

"an injury to one is an injury to all"

UNITED LABOR ACTION

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Ford's "cure" for inflation - NO JOBS!

By MIKE TILLI

These are hard times. The economy is in a tail-spin and you don't need one of Ford's "economic experts" to tell you so.

Ford says we need more unemployment to end inflation. But why layoffs; isn't there some other way to solve this crisis?

Does Ford know what it is like to have a pink slip in one hand and a hand full of bills in the other?

It's the end of the road. A meager unemployment check for a few months then boom—nothing.

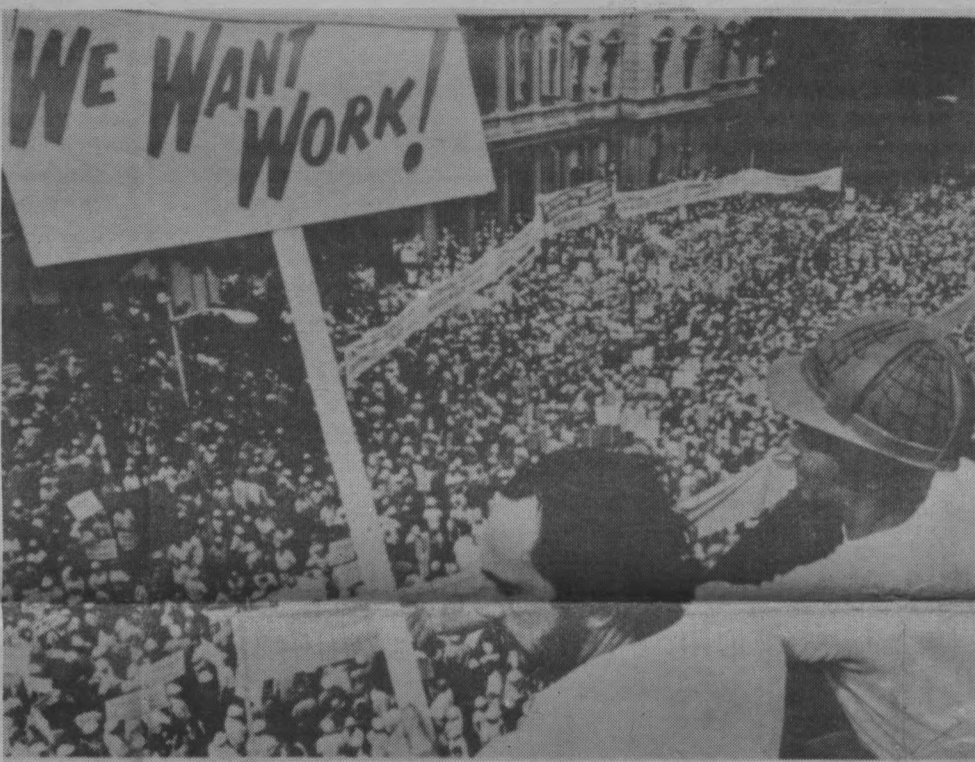
You bust yourself working. Each day, tearing yourself out of bed, sweating and grinding through the day, eating your gut out with frustration. And what do you get?—The boot!

For all those years and all those tears, what have you got to show besides ulcers and a bad back?

You and your friends made that shop hum. It's nothing but an empty hunk of bricks without you.

So why does Ford want to solve the crisis by putting the burden on our backs?

Your life is wrapped up in that job. You



sacrificed and you made it what it was. Every penny the boss made out of that company happened because you and your friends made the wheels turn.

So why have we got to bear the full burden on our backs? Despite all we've done for them the bosses won't even help us out. All they are interested in is profits, which are soaring. But we can make them share the burden.

It's no big deal. The law we need is on the books. It's called the Full Employment Act of 1946. The Act says that the government—federal, state and local—must do all it can to fight unemployment and keep workers on their jobs doing productive work.

This means it is illegal for Ford to try and solve this crisis with unemployment!

He should issue an executive order to all companies halting all layoffs and ordering the rehire of all those laid off in the last year. The Full Employment Act empowers him to do it.

Let's not let this law stay buried and gathering dust. Let's make Ford use it. After all, we deserve something for all that work.

photo: AFL-CIO news

Big layoffs in auto-

C.U.L.A. demands: enforce Full Employment Act

By a member of UAW Local 15

DETROIT, November 1—After several weeks of unconfirmed reports and ambiguous company statements, it now appears quite certain that Chrysler Corporation has decided to close down their Jefferson Assembly Plant. With over 5,000 workers it is one of Chrysler's largest plants, producing over 238,000 cars in 1973.

But opposition to this attack on the working people has begun to be mounted. The NAACP issued a letter to Chrysler criticizing the corporation's concern only for profits and pointing out the devastating effect on Detroit that would follow the closing of the plant.

Operation PUSH has scheduled a meeting in the community on Nov. 22 to protest the threat.

The Detroit Center for United Labor Action has begun a campaign to keep the Jefferson Plant open. An open letter to Detroit's Mayor and City Council has been distributed at the plant and in downtown Detroit pointing out that the Employment Act of 1946 places a responsibility on local officials to act to maintain full employment.

The Act states in part:
"... it is the ... responsibility of the Federal government, with the assistance

and cooperation of ... State and local governments to coordinate and utilize all its plans, functions and resources for the purpose of creating and maintaining ... useful employment ... for those able, willing and seeking to work, and to promote maximum employment ..."

The C.U.L.A. has further exposed that Chrysler claimed an \$8 million loss, but still paid its stockholders \$19.9 million in 3rd quarter dividends! And Chrysler has raked in over \$500 million in profits in the last 3 years.

A drive will be launched to force the City government to act as required by law and take measures to prevent the plant from closing. The working people already are suffering severe unemployment and the workers at Jefferson are ready and able to fight for their jobs. The many militant rank and file actions of the past (like the plant takeover in August 1973) should serve as a good training in this most crucial struggle.

One Jefferson Assembly worker summed it up: "If they close the plant they knock 5,000 guys out onto the streets and what the hell they gonna do. Look how bad unemployment is now. If they shut down the plant they'll be doing a lot toward making sure we see another riot."

BULLETIN—Detroit: In C.U.L.A.'s ongoing campaign to get the Full Employment Act of 1946 enforced, thousands of leaflets were distributed at the Jefferson Assembly Plant and throughout the city.

The leaflet demanded the Detroit city government meet its obligation under the Act and fight the closing of the Jefferson Assembly Plant.

At a press conference held November 8th, C.U.L.A. announced the city council unanimously passed a resolution citing the Act and urging Chrysler not to close the plant.

C.U.L.A. demanded that President Ford, pursuant to the Act, issue an executive order stopping all plant closings and all layoffs, with the rehiring of all workers laid off in the last year.

Underscoring the urgency of this demand, the Big Three simultaneously announced massive new layoffs.

The C.U.L.A. called on the United Auto Workers and the AFL-CIO to recognize this: number one danger to its membership and start a top priority, aggressive campaign, to get the Act enforced.



"The last hired and the first fired." These Black and women workers pictured above are shown leaving Chrysler's Detroit plant. photo credit: LNS Women's Graphics

Coal miners move for big gains

By MIKE TILLI

There is a feeling in the coal fields. It's in the air, as thick as coal dust. "Now is the time for change," and everyone knows the miners will fight to get it.

If it takes a long strike to get a good contract, they'll do it. It looks like the miners are prepared to resist injunctions, defy the Taft-Hartley Act, ignore the anti-union slanders of a hysterical press and stand tight to win.

Because the miners are willing to fight a long strike they probably won't have to, and the 1974 contract will be most likely gotten with a short strike.

The coal bosses are as profit hungry as ever and Ford is just as willing to invoke a Taft-Hartley, back to work order as Truman was, but they are afraid. They know they can't break the miners spirit and as John L. Lewis said "You can't mine coal with bayonets."

For the last few years the miners have been building this fight. The rank and file threw out the corrupt Boyle leadership and turned the United Mine Workers into one of the strongest, most democratic unions in the country.

Conditions in the pits are as bad as ever. The chance of being run through a conveyor or crushed in a roof fall are as big as ever.

Over 130 miners were killed on the job last year, making mining four times as

dangerous as other industrial jobs.

The U.M.W. contract demands include sweeping, new safety rules that will change these bad conditions.

The union wants helpers on all major machines; full-time, union safety committeemen; extensive training programs for new miners; the clear right to leave imminent danger situations; the right to strike during the life of a contract and they want wage increases to keep up with inflation.

These are big, no nonsense demands and they may not get them all, but the fact that the miners are strong, united and willing to fight goes a long way towards guaranteeing that they will win.

Union victory won by taxi testing workers

By TERRY KLUG

A week-long strike by workers at Olson Laboratories, the newly initiated taxi inspection facility under contract by the Taxi and Limosine Commission, ended with a tremendous victory for the workers.

A strong and spirited picket line set up by the workers in front of the facility, and respected without exception by every cab that pulled up for testing, completely shut down operations for the California-based company. Within a week the bosses at Olson labs were forced to recognize Local 239 of the IBT as our bargaining agent and agree to a contract negotiating date of no later than three weeks.

For two months prior to the strike, a drive for union recognition had been on at the inspection center by both shop and clerical workers. Spurred on by wages averaging only \$3.00 per hour in these times of galloping inflation and horrendous working conditions—highlighted by carbon monoxide fumes in the shop of up to six times that which is considered acceptable by the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and coupled with the racism of the all-white management, 100 percent of the mostly Black and Latin workers had signed show of interest cards giving the union the right to file for an election before the NLRB.

From that point on the company bosses tried everything possible to divide and



After only one week of striking, Olson Lab workers won their union. No NLRB elections were even needed due to the strong and solid determination of the workers.

demoralize the workers and to break the union drive. All the way from attempting to bribe some of the workers away from the union, to threatening others, especially the key union organizers in the shop, the company was countered at every turn by the unity that prevailed in our own ranks. We realized that the bosses would do anything and say anything to keep the union out and keep their profits soaring.

Finally, at their wits end, those who had built their lives off the work of others, decided to gamble and fire one of the central union organizers in the shop. Completely underestimating the determination and strength of the workers, the bosses were flabbergasted when the firing was answered by all the clerical and shop workers walking

off their jobs and onto the streets. To a person, we understood the firing as a last ditch attempt to keep the union out.

From that moment on the facility was shut down tight as a drum. Support by cab drivers throughout the city and by the C.U.L.A., which helped organize support, sent strong daily delegations to our picket line, helped us run off and distribute leaflets, and call the press—how could we go wrong? Within a week the bosses had had enough, cried uncle, and agreed to settle for most of our demands. Victory was ours!

And also, very importantly, we learned too that victory doesn't come cheap. Only the unity and determination and a fighting spirit by the workers can force the bosses to their knees.

Anti-racist actions continue in Boston



On October 18 hundreds attended a demonstration in Boston called by the Ad Hoc Committee to Defend the Right of Equal Education. Frank Neisser of C.U.L.A. spoke at the rally.

He said such demonstrations were the best answer to the racist anti-busing campaign and hoped there would be future anti-racist actions.

Welcome, Youngstown C.U.L.A.

By BETSY DAVIS

On November 2, C.U.L.A. took another step forward with the opening of a chapter in Youngstown, Ohio, the center of the "Steel Belt" and an important industrial area of the Midwest.

The opening of the new office was marked by a meeting attended by about twenty people, all of whom indicated they would support the initiatives taken by C.U.L.A. The discussion focused on C.U.L.A.'s most important task—to mobilize the working people to solve their own problems, be it fighting the utilities, opposing bus fare hikes, supporting labor strikes, or opening up struggles against racism in all its forms.

The economic situation also received much attention at the meeting.

Ted Dostal, a retired steelworker, spoke about the Great Depression of 45 years ago. Dostal, who spent 26 years at the U.S. Steel Ohio Works in Youngstown, pointed out that another depression is expected. But workers now, many organized into unions, have a better chance of fighting back and winning.

The women and men taking the lead in this new chapter have already issued their own local newspaper, called the "CULA Organizer," reminiscent of a paper issued many years ago by labor militants in the area.

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N.Y. Tel operators fight firing and death of workers

BULLETIN!! As we go to press, we have just learned that Gabby Gemma was reinstated at her job with full back pay! This is a tremendous victory for all the operators.

By a Long Distance Telephone Operator and member of the Evelyn Coburn Grievance Committee

On October 31st, when John D. DeButts, chairman of AT&T stepped out of his limousine in front of the New York Hilton, he heard the angry chants of telephone operators, telephone workers and supporters of the Center for United Labor Action—"DeButts lives high while operators die."

DeButts was there to receive the "Family of Man" award from the Council of Churches. The award reads in part..."sensitive to the hurts and needs among us, our deprivations and inequalities and responsibility for the search for solutions to the sadness in our family."

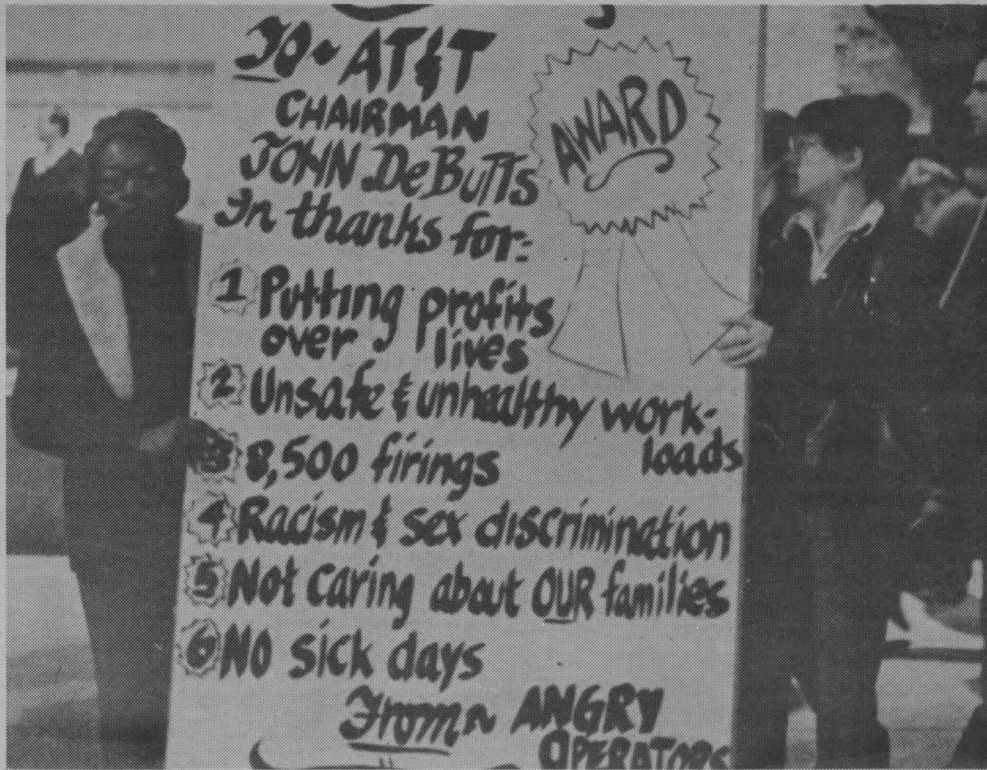
At the last meeting of the Board of AT&T, DeButts proudly announced a record profit of 89 million for the last quarter alone. But not one penny of these profits reach other members of the family of the man—the telephone operators that work so hard to insure AT&T profits.

Does DeButts, AT&T, or New York Telephone care about the family of Evelyn Coburn, a 24 year old Black telephone

operator murdered by New York Telephone? Did they care when they told her to report to work or be fired even when they knew that she was ill? Did they care how her husband felt when he came home and found her after she worked half that day? And did they care when they posted the schedule in the office that read, "Coburn—Dead effective 10-19-74"?

And how does DeButts who has the "responsibility to search for solutions" feel about the family of Gabby Gemma? For the past year Gabby was a well known union organizer for the Communications Workers of America. She was editor of the organizing paper *Between the Lines*. Every day for the past year she worked and struggled in every way to fight the company's racism and harassment. She really struggled to find the solution to the inequalities of an operators job. Did she receive the Family of Man award for her efforts? NO. On October 16th, she was fired by N.Y. Tel. Their reason: she had an annoyed tone to the customers. Our reason: her union organizing activity.

Evelyn and Gabby both worked in the same office and also on the CWA union drive together. In that office the operators have organized the Evelyn Coburn grievance committee. It is this committee that is organizing to help get Gabby her job back. They've already distributed a petition for her reinstatement. The day after Evelyn's



Operators confronting A T & T chairman De Butts — It was this type of action that won Ms. Gemma's job back.

death they distributed black arm bands which all the women wore to make sure the company got the message of where the responsibility for Evelyn's death lay.

Gabby Gemma is also an organizer for the Center for United Labor Action. The C.U.L.A. has pledged to assist the Evelyn Coburn grievance committee in every way. C.U.L.A. with Gabby in the forefront, has continuously fought against AT&T for the racism, sex discrimination and harassment of telephone operators as well as against the rate increases which mean higher prices and fewer jobs because of automation that is

paid for by these rate hikes.

Helen, an organizer of the Evelyn Coburn grievance committee said, "We got support from a lot of places we didn't expect. We're going to fight to get Gabby reinstated and get better working conditions. Considering the pressure on the job, the support is spectacular. In fact the Telephone Traffic Union (TTU-company union) delegate told me that Gabby is going to be reinstated. She was lying just to keep me from coming to the demonstration. But we're going to keep fighting until Gabby gets her job back."

Fedders workers stop union-busting drive — win better contract

By a FEDDERS WORKER

BUFFALO, N.Y.—On September 1st the Fedders workers of Local 1753 United Steelworkers went on strike for a decent living and a better contract. After two weeks on strike, the company came up with their "one and only offer," 12 cents an hour raise the first year, 7 cents the second and 7 cents the third; no cost of living and \$2.56 a month towards the pension program.

The company attempted to ship whole warehouses full of their products, stockpiled before the strike, out by rail during the night. But the negotiating committee went to the railroad workers union for help and found that it was the railroad supervisors who were trying to move these products. The following day some fifty railroad ties appeared on the tracks.

After seven weeks of trying to move the products, the company brought in a government official from the I.C.C., several Penn Central police and Buffalo police to move the train. The picketers were told to disperse or be arrested. The government official told us we were interfering with inter-state transportation. The Railroad Workers came to our aid after hearing we were willing to fight and even go to jail to protect our rights and win a decent living. They told the company, the I.C.C. man and the railroad officials, that the railroad workers were not going to cross the picket line. This union, in solidarity with our strike, posted on all local station's bulletin boards that cars loaded with Fedders' products were not to be moved. There were rumors that blasting caps were put on the tracks to warn any train not to go any further.

After coming up with several more offers of better wages, but no sliding cost of living clause, the Company tried another notorious trick: one intended to divide us by going over the head of our negotiating committee. The company sent out letters to all of us, telling us it was a good contract, and the "final offer," and that we should go back to work right away.

Just before we were to collect our unemployment benefits, they saw we weren't giving in and were finally forced

into giving us more than the first offer: 40 cents the first year, 25 cents plus up to 10 cents cost of living the 2nd and 3rd years of the contract; \$6.50 a month towards our pensions the first year, \$7.50 the second and \$8.00 the third. Shift bonuses were increased from 10 cents to 15 cents. We also had a lot of wording changed in the contract to favor the workers and not the company and written so it is easier to understand.

Although we didn't catch up to the skyrocketing cost of living nor get what we should have gotten—an escalating cost of living clause and other things—this contract is three times better than the first offer and the best we could get at this time given the fact that the company was trying to starve us out.

The negotiating committee and company had held negotiations five months before the strike, but we didn't get anywhere until we were in the streets fighting back. We know what we have to do to beat these companies. Watch out next time. Take a lesson from the Fedders workers—fight for a decent living.

Mass. machine workers fight runaway

By DAVE CARVER

BOSTON, October 23—For an hour after work today, a hundred people rallied outside Massachusetts Machine Shop (MMS) in an attempt to stop this union shop from running away to New Hampshire. The rally, called by the Executive Board of Local 262 of the United Electric, Radio, and Machine Workers (UE), brought out twenty five MMS workers, as well as delegations from other shops in the local and other supporters.

Dave Knights, the owner of MMS, is planning to move the shop to New Hampshire after Christmas. Is it that he is concerned with the health of the forty workers here, hoping that fresh country air will reverse the damage done by the poisonous fumes, ear-splitting noise, and ancient facilities in the Boston shop?

No, not exactly. Safe chemicals can be used, sound baffles placed around

machines, and new buildings nearby can be built from the profits extorted from the workers. No, Dave Knights is more concerned with the health of his ledger books than that of the workers. The older workers here nearly all suffer some illness or defogmy stemming from conditions in this metal stamping plant.

On June 28, 1973, the workers voted 26 to 11 to join UE, and on Nov. 4 started to benefit from a good contract based on the struggles and sacrifices of months of battling with Knights on the shop floor and in the sacred offices of the President of the Co. himself.

The contract includes such provisions as the rest of the day off with pay when ninety degrees is hit, 100 percent free insurance benefits, an average 86 cents per hour increase in the first year, and the basics of a union contract—collective bargaining, grievance system, holidays, vacations, and so on.

Knights wants to wipe out these benefits by moving thirty-six miles into a state with right-to-work laws and few unions. Moreover, this move would evade a contract clause which provides for preferential hiring and continuity of union representation if the factory is moved within thirty miles of its present location.

At the rally, a Black shop chairman from a Revere sugar plant told the workers to stay strong in their struggle, while a Puerto Rican worker from MMS denounced the runaway in Spanish. A UE chairman from another shop called for fairly weak tactics, such as letter writing, but the shop chairman for MMS, Pete Olney, put the struggle in the right perspective by speaking about stopping the trucks that move the plant. He also pointed to the example the Rheingold Brewery workers in N.Y. set when they successfully used a sit-in at their machines to prevent a runaway.

Boston C.U.L.A., which played a leading role in organizing the union at MMS, will continue to support this important battle in Boston against runaway shops.

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C.U.L.A. wins public hearings to expose Ill. Bell robbery

By G. MOSSBERGER

CHICAGO, October 15—A big victory for all working and oppressed people in Chicago took place Friday night, October 11, 1974. For the first time, the Illinois Commerce Commission has been forced to call a special public hearing in the evening, when workers could attend. This event marked the high point (so far) of a months-long campaign by the Chicago Chapter of the Center for United Labor Action, organizers of the hearing.

Illinois Bell had gone before the Illinois Commerce Commission to request that they no longer need to have public hearings when they want to raise their rates. They want to be able to automatically raise their rates monthly, supposedly to pass on their costs, without the "inconvenience" of public hearings.

First off, both Illinois Bell and Western Electric, its main supplier, are owned by AT&T, so really they buy from themselves. Secondly, the I.C.C. has proven nothing but a rubber stamp for the utility monopolies, anyway. (Bell has received eight rate hikes in the last six years.)

Nonetheless, public hearings are a vehicle for workers and their organizations to

intervene and Bell wants to rob us of this right. Moreover, utility companies throughout the U.S. will be encouraged to take away this right we have, unless Illinois Bell is stopped.

The Center for United Labor Action, an independent organization of working men and women of all nationalities, therefore initiated a struggle for a special public hearing on this issue. After handing out tens of thousands of leaflets, getting out hundreds of posters, contacting friendly organizations and unions, and holding several picket lines and street meetings, they finally succeeded in getting the historic hearing.

Around one hundred working and poor people, including many Black and other oppressed people, participated in the very spirited and militant meeting. Many in the audience were senior citizens, organized by the Senior Citizens Senate to protest the fact that their phones, which they call their "lifelines," were becoming increasingly difficult to afford.

The hearing room was decorated with many colorful banners, including one from the C.U.L.A. which read "I.C.C.—AT&T: Stop Their Criminal Conspiracy!" and one

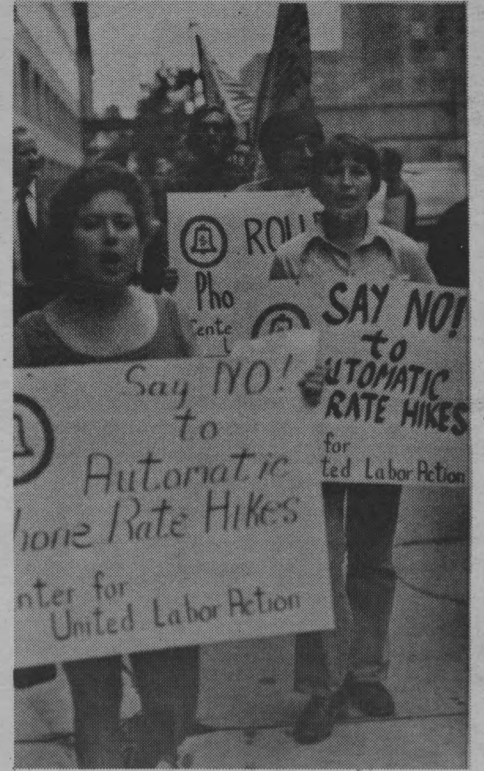
from the Senior Citizens Senate which said "My Phone Is My Lifeline! Lower Rates for Seniors". Many people in the audience held signs denouncing AT&T and Bell for their request for automatic rate hikes and calling for them to lower their rates and open their books.

The two men and a woman who represented C.U.L.A. were continually interrupted by applause and encouragement from the audience. The whole meeting was characterized by much militancy and audience participation, partly because of the tone set by the speakers and because it was a rare opportunity to speak out against such a giant oppressive monopoly.

Moreover, the racist hearing officer had angered the audience and evoked a storm of protest when he referred to the first C.U.L.A. speaker, a Black factory worker, as a "boy." From then on, everyone knew for sure which side this alleged representative of the public was on in the fight between the poor and working people and AT&T—and they challenged his every move.

He further exposed the role of this government agency when he refused to remove two uniformed cops who had insulted all the workers present by entering the hearing room.

All three speakers called for AT&T to open its books and pledged to continue the fight against the giant Bell system until everyone can afford a phone without sacrifice. The Senior Citizens Senate spoke next, noting that their phones are a vital necessity, not a luxury, and also called for Bell to lower its



C.U.L.A. pickets Illinois Commerce Commission—wins evening hearings.

photo: Lauren rates.

Both the I.C.C. flunkies and the nervous Bell lawyer (an overstuffed \$64,000 per year fatcat) got just a small display of the workers' power last Friday night. The fight will continue until all the robbers like AT&T go before a real public commission to stand trial for their crimes!

Also in Detroit, the workers at Harper Hospital are awaiting union certification. Harper's management has been fighting the Service Employees International Union's unionizing drive tooth and nail for over a year. They have already contested TWO elections held under the Michigan Employment Relations Commission.

The workers at Harper have shown through these elections that they want a union—now! But the hospital wants to force a third election, claiming the others invalid, now that hospitals fall under the NLRB.

On October 30, 75 workers from the Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union picketed the NLRB offices in Detroit. The NLRB has ruled 61 challenged votes as acceptable in a vote that would force the union out at a Muskegon, Mich. restaurant. The workers challenged that many unauthorized people, including supervisors, people who didn't even work there and even the owner's son, voted in that election and demanded that the NLRB rule in favor of the union.

These workers, who have been on strike for 11 months, and others, are telling the NLRB that its pro-management actions will not stop workers in the fight against the bosses to get improved job conditions.

Publishing workers strike MacMillan Co.



photo: Macmillan striker

The workers of MacMillan Publishing Company went on strike on October 14th, when the company fired 250 workers overnight in a union-busting move.

The strikers, mostly women, have had daily picket lines and many noon rallies, which C.U.L.A. has frequently attended.

These women are waging a strong fight against a powerful company in a highly unorganized field.

Local 153 of the Office and Professional Employees International Union has filed for representation and a consent election is soon to be held.

Detroit hospital workers picket NLRB offices

By a DETROIT HOSPITAL WORKER

In Michigan it is becoming clearer to more workers that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is pro-management. The NLRB has always been quick to hear cases against organizations such as the C.U.L.A. and unions (for the support of the Farah strike and the boycott of Sibleys in Rochester, N.Y.) to take away our rights, while it stalls on decisions that would be in favor of working people.

In August, a federal law was enacted to put private hospital workers under the jurisdiction of the NLRB. At Detroit

Memorial Hospital, the union (AFSCME) was in the midst of negotiations and it was obvious that a strike would be needed to win its demands. The union began taking the steps for an authorized strike under the state labor relations commission, with the supervision of a state mediator.

Four days before the union would have gone on strike, management threatened to bring in the NLRB and throw out the previous mediated negotiations. This intervention, at the VERY least, would have meant a 30 day delay (for the mandatory "cooling off" period).

Steelworkers stop speed-ups — win steward's job back

Over 950 workers at the Commercial Shearing and Stamping Company in Youngstown won a resounding victory after a five day wildcat strike in the last week of October. The workers went back to work after a shop steward, Jim Argiro, was reinstated on his job after being suspended for five days subject to discharge.

This victory was made possible by the

militancy, determination and solidarity of the striking workers against great opposition—the company, the bureaucracy of the union, the local judge and the local press.

The company had been pushing for increased production and was setting quotas on jobs that are non-incentive. The workers resisted this increased pressure and speed-up. In retaliation, the company suspended the shop steward, Jim Argiro.

The response of the workers was nearly instantaneous; they shut down the whole plant immediately. Then Judge Jenkins issued an injunction against striking. Also, President Abel of the steelworkers union, ordered them to resume production.

The workers nearly unanimously defied all this pressure. When the meeting of about 500 workers demanded they have their steward back on the job and assurances that no disciplinary action would be taken against any of the strikers, the union staff agreed to present these demands.

So Judge Jenkins ordered the company to reinstate the discharged shop steward and the staff rep agreed that he would fight any disciplinary action by the company against any participants in the strike. The workers went back to work, victoriously happy of their achievement.

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