fighters through in the hope of winning glory in the Los Angeles press with the catch. Sinclair stepped on a speaker's box the Wobblies had used before him. "Get down," the captain shouted, "I'm taking you in if you utter a word."

"My right to speak is protected by the U.S. Constitution," Sinclair replied. Then he recited the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, which became part of the Constitution in 1790. It guarantees the right of free speech and free assembly to the American people.

That was his speech. He spoke slowly. It took fifty seconds. Then Plummer grabbed the people's novelist by the collar and turned him over to a cop.

Sinclair's three friends were stopped more quickly. Prynce Hopkins had time to recite only the first five words of the amendment—"Congress shall pass no law"—when he was hauled down. The last two were arrested when they mounted the box before they said anything.

The cops handled Sinclair very stupidly. The novelist's companions were quickly released, but Sinclair was held incommunicado. The police refused to tell the press where he was. His wife raised an outcry. I issued a press statement saying Sinclair might be a victim of "foul play." The author of *The Jungle* was a world figure. The case made international headlines. Captain Plummer felt compelled to free Sinclair in two days. This victory stimulated the fight for civil liberties in California.

It didn't save the San Pedro walkout, however. The Wobblies had changed their strike tactics since the five-month strike in the Paterson, New Jersey, silk mills in 1913. They now believed in shorter strikes. If a walkout wasn't won rather quickly the Wobblies voted to "transfer the strike to the job," were workers slowed down until the boss surrendered.

My San Pedro fellow workers remembered that the "strike on the job" won the eight-hour day in Northwestern logging camps in 1917. They saw that the waterfront workers were

hungry and restless. They realized that organized strike activity had become almost impossible. So—by general agreement—the months-long strike was transferred to the job.

The strike on the job was weakened by the departure of seamen for distant ports. It was also hurt by the isolation of Wobblies from the rest of organized labor. This was a chronic IWW weakness. The struggles continued but the demands were not won at that time. The Fink Hall crooks continued to control longshore hiring. The syndicalism frameups went on, and more than thirty strikers got one- to fourteen-year terms in Folsom and San Quentin.

The struggle to free the syndicalism victims was actively waged by all progressive forces. Sinclair's play about captive Wobblies—"Singing Jailbirds"—helped the liberation battle. The IWW carried on a tireless campaign for its imprisoned champions. And the Communist Party was very active in the freedom fight. Only on Communist—Anita Whitney—was convicted. But she was kept out of the penitentiary by mass agitation and court appeals. The Party won notable victories in two syndicalism trials in Oakland in which Jim Dolsen served as counsel for himself and other Communists. (Jim—now ninety eight—is an active Communist in Philadelphia today.)

That spring month in San Pedro was a month of drama, beauty and heroism. It was a rich experience in my life. This waterfront strike gave stirring examples of new tactics in the class struggle. The Liberty Hill battle was very different from the Battle of Blair Mountain in West Virginia, but both left glorious traditions of solidarity and workers' power behind them. These traditions bore ripe fruit. In California the fruit was the rise of a powerful, progressive union under the leadership of Harry Bridges in the next decade.

¹Big Slim's end came two years later when I was in New York. A Wobbly showed me a letter from a friend in Chicago. "The cops got Big Slim from behind with a sawed-off shotgun," the letter said. "They blew half his head off." This happened under a "shoot on sight" order by Chicago's mayor, "Big Bill" Thompson. The order was never used against Al Capone's gangsters; it only applied to lone wolves like Big Slim.

The Farm Crisis And the All People's Front

HELVI SAVOLA

The Basic Document adopted at the 23rd National Convention of our Party states, "we should bring to all levels of our Party an awareness and understanding of the qualitative change that is taking place in the farmers' movement and become involved in the struggles, especially in the growing farmer-worker alliance."

Since November 1983 the ever-aggravating farm crisis has proven the correctness of this statement. The farm movement has become an important sector in the development of an anti-monopoly, all people's front. The urgency of the farm crisis has brought about the beginnings of a very broad anti-monopoly coalition in every Midwestern state and is becoming a force that could bring about a basic realignment in the political forces in our country.

Most of the Midwest states—Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado, Kansas, etc.—have witnessed some of the largest mass demonstrations since the depression years of the '30s. Many important features are new to these farm demonstrations. Unity and cooperation among all farm organizations, with the exception of the Farm Bureau Federation, which represents agrobusiness interests, has been growing.

The farm demonstrations have had support of labor unions, including the state leaderships of the AFL-CIO and the Teamsters Union. Organizers of rural small towns are participating, as well as independent bankers' groups. In Minnesota, the local school boards closed schools in many communities to enable the teachers, students and parents to get to the demonstrations using school buses. In some towns business establishments closed on January 21—either for the entire day, or for the hours of the demonstration—to express their support. Every church

with rural parishioners has held conferences to outline programs for what they can do about the farm crisis.

Low farm prices are the prime reason for the depth of the crisis in agriculture today. In 1983 parity was lower than in the depths of the crisis in the '30s. In Minnesota the market value of the 1981 crop dropped by \$1 billion between planting and harvest—an average of \$10,000 in gross income per farm.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that last year interest cost farmers 18 per cent of their gross income, energy cost 17 per cent. Between 1978 and 1981, fuel and lubrication costs increased 261 per cent for corn, 257 per cent for wheat, and 266 per cent for soybeans. Fertilizer and herbicide prices have increased even more.

Farm debts in 1950 totaled \$12 billion—less than the net income of that year.

By 1980, total farm debt was \$160 billion—*eight times net farm income*; today farm debt has risen to \$235 billion. *Interest alone* is higher than net farm income. The cost-price squeeze has forced an average of 2,000 farmers off the land each week since 1950.

Although the bottom has dropped out of the farm economy, with farm income lower than any time since the Great Depression, the Reagan Administration has reduced farm support. The Administration's new farm program proposes to have the market determine farm prices—a policy advocated by the giant grain merchants and agribusiness.

The Reagan Administration's widely heralded Payment in Kind (PIK) program to reduce farm commodity surpluses, put into effect for the 1982 crop season, proved to be the most expensive farm program, estimated to have cost from \$18 to \$28 billion, higher than all the previous farm programs for 40 years. The PIK pro-

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gram neither decreased farm commodity surpluses nor increased prices for farm commodities. It proved to be a big handout from the U.S. Treasury to corporate and largest farms and to railroad companies and grain merchants. The U.S. General Accounting Office said that under Reagan's PIK program, seven California farms received \$2 million each, and 2 corporate farms got \$3.7 million each. Railroad reaped millions for transporting the Grain Payment In Kind, and large grain elevators cleared hundreds of millions for handling the grain. The average family farmer got very little help—in fact, farm indebtedness grew by over \$22 billion.

We will not see a reversal of the farm crisis this year. Unless a farm program is adopted that will control production and provide parity price, the farm crisis will become more severe. With all the talk of high farm supports for the U.S. family farms, U.S. levels of support for wheat and corn are among the lowest in the world.

Farmers postponed economic collapse for several years by resorting to debt expansion, being able to do it because of rising land values. Land prices increased 86 per cent between 1975 and 1980. The total acreage under production increased by 43 per cent, while the market did not expand—rather decreased, due to the embargo against sales to the Soviet Union and other government policies. Farm income fell from \$43 billion in 1979 to \$19 billion in 1982, the lowest in 50 years. Falling land prices these last few years have reduced the value of farmers' collateral, and their debts are being recalled by banks even though they might not be delinquent in mortgage payments, and they are being refused new production loans to plant this year's crop because of the low land values.

Although there are fewer than two million farmers today, the impact of the agricultural crisis is greater than most realize. A national study by Sperry-New Holland Corporation recognizes agriculture as America's largest industry. All the assets of 400 top industrial corporations are less than the total investments in U.S. farming industry. About four million people work on two million farms, which is a larger workforce

than any other single industry.

Economic success of farming is important to employment—a farmer is responsible for creating approximately nine other jobs in small and large communities. Between 15 and 17 million workers work in agriculture-related jobs.

A Georgia University study estimates 13.5 million jobs are directly associated with purchasing power of farmers. In 1980 farmers spent \$135 billions for materials and services needed to produce their crops—steel, rubber, equipment, machinery, seed, feed, fertilizer, chemicals and service industries.

Low farm prices directly affect employment in most industries—there has always been a correlation between low farm prices and high unemployment.

Farm income for the past 20 years has been such that many farmers have had to depend on off-the-farm income. Average net income in 1981 ranged from \$14 a year in Oklahoma to the high of \$7,843 in Pennsylvania. American Agricultural Movement director Senter estimates that 60 per cent of the farmers' net income comes from off-the-farm sources. A great many farm wives work on off-the-farm jobs, and, according to Senter, some \$11.4 billion of farmers' income is derived from factory work—farmers *working full time in plants* to enable them to farm.

Farm organizations and farmers recognize that they can not hope to have Congress enact a farm program that would offer some solution to the farm crisis unless they are able to rally the support of labor and small business of rural communities. Even in the most agricultural states the farm constituency is too small to get legislation passed without support from urban areas.

The large financial institutions, agribusiness and large non-farm investors are using the family farm crisis to wrest ownership of the land from the farmers and to monopolize banking in rural communities. In many of the Midwest farming states there are laws on the books that place some obstacles to corporate ownership of farm land. These laws were enacted years ago,

when farm population was larger and the populist movement had political clout. Presently there are bills in every farm state legislature to bypass anticorporate land ownership laws, regulations against multibank holding corporations, bills to make it possible to write off a larger share of non-farm profits against farm losses on income taxes, etc. Also, numerous bills to enable non-farm investment companies to buy off farmers' debts, for farmer-investment corporation partnership to gain control of the farm lands and to use farm losses as writeoffs for non-farm profits on income taxes for rich individuals and corporations, have been proposed.

These efforts are meeting resistance by family farmers and some consumer-oriented groups that see a threat in complete corporate control of agriculture. Recently, due to great pressure from farm groups, Governor Perpich of Minnesota dropped his advocacy of changes in the law to permit corporate ownership of farm land.

Rural Papers, a newsletter from the Kansas Rural Center in Whiting, reports in its February issue:

As this goes to press, a bill that would change the Corporate Farming Law in Kansas is being drafted. It would allow corporations to purchase land from farmers with lease back provisions . . . it appears that a major assault on the state's ban on corporate farming is underway. Hearings are to be scheduled.

From South Dakota, the *Argus Leader* of Sioux Falls (March 23, 1985) reports that a new law allowing corporations to own limited amounts of South Dakota land may be referred to a public vote. A petition drive to repeal this law is being launched, said Leland Swanson, president of the SD Farmers Union; 13,929 petition signatures are needed to refer the matter to a public vote. The SD Farm Alliance Coalition campaigning on this issue is made up of the Farmers Union, National Farm Organization, American Agriculture Movement, the SD Farm Borrowers Association and the SD Independent Stockgrowers Association. They sponsored and organized a statewide farm rally that drew thousands of farmers.

As these coalitions develop, participation by progressive and labor forces is imperative to keep the movement on an antimonopoly, pro-peace course. The American Agricultural Movement, fighting for parity prices and organizing tractorcades in the late 70s, received little guidance or support from progressives and the labor movement. Such ultra-reactionary forces as Posse Comitatus, the Birchers, etc., moved into the vacuum. They were able to influence many active forces in the farm movement and lead the movement into a blind alley, isolated from the broader support of other farm organizations and labor.

The U.S. Farm Association of Iowa, with a small corps of young farmers and farm activists, banded together in the late 1970s in the states of Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Kansas, etc. They studied the experiences of the farm movement in the '30s. They brought Canadian farm activists to talk to farm groups, organized farm conferences, and worked to unite various farm groups in the formation of the North American Farm Alliance. NAFA and its president, Merle Hansen, have played a leadership role in bringing about cooperation between leading farm organizations, the labor movement, small businessmen, independent bankers, church groups, etc. NAFA has worked with the Black Congressional Caucus, and it brought Jesse Jackson to the agricultural Midwest, where he presented a clear farm program for parity prices and a moratorium on farm foreclosures. The North American Farm Alliance has linked the farm crisis with the huge military budget and the great federal deficit. Awareness of this link is beginning to be reflected in slogans at farm demonstrations, as in Iowa: *Reduce Arms, Not Farms; Silos for Grain, Not for MX; Export Butter Not Guns.*

The North American Farm Alliance and its newspaper have also contributed to the antimonopoly, anti-Reagan Administration direction of the growing farm protest movement, but much more must be done if the potential of the situation is to be fully utilized to forge a new political alignment in the Midwestern states.

In some states, progressive action by farm-

ers in the '30s was subverted and defused by banks and agribusiness corporations, through the creation of neo-fascist front organizations. In California, the largest and most successful of these front groups was called the Associated Farmers, financed almost exclusively by major California banks and agribusiness corporations. The largest single source of funds was the Bank of America, the largest private farm lender in the world. One of their most effective strategies was to keep the farmers divided and in conflict with farmworkers by using racism and anti-Semitism.

In California they were successful enough to weaken and destroy all legitimate organizing among family farmers. The end result was the actual defeat of family farm agriculture as the dominant form of commercial production, and the renewed control by corporations, banks and wealthy families over the richest agricultural regions in California.

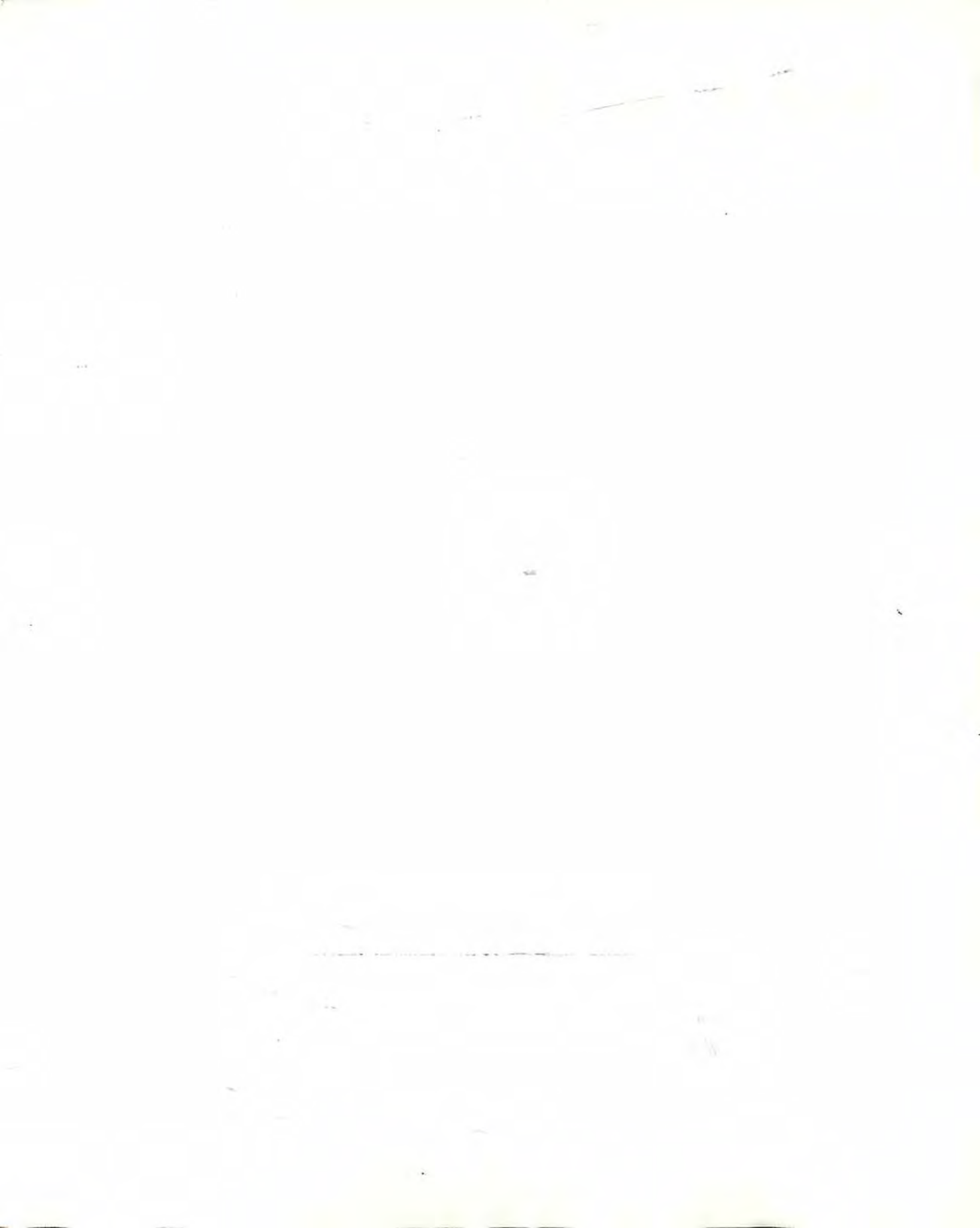
The victory of corporate agriculture in California paved the way for the development of agribusiness-controlled industrial food production that now threatens to eliminate family farming around the world.

In the Midwest and other areas, what was important about that entire period was that when family farmers were pushed to the brink of extinction, they organized politically, and forced through legislation that restored their strength and stabilized the family farm economy in much of the country. In the days of the Non-Partisan League in North Dakota and the Farmer Labor Party in Minnesota, these gains

were made by farmers often at the expense of corporations and banks.

The Communist Party got into the farm struggles of the Great Depression and played a very important role. Its advanced demands for farm relief and production loans, helped organize penny sales, and launched the "Left" United Farmworkers League. It initiated the Lundeen Farm Bill and worked to mobilize support for it in the rural and urban communities—a movement that helped to elect many progressives to state and national legislatures. In Minnesota, the first Communist mayor was elected in Crosby, with the help of the United Farmers League. The influence of the Party in the farm movement contributed greatly to preventing monopoly capital control in the Midwest agricultural states.

In the recent period our Party has been slow to recognizing the depth and political importance of the farm crisis. To avert the danger that the frustrations of the farmers will be subverted to an antiprogressive, antilabor track, we must get into the struggle with a clear program and willingness to help mobilize the labor movement for support and leadership in this struggle to defeat Reagan's anti-farm and anti-people programs. The labor movement must begin to exert pressure on Congress and state legislatures to pass farm emergency bills as part of labor's self-interest, and urge the farm movement to support the fightback of labor for Jobs or Income, and put an end to the Pentagon insane drive toward nuclear annihilation. □



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