Abusing the Workers’ Strength

A Chrysler worker was telling me of a recent union meet called by the leadership for the purpose of taking a vote in the recent contract negotiations with Chrysler. He said that according to a leaflet passed out several days later, the meeting would be held by day and the strike would be taken a day or so later.

MEN UAW AND CHRYSLER NEGOTIATED

Emil Mazey, one of the International union’s top officials, gave a report at this meeting of the situation in the Chrysler negotiations. He pointed out that the hold-up in the progress was that the company refused to grant a 7% increase to the highest classification in engineering. These workers make $3.34, an hour or more. The next problem was a raise for the tool and die workers who made something near the same. Another problem was the office workers to whom the company did not want to grant an annual wage because they are paid on a yearly basis. The last problem was the Steward System: the company wanted to reduce the number of stewards to less than one-third of what it is today. The remaining stewards would have an hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon to take care of grievances.

OTHEING FOR PRODUCTION WORKERS

Mazey said that was it. Not one thing he did say about reduction workers, the mass force of the workers.

This worker told me he noticed that the stewards had not very friendly to the workers several days before, urging the workers to attend the meeting. As this worker said, the stewards were there just to report to the meeting and no office workers. Production workers were at the meeting and they take home less pay than most of those mentioned and their working conditions are unbearable in comparison. Yet not a word was said concerning them. The union just asked them to give their votes and their strength so that pressure can be put on the company to get what the union wanted.

As workers, we would be glad to see every one of the recent chief stewards working every day and all day. But we have to vote for them because the company will have complete control over every minute of production without any representation that we can protest to. The workers ran a change in the Steward System. We want more and better representation, to have some control of our destiny. This the company and the union leaders are afraid of.

UNION AND COMPANY AGAINST WILDCATS

This worker also said that the big brass made quite a big speech against wildcat strikes. The workers had one hat day and the company used against the union was in bargaining. It hurt those union leaders and it really hurt the company too. It shows that neither the company nor the union leaders have complete control over the workers.

SQUEEZED IN MIDDLE

Many workers asked each other what they thought of Mazey’s speech. Some said it is another bunch of lies to use our strength for their own use and gain against us.

One worker said, “Did you see the vicious attitude expressed against those workers who had the wildcat strike? The implication was in the speaker’s talk about firing them if they don’t return tomorrow. They said the voting would begin tomorrow but they are asking us to come tomorrow to vote today. They do not trust us to come back. It will give us time to think over the speech.”

It all adds up to this: The production worker is caught in the middle between the union leaders and the company. We will be squeezed to a point where we will be forced to burst out.”

LABOR UNION

Workers Are Restless In All Industries and Unions

A West Coast construction worker, who is a regular reader of NEWS & LETTERS, has written the following which we publish as the lead article for this issue:

“Over the past few weeks, NEWS & LETTERS has carried stories and articles that show how greatly displaced workers are with their particular unions. Both Charles Denby and Jerry Kegg have told stories along these lines. Other articles have shown that more and more workers are in different parts of the country. In particular, I’ve read the articles that are pointed against the leadership of the United Auto Workers and the United Mine Workers. Workers in those unions have shown their displeasure by walkouts against contracts negotiated by their leaders.

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“I don’t mean to say that the union just asked them to give their votes and their strength so that pressure can be put on the company to get what the union wanted.

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AN APOLOGY

We are very sorry this issue reaches you late. It was because of conflict in printing schedule, we were forced to change our printing Thursday.

With this issue, we begin our new printing schedule on Wednesdays instead of Fridays.

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A DOCTOR SPEAKS  
BY M.D.  
WHAT DOES TIPPING DO TO YOU

Not long ago a TV repair man came to our home to check the set. We could hear voices but not see the picture. Within three minutes he had replaced a tube which had to do with voltage regulation and the picture was clear.

When I was paying him, my young son and his sister, concerned over the fact that the man was working on high, said loud whispers to give him at least a dollar tip.

I suppose that I tip about as often as most other people, but still I don't like the idea of tipping. Perhaps the word has become a bit shop-worn and hollow-sounding of late, but I don't think it is American. There are, today, a lot of words spoiled on the term "American." It has become so covered up that it is difficult to see what it actually is.

To me, America would be meaningless if people did not hold on to their private values — for an appreciation of the worth of each human being.

There is something false about tipping. It is as though one were receiving a bribe to perform well. Basically, it undermines human dignity for it assumes dishonorable values — for an appreciation of the worth of each human being. Practically, it helps to maintain poor wage levels.

Many physicians are generous tipers. I have often seen them leave a 25c or 50c tip for a cup of coffee in the hospital restaurant. I know one doctor who is extremely concerned over the fact that the man was working on high, said loud whispers to give him at least a dollar tip.

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Speed-up and Lay-Off Plague New York Factory Workers

NEW YORK—When they opened up a new line in the Torstein Motor Works they hired a group of workers that had been laid off for seven months from a big electronics factory. One of these was a young girl who found it next to impossible to keep up with the speed. Slightly more than a third of the day, she said, she could not keep up with the line. "I wonder what are you going to do about this mess?" All he could say was, "What do you mean, you just try to keep up with the line, that's all." She said, "Daddy-O, this got to go!", so he took away the lunch break, which would improve. There would be a better union representative working right on the line.

The companies, however, one man has been doing the work of two. Labors, sometimes, he finds this last month, is getting very nervous and at your time, the inexperienced union-wise, the secretary and the president here, he said it couldn't have been. He said it couldn't have been the company's fault, but the people who were doing the work were making it very difficult.

ILLING THE JOB

The way things are going—I'm not only killing himself, but the company isn't going to be a very good company without having the men on the floor. The company is going to be able to set the speed of the line.

Speed-up is Fierce

The speed-up in radio shops is at a very fast pace. They have one of these days. When I started as an assembler five months ago, they set 45 sets per hour with eight connections for each operation and working full weeks. When I started at this job in October last year, they were doing 75 sets per hour with eight and 156 connections and finished buildings, but that was impossible. Some, at the beginning of the month, they would only set 60 per hour and get to 70. The only thing that was happening was that they were giving them less. Now, in one hour, you average around three to four hours. I figure that they must be getting more sets out now and it could them less.

UNION DOES NOT WANT THE WORK

UNION does not want to give the workers the union the speed of the line. They are giving the company a very large number of workers. They had to be forced into the union. The workers who had the authority to do something about it, didn't do anything about it. The workers would not sign for the limited agreement or seniority agreement, or any other agreement. They had to be forced to sign for the limited agreement in streamlining and the work agreement.

CONDITIONING the mind with promises is an old method of trying to get people to accept things as they are without attempting to change them.

There are some very large plants out on Long Island, with thousands of workers. But there are a lot of them that they never went to New York City that they have only 300 to 300 workers. There are many shops where there are only 20 or 30. There is a different union in practically every place. Although I am talking to unions, I am very cautious about paying my $10 initiation fee because two weeks after I might be laid off and get a job in another place with a different union and another 10% initiation fee.

I have worked in shops that have had the AFL, the CIO, and the United Mine Workers, a carpenters union, and the United Auto Works. This UW shop has the worst conditions. I've heard of. Two years ago they started with 75c and an hour.

Most of the places that have the AFL, the CIO, and the CIO unions start with $1.40. So, I said, if you average around three solid months, with eight hours, in a year, that's good.

If you have steady work, you are either lucky, who won't get rich, but you'll die rich.

In Auto Industry

Peace Offensive and that would now most likely, support the status quo and even. Speed up that usually, when everyone is in one union, like skilled or unskilled, and the other, that even in different organizations, workers of all types can be united and help each other.

He said that there is jealousy and hard feeling between unskilled workers, especially since the wage gap is decreasing.

I said, "Do you think that a program of 30-hour week would be put into effect?" He said, "I thought it would as it were mean more for the men, and I thought that the workers would be satisfied as they would make so much less, for overtime over 30 hours."

Nut Head Says—

"If you work hard and mind your own business, maybe you won't die rich but you'll die happy."
CONFLICT BEHIND PEACE TALKS

I believe that every issue of NEWS & LETTERS should carry material similar to the lead article "Conflict Behind Peace Talks," (Aug. 19) It was good to get behind the smokes of the politicians and see what are motivated by the relations of people at the point of production.

"Conflict Behind Peace Talks" was long but that didn't bother me. Combined with the other material in the issue, what the American workers criticize the American factory system it made this issue a memorable one that should have the widest possible circulation.

Factory Worker
Los Angeles, Calif.

Congratulations on "Conflict Behind Peace Talks." Your theoretical article on the talks at the "summit" was superb and the concrete account of the meetings rounded it out admirably. I have not seen material like that anywhere else.

Labor Columnist
New York

I am glad to see that you have a political cartoon on the front page. I never realized the facial resemblance between Eisenhower and Khruschchev before. I'm surprised that no other cartoonist caught that.

Reader
New York

It was an inspiration to portray those two as grinning scratching, Cheshire cats. It caught the whole boys and Amiens without re-working the worn out theme of "Two-Edged Sword & Two-Headed." It's the best political cartoon I've seen in a long time and I think any publication would be wise to re-print it.

Cartoonist
Chicago

As soon as I read about those satellites they're getting ready to send into space I figured the whole business was in deep water. They're afraid of the trouble they've made for themselves, and they're getting ready to take off and leave. That is the only way they can see to get out of it.

Miner
Fairmont, W. Va.

If those leaders think they're going to leave for one of those satellites and leave the rest of us behind in their mess, they've got another thing coming. They may as well care what happens to the little guys, but us little guys do. If they take off and leave us in rags, b. right there with them.

Miner's Wife
Fairmont, W. Va.

There was a time when the only measure of the workers revolt was indirectly, through the anti-labor "labor legislation," and the millions thrown into concentration camps. This is still true. But ever since 1955 there was an open revolt in Yorknta, the forced labor camps which supply Leningrad its coal, in which the following: workers were involved. Of course, the workers in the region in general have a more open view of the rebelliousness of their colleagues.

Old Politico
Detroit

The sentence in "Conflict Behind Peace Talks," (Aug. 19) reading "The low productivity of the Russian workers is to a large extent due to the resistance of the totalitarian regime which puts to mind a story a machinist told me about Fascist Germany.

During the war he was an office in an army Ordnance team in Europe whose job was to capture enemy equipment and convert it to working order. Then the equipment would be sent to the United States and England's fields, and any improvements in German equipment could be incorporated into British and American weapons.

He told me that after one big battle his team moved in and had to repair some 60 German tanks. Though they had access to a whole warehouse of spare parts they could only get 14 of the tanks running. The spare parts would not come.

I expressed some amazement at this. After all, the Germans have a reputation for craftsmanship. They know and practiced all the principles of mass production. How could it be that spare parts would not fit their tanks?

My friend said that during the war the Germans forced the skilled craftsmen in the countries they occupied to produce for the German war machines. Natural these workers did not like to work for the Fascists (many native German workers had this attitude) but there were many lost their lives and others their livelihood.

It was a matter of prontom or death. They did not so do. They produced tank that would run and go that would fire. When machine parts were out of tolerances (which can very easily be done deliberately) workers then make the matching parts to fit the original deviation. In the black market parts instead of being interchangeable could not be used except for the particular device which they were made.

The tanks ran all right when they left the factory but when the machine broke down in the field they could not be repaired unless parts were handmade.

This lesson that force labor can be made to work but not efficiently is the result of the Russian dictatorship deal. It is evidently also cost them their Russian crews part a similar high price. But the fact that onl one-based labor force and will produce efficiency is as unnecessary as is the totalitarian dictatorship as it is to the capatains of the American industry, which produce with the force labor of the wage system.

Machinist
Los Angeles

They ought to take al those satellites right this side—and put them in a circle. Let them fight it out and we leave us in peace. That's how they did it in the old days.

Housewife
Fairmont, W. Va.

I've waited a long time for an article like that. I'm glad you put them both sitting on the same spot. We were just talking about this a week ago. We are wondering why the Russians were up to it and why all those big shots were going around smiling at each other while things kept getting worse.

Woman GM Worker
Detroit
**Views**

**STRIKES, CONTRACTS & CONDITIONS**

There is no doubt that a system of democratic control of the main system is better than having only committeesmen, but this isn't the main reason why the auto workers at GM, Ford, and Chrysler are putting up a better fight than ever before. The main reason is that it is easier and less red tape if your delegates want to back you up. However, even if Chrysler and the men begin to feel hostile towards the stewards as they have been to be the voice of the side of the company in enforcing the contract.

**Auto Worker Detroit**

* * *

Just before Chrysler and the union signed the new contract the union was all for calling a strike right now when most of the workers are laid-off for model changeover. This would even have robbed us of unequal conditions of representation. If they'd wanted to strike, they should back it up for a couple of weeks so we go back to work when the company would be trying to catch up on production. But my strike vote thinking they'd hold if until we were working against the workers even though we were working during negotiations they'd always compromise and extend the old contract. Now when we're not working they say, "No compromise. Strike." How phony can you get?

**Worker — Detroit**

That Chrysler contract must have been in the bag long before they announced their agreement. In the middle of September, just before Reuther turns up making big speeches in Israel. Would he have left if the Chrysler contract was in doubt? Or does he think that contract talks is a good time to play traveling salesman for the State Department in the Middle East?

**Reader Detroit**

* * *

The trouble with most intellectuals is that they think workers are dumb. A great many of them people shouldn't be talked to them and be led by the nose. But workers lots of times know what they're talking to say before he says it. They know things before the smart fellow near him knows and turns deaf when he starts talking. They know from experience.

The trouble is they talk so way in the future instead of here and now, you can't follow them. I remember one fellow that would talk to me. I'd ask him a question, and to answer it I'd have to walk around—and before I knew it, he'd be way off some where past what I'd found out. This fellow is too far away in the future for me. If there was an old steward I'd just manage to turn to him, and start talking about something in the present, he could talk to each other.

Minter, Fairmont, W. Va.

* * *

I don't know why anybody is stupid that skilled workers led the wildcats here in Detroit and are more militant (READERS' VIEWS, Aug. 19). Production workers have led 95 per cent of the strikes in ship shops and you think keeping quiet is being militant, then skilled workers are more militant.

Detroit Skilled Worker

* * *

We're all workers together, but not even Reuther would dare say the skilled workers are more militant—certainly not to a body of production workers. Of course, he can find anything else he'll play around with skilled workers but everybody knows it's him and the production workers who have led the action in auto.

Skilled Worker

Detroit

* * *

The tool and die conference in Flint said that Reuther is only interested in the production workers' welfare in the new contracts. That's because the skilled workers work the year around and GMA means nothing to him but it does mean a little to the low-seniority production workers. The nature of work of the skilled workers is so different from the production workers there's no comparing.

Production Worker

Detroit

* * *

My husband might make a pretty good sun but he's not an excellent one. Once time Uncle Sam reaches his long arm in your paycheck and you don't have pretty small. I never knew there to be a time when before they could tell you what you could earn. They keep telling you more and more what you can do. Now, even how much you can take home.

Minter's Wife

Fairmont, W. Va.

**NEGRO AMERICANS**

My construction-worker partner pays $115 a month rent plus utilities for a one bedroom apartment, where he and his family can be away from colored, from the "white" section of Second and Third streets of Detroit. To do this his wife has to work. However, before he moved, he still had to pay $96 a month rent for his wife and four kids on Second Street. My next door colored neighbor, through desperation, bought it for $800, when the original owner just sold it to the realtors for $500.

Housle Painter

Detroit

**YOUTH**

I liked "Working for Independence" (Aug. 19) quite a bit. It's something of what I think I've always wanted to see in the Youth section. Something about what someone really wants and feels.

Eighteen

Los Angeles

* * *

I liked it. It wasn't a gripe or anything, but that School Boy Los Angeles

* * *

I thought it was very fine. I've wanted to see something like that in the paper for a long time. What a young couple feels when one of them has to go overseas, especially in peace-time.

Young Wife

Los Angeles

**WOMEN**

I don't think, even if I could have a "schedule" I'd ever be able to plan what has to be done. But I don't want ever to feel that I have to do it at a certain time. I want to wash, I'll wash. When I feel like ironing, I'll iron. It's not a question of what has to be done, but a rigid schedule is too much like having a guard standing over you and wanting to feel like I have a guard over me.

Housewife

Pittsburgh, Pa.


**Notes from a Diary**

**TWO WORLDS**

In spite of all the Labor Day speeches hailing the forthcoming unity between AFL and CIO, never has there been such a division between workers and the union leaders. This underlying unrest has encouraged the casina builders. The average worker in the auto plants, Bert Cochrans. Recently, one of Cochrans' followers claimed to have "the best anti-Reuther caucus in Flint."

During the depression, Cochrans was a student at the College of Labor Union Work. He was known as a die-hard intellectual like Cochrans joined the strike movement of the workers and the unemployed and give it "leadership." In 1934 when he was active in the famous Auto-Lite strike in Toledo, Ohio, Cochrans met some Trotskyists and he was greatly attracted as "theoreticians" of the class struggle. Where the Russian Revolution of 1917 made James P. Cannon, the founder of the American Communist Party, break with the Industrial Workers of the World and accept the doctrine of "a vanguard party to lead the workers to power," the Cochrans affair in the 1930's made Cochrans accept the doctrine of the party to lead the workers from above.

His glib tongue and facile pen soon made him a "specialist" in trade union work. But Cochrans' specialty was not to organize masses, but to dominate the workers through a number of union leaders. He was in his youth a writer. He got a position in the Labor Department in the Middle East while in the Labor Department in the Middle East. He used the paper for a long time to fight the Commissars, and Cochrans got from Martin the post of UAW-WPA director.

The partnership didn't last long. At the very first strike Martin and Cochrans fell out. Martin never worked with the rank and file of the union. He expected to fight the Communists, and Cochrans got from Martin the post of UAW-WPA director.

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I Found Out
By Ethel Drinan
One day a white woman came in and sat down and started talking over first one thing and the other. After we talked for a while, I said to her, "Tell me why so many white people discriminate against us, negroes?" I mean, we are black, or do they think that we are dirty because we are black?
She said to me, "Well, Ethel, I can tell you a little about some what whites think. And that is the thing. They think that if a Negro touches them, they would turn black too. But I have learned better now since I started going around with colored people. They are just as good as white people. One day a white told me that if I should ever call him "nigger," I would come to like one of those black men that if a Negro touches them, they would turn black too. But I have learned better now since I started going around with colored people. They are just as good as white people."

The man said, "Look, nigger, this is a swimming pool. For a white person to sit in a swimming pool with a colored person would be to contaminate them."

I said to him, "That is worse than refusing to let colored people in the pool, either, would they?"

Finally, my friend ended the argument. "Look," she said, "When I pay you my bill, you don't have two cash registers, do you—no, you serve me one for colored and one for all. It all goes into the same till! You can see why.

The store keeper got pretty flushed, and walked away. But my friend didn't think she'd be buying at that store any more. If they didn't have the same pool, why should she put her money in the same cash register.

In my early days
I see my own blood. I get mad when I think of the shame.

I am shaved. I get mad when I think of the shame.

I see the blood of my own people. I am shaved. I get mad when I think of the shame.

I see my own blood. I get mad when I think of the shame.

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DEPRESSION YOUTH

"I sure don't know what it was like," said Mrs. Martha Hunt, "but things that everybody, even kids who were born afterwards, understood. Since the Depression, you're not too surprised. A second World War came along at close contact with the first and we were having hard times.

The line I was on had all the things that the others did. We had to walk from a German town to a boy no more than 10 years old, she was around 13, she escaped from a German concentration camp and had to go to work with the Gestapo officers. "There's a Jew," she kept walking as if nothing happened but then the Gestapo officer caught her and she was caught again. She said to me she has always wondered how it is that somehow it was Jewish and what was it that she was doing in her life.

If that's the case, you had the Korean war and all sorts of wars in between, and all over. A world where you have to be in the army and have some sort of thing that should be yours. I don't know. I think these days are the same way. That's around and think out "why" but things that have to be stopped."

STEWARD DOES NOTHING

"They got stricter about shutting off the line and posted some wheel to see that no one shut it off. The line was always on schedule."

"The only time it was off was when the sets started to go down, and the guys used the bottom section of the belt to trade everything on that part of the line. Then we began to have a series of breakdowns. Some times we did nothing for hours."

LINE JAMS UP

"No, dear. I don't think you should get a job. The doctor said you shouldn't do anything strenuous."

WOMEN

Wife Learns To Be Independent

When we were first married, we were 18 and I had gone straight from the over-protection of my family right into marriage. My husband and I both were from the same background. I had been in the labor force since I was 12, and I may not know some of the things that are going on in the world unless they directly affect me or if they are of interest to her, slowly she comes an expert in her field.

A mother and wife is the only one who can keep her husband in a place of contentment for her husband and children. And keeping happy to be the wife of her jobs. So, although, it is a fine thing to go out to work, and a housewife is from this man, as anybody, a housewife is not as limited in her ideas as it might appear.

If she spends hours a day doing housework, how to fix real Italian spaghetti and how to fit a pattern to a dress, it may be common knowledge. Let all those who believe that she is narrow in her interests remember that her concern with human beings is in opposition to the philosophy of our time which declares that human beings are not important.

After six years, there were many things that were wrong. New York. - The first time I ever worked on a moving-belt assembly line was in a television factory in Long Island City. Most of the employees in the shop were women. They made up the majority of the wirers and solderers on the other lines.

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War Stories
(Continued from Page 1)

Workers Are Restless

Many others like me, I know
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to see just in the past ten
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And singing in the flying
I am a carpenter
And hate the noise and the
My trade is wood-butcher
And hammering in the sun.

The forever swinging,

World Outlook

FLAMES OF REVOLT

Millions of Americans,
within the last few weeks,
have seen pages of pictures
in the shock and grief of French
colonists in North Africa who
felt the fury of rebellious
workers rising for their
independence.

Particularly, these pictures
showed the numb and hy-
terical faces of women who
had relatives struck down in
this civil war. Panic as the
personal suffering of these
coloniens may be. Their shock is
as nothing compared to the
untold suffering and degra-
dation, and the French govern-
ment have heaped upon the 'Moroccans' for genera-

When this latest outbreak
in the North African war
self a few weeks ago, North
Africans killed and wounded
several hundred Europeans, mostly Frenchmen near
Oued-Zem area of Morocco.

Within days, the French
Army, especially the Foreign
Legion, threw themselves
against thousands of old men,

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Most of
NEWS & LETTERS
articles are written by work-
ners. Our columns are always
open to them.)

Unusual Hobby

Carpenter

My life is the trip to the
hiring hall
And pay day on Friday.
And singing in the flying
sawdust
And hammering in the sun.

My trade is wood-butcher-
ing.

I am a carpenter
At the work of noise and the
weariness
And fear the firings and the
slavery of the State.

And love the brotherhood, the
earned respect of one
construction man for an-
other.

The concrete truck, its
screaming engine
Like a huge animal vomit-
ing in the sky.

The cranes—, their booms
reaching up to the
heaven—
to the sky.

The banging, man, the
banging of hammers—
The firm feel of an old
fashioned tool that
built the world.

The forever swirling,
strong, multidimensional

flame.

During his stay in New
York he pointed to the map
of South Africa both for inves-
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ported millions of Arabs in
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