

# NEWS & LETTERS

"This Paper Belongs to the People Who Read It and Write for It"

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## WORKER'S JOURNAL

### Politicians Always Underestimate Workers By CHARLES DENBY

Workers were discussing Congressman Adam Clayton Powell's new political move as to supporting Ike and Nixon in opposition to Stevenson and Kefauver.

Some were glad from the point of view that one leading Negro in Washington is not tied so close to the Democratic party that he cannot have a streak of independence. Some were saying that Rep. Diggs was blowing loud and hard several months ago, to the tune: if the Democrats did not do anything on civil rights he would bolt the party.

The Democrats have not done a thing but push it farther backwards and, as the daily papers stated, Diggs' comment was that regardless of what Powell does, he was still a solid Democrat and is supporting the Stevenson-Kefauver ticket.

#### NO BIG DIFFERENCE

Many workers did not feel that supporting Ike against Stevenson, or vice versa, would make any big difference in regards to civil rights.

This action by Powell made them see clearly the Negro leaders' role in relation to politics.

The daily papers also stated that the elder Diggs (Rep. Diggs, Jr.'s father) has come out in support of Ike, even if it causes young Diggs to lose his election and position.

#### CAUGHT IN THE WHIRLPOOL

Some workers say that young Diggs is caught in the whirlpool of Reuther and Gov. Williams. When he ran for State Senate, he did not have the support of the union. The union tried so hard to beat him, they put a Negro on the slate in opposition. Diggs was independent. He won by a landslide. The union and the Governor of the state saw he had some support so they got him to join with them.

As one worker said, "Diggs was getting his support based on the question of Negro rights. But when he opposed Cora Brown, a Negro woman, in favor of a white man, I knew the bigwigs of the Democratic party had made him swallow the hack and line.

"After he came back from the Democratic convention trying to sell the Negroes that civil rights plank, he was not the Diggs that was threatening to walk out of the party."

#### HOW CROOKED CAN A POLITICIAN BE?

Another said, "How crooked can a politician be? Powell says Ike will take a better position on Civil Rights than Stevenson. One will have to ask: Has Powell forgotten how strongly Ike opposed the Powell amendment to stop government aid to schools that refuse to comply with the Supreme Court decision?"

Some workers are saying, "What is the talk that Ike and Powell had, to cause him to make the break? Why doesn't Powell make it public?"

Some say that as soon as Reuther and the Democratic big leaders see that Diggs does not hold the Negro votes in his pockets, they will drop him faster than they picked him up.

But such is the life of these politicians. They always underestimate the thoughts and understanding of life of everyday working people—and especially the Negro people.

They keep saying that the Negroes are welded to the Democratic party. But this new break by Powell, and the discussion of Negroes around it, will prove that no one can be absolutely certain how the Negroes will vote. The ballot boxes are secret.



Mine Owners Praise Lewis For Understanding Their Problems

—N.Y. Times, Thursday, October 4, 1956

## UMW Convention Ignores Rank & File

### Lewis Condemns Wildcats, Threatens Wildcatters

The 42nd International Constitutional Convention of the United Mine Workers of America came to a close on Tuesday, October 9, 1956. From the 2nd through the 9th, the delegates to the convention saw confirmed what had been told them by their membership before they left for the convention: "You guys aren't going to be able to do anything but say 'aye' to anything that Lewis wants to put down."

#### LAY-OFFS VS. PRODUCTIVITY

One of the most serious problems that many of the delegates tried to get something done about is that of the increasing lay-offs that are taking place. The new machinery, continuous miner, is throwing men out of work by the score.

It so happened that the new contract negotiated by Lewis and Fox, representing the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, was presented to the Convention for ratification by the delegates. This gave the delegates an opportunity to speak about the things that they wanted.

The one thing that received the most attention in the discussion was the problem of lay-offs. The men wanted a six-hour day and said so.

With a six-hour day, the men who are now working can reasonably expect to keep working. More than that, the many, many thousands of miners who are out of work—many of them permanently—would have a better opportunity to get back to work. Particularly those miners who have reached the age of 45 and whose prospects of finding employment in other industries are very, very slim.

#### WAGE-CUT OFFERED

Lewis replied. He said that the miners (those who are working, that is) are able to have such high wages, the highest in any major industry, because of the high productivity of the American miner. These high wages, Lewis said, are possible because of the mechanization that has taken place in the mines. The men never had it so good, he said. About the speed-up and unemployment that have been caused by this automation, he had nothing to say—except that the UMW is in favor of legislation to provide unemployment benefits for the unemployed for the length of time that they are out of work.

Lewis went on to say that he could, if the miners wished, negotiate a six-hour day contract. But, he said, this would increase production costs for the operator and would have to mean a six-hour pay for the men. It is a matter of economics, he said, of efficient production. The more you produce, the more you get. For the ones who remain working, that is.

#### WILDCATS AND CONTRACTS

On one subject, however, Lewis came to life. On the subject of wildcat strikes, Lewis had plenty to say.

There were 170 such strikes from January through April of this year. Of these strikes, the one to which Lewis gave the most attention, was the massive wildcat which recently paralyzed the entire coal industry in Northern West Virginia. It involved the men of District 31. (See full story, NEWS & LETTERS, Sept. 18 & Oct. 2.)

Lewis branded that mass eruption of miners as the work of "Some individuals, ambitious in character—perhaps hoping—they would be called upon and elected to some high office." He said it was a dispute involving four men!

There isn't a miner working in the mines who doesn't know better. It was a dispute involving all of the miners and they all fought to preserve two men rather than one, not only on the roof-bolting machine, but on all machines.

Apparently the head of the Miners' Union thinks it a shame that the miners fought to protect their lives instead of letting the company get away with having one man on a machine.

Lewis wound up his blast against the miners

(Continued on Page 8)

# COAL AND ITS PEOPLE

## MINERS KNOW THIS . . . AND SO SHOULD YOU

CINCINNATI, O.—Many comments made concerning the United Mine Workers convention will appear nowhere else in print. Much of what the men felt was said outside the convention hall, not in it. Here are some of the observations and comments most frequently heard:

"Did you see all of those guys in there with those ribbons! Those are all Lewis' hand picked men. It looks like there are more of those boys here than there are delegates."

"For all the good that we're doing here, we might as well have stayed home and saved the local some money."

"At the last convention there were some 3,000 delegates. At this one, there are about 2,100. I'll bet at the next one there won't be much more than a thousandth." (Each delegate represented a minimum of 100 men.)

"That increase in wages won't do those guys out of work any good. It won't do any good for those guys who are going to be laid off when we get back. And you can bet that there will be plenty laid off now."

"A lot of guys say that you can't fight him, all you can do is join him. But I'm too old, been fighting too long, to be able to do that. I don't figure on being able to do too much to help me, but there are a lot of young guys that I might be able to help."

"I would get up and say something about what the membership back home wants. But Lewis doesn't want it, so what's the use?"

### THE NEW CONTRACT

The new contract, negotiated between the UMW and the coal operators, has these provisions:

Wages are increased \$1.20 a day as of October 1st; an added 80c will go into effect on April 1st, making the total \$2.00 per day increase.

Vacation and vacation pay were increased. The vacation will be 14 days and will be divided like this: 11 days from June 28th through July 8th. Then three days in December, the 24th, 26th and 31st. Vacation pay for the first eleven days was increased from \$140 to \$180 with an additional \$40 to be paid on the last pay before Christmas for that vacation period.

"I'd heard about Lewis' machine, but this is the first time I've ever seen it in action. He sure can chop his opposition up. The only way you can beat him is with the rank-and-file, and they're not here."

"The rules committee said that there would be a limit of five minutes for the speakers. All the delegates got was five minutes, but Lewis, Owens and Kennedy could take all day when they argued with anyone."

"The Constitution says that no appointed member of the organization can act as a delegate other than from his own local. But the book on credentials shows that those guys from the District picked up credentials from a bunch of small locals that couldn't send

### Open House

The UMW Convention that was just held in Cincinnati was a wide open convention. No one was barred. Any one at all could have attended the sessions. Wives and daughters of delegates were made welcome to the proceedings.

This change of policy puzzled many delegates and there was considerable discussion about the subject when the convention first opened. Men who had attended previous conventions, and had gone through many a stormy session, pointed out what was eventually to happen.

They said it was a shrewd move on Lewis' part. With the women present many delegates were reluctant to cuss and fight as forcibly as they would have had the women not been there. Their presence tended to act as a brake on the delegates.

Many delegates were to say, before it was all over, "If only those women weren't there—"

### "What the H---?"

You could have knocked me over with a feather. On the last day of the convention, Lewis had three guests of honor on the platform — three of the biggest businessmen you could find. What the hell were they doing at a United Mine Workers convention?

—Convention Visitor  
Cincinnati, O.

delegates. Even if you did get a roll call vote, the votes were stacked against you."

"We got our dues increased from \$4 to \$4.25. No one can argue too much about that. But that quarter increase for the pensioners, the disabled and the unemployed, I don't know how we can go back home and hold our heads up to the men when we report it. This is the last time I'll ever come to a convention."

"What we all ought to do is stay home the next time. Just let Lewis and his boys pass on everything like they did here."

"That vacation business, the way it came up in the report, sure wasn't clear. I'll bet that a lot of guys think they have 14 days, plus those three days in December. Actually, we get one less day than we had before. In the last contract, we had twelve straight days, now we have eleven. And those other three days, well, most of the men took those days off anyhow."

### New Bargaining Technique . . . Without Miners

Lewis told the convention that a "new technique" has been employed over the past several years in the negotiating of contracts. A two-man negotiating team — first of Lewis and Moses and, since Moses' death, of Lewis and Fox. This new technique, Lewis said, has been very "successful" as the contracts have "proven." It is so much better, he said, because before, when contract negotiations were entered into, the public press was allowed and there was publicity. Since the public press, as Lewis put it, is controlled by big business, they put out reports that the operators were right and the miners were wrong and this would stymie negotiations.

Now, Lewis said, this is all changed. No publicity to negotiations, no more public press to encourage the operators, so the operators give in to the demands and everything is O.K.

The only thing Lewis didn't mention is that the miners don't know about the negotiations either and Lewis does just exactly what he wants and not what the miners want.

—Young Miner  
West Virginia

# Women "Homesteaders" Help Faucet Co. Crush Workers, Fired Striker Charges

MORGANTOWN, W. Va.—The guys that went back to work at the Faucet are crying now. What they're crying about is that the same jobs they used to make \$20 a day on, they're only making \$14 on now, piecework.

The company probably figures they can do anything they want there now that they have all the "trouble-makers" out.

When the last contract came up there was a lot of dissatisfaction about the piece-rates. If a guy is only going to be able to make a little more by working his tail off trying to do piecework, he'll probably settle for not working his tail off and just take the day-rate.

At any rate, when Ruby was negotiating that contract, they figured they'd have to make some agreement on piece-rates. But since the strike was broken, the company probably figures the guys who are left there will take anything. And the rates will probably all be cut soon.

### WOMEN "HOMESTEADERS"

The trouble out there is that there are just too many "homesteaders." You know, ones that have been there so long they figure they have a stake in the company. Ruby can keep them under his thumb he figures. He gives them a turkey at Christmas and they think he's "great."

The company got quite a few to go through the picket lines. In a way, I guess I can see the point of view of a lot of those women who wouldn't support our strike. A lot of those women are single. They support themselves, but they can do with a nickel, where a married man with a family needs a quarter to keep his family going. And a lot of the married women have husbands who are working too, so they don't have to worry either.

### BAD CONDITIONS

Conditions there are pretty bad, but I don't know that anything will be done about them anymore. You don't really have to ask anybody about working conditions in a shop. You can tell by the turn-over what a place is like. The turn-over at the Faucet is terrific. They hire almost every day. And they're not expanding, just replacing.

### SLICK MANEUVERS

The Union was pretty clever in that strike, too. They called a meeting every day, to take a vote on going back to work. While we were off the picket line the company could run their trucks in and out. They knew we'd have to go to the meet-

ing, because if the pickets weren't there at the meeting, they'd push a vote through to go back to work.

The way it looks these days, the Union is just a commercial enterprise. They've just made a business out of it.

There weren't really very many who were in that strike sticking together. If everybody doesn't pull together there's not much you can do.

—Another Fired Worker

### "After 30-Day Strike — Same Old Grind," L. A. Cab Driver Says

LOS ANGELES — We had the cabs back on the streets on August 31, just when the company wanted them for the American Legion Convention. That ended our cab strike.

There certainly is no victory feeling since we came back to work. It is, in fact just the opposite—the men are very quiet.

They have the feeling the company knew everything that was going on at the Union meetings from the way they treat the men who spoke up at the meeting.

### UNION URGES

At the meeting where the union leaders tried to sell us arbitration, they said the company had us over a barrel if we didn't accept, and that we should put the company over the barrel instead, by accepting. But the union leaders knew all the time the company was ready to accept arbitration to get the cabs rolling for the convention — this arbitration they had refused us before.

### COMPANY WATCHES

Some of the men said it was foolish to go back after we had held out 30 days, but it passed. The company is now watching very closely the men who spoke up for a strike to begin with and those who spoke against going back.

I myself don't see any reason for them to have called the strike just for a guaranteed wage. I wouldn't mind going out for better working conditions, such as a guarantee against too many cabs on the street, for sick leave benefits and paid holidays.

As it is we are back to the same old grind. The union said it would take three to four weeks for the arbitration. We returned August 31. This is October and we haven't heard yet.

—Yellow Cab Driver

(Note: See earlier story, Sept. 18.)

# "Steel Mill Is a Crazy House, Steelworker Says

## "Where Are We Going?" Steelworker's Wife Asks

**PITTSBURGH, Pa.** — The paper described the auto shops as being like a "crazy house" now (News & Letters, Oct. 2). It's not just auto. It's everywhere. The steel mill is like a crazy house now, too.

They sure have stepped everything up in the past few weeks. They now have a guy they call the "coordinator." He's supposed to check all the jobs and keep things running smoothly. What he really does is see that nobody stops for a minute.

It used to be that you'd have a few minutes here and there on the job. A steelworker actually worked about six hours of the eight on a shift. But they stepped it up enough so that's you'd be putting out your eight hours in that six. The "coordinator" is there to see they get better than eight hours' work for their eight hours.

### PRETTY DISGUSTED

Actually, we've been doing more walking than working on the jobs lately. They used to take you off a job to go somewhere else to help out only if it was a real emergency. Now that goes on all the time. You just about get a job set up and before you can start to work on it they call you off of it to go work somewhere else. It gets you pretty disgusted. You set things up, but never get to finish a job, before they're rushing you off somewhere else. That's what I mean about doing more walking than working now.

Just to give you an idea of how they're stepping things up: They had the American Bridge Co. doing some work in the mill last week, putting in the floor of one of the furnaces. And they had our crew putting in the body right at the same time they were putting in the floor. Everybody was in everybody else's way. Then they give us talks about safety!

—Steelworker

### Where Are We Going?

**PITTSBURGH, Pa.**—I sometimes wonder where we're going and when this crazy race is going to stop. It has to stop somewhere.

Everytime the steelworkers get an increase in their wages, everything goes up. Carfare rates have gone up so many times it won't surprise me if we have to pay \$1 to ride a street car pretty soon! You think of what you used to pay for milk and how much it costs now. Bread, too.

It's crazy to keep concentrating on raising wages. The union acts as if that's all they have to do.

There are so many other things they ought to take up, things a lot more important than a nickel raise, that you never get because they raise prices and your income taxes as soon as you get it.

### IMPROVE CONDITIONS

It's the conditions the men have to work under that need improvement—not their wages. One step to settle the upgrading condition at the mill would really mean something. Raises don't mean anything except higher prices.

My husband's been working in the mill a long time now. He can't get upgraded to a skilled job. He's stuck where he is because they won't upgrade Negroes—and the union won't do a thing about that.

That's what gets me so mad about a colored paper in our town. Once a year they will salute the mills. They will pick one colored man out of the thousands that have labor jobs, and play him up big. There are thousands of others, who have been there for a life-

time, working in the labor gang because there is no upgrading for colored men. They don't say a word about the upgrading policy of the union.

### MONEY NOT EVERYTHING

I want my husband to get a better job, so he can live longer. He could have a job somewhere else, but it's his seniority that keeps him there. He doesn't want to make a move until he's sure it's the right one. I know that it would mean less money, but we could make the adjustment. We've lived on less before. Even though it's harder to get used to less once you've had a higher standard of living, it would be worth it to me.

Money isn't everything. In fact, it's nothing compared to your health. I'd rather see my husband's working conditions improved so the job wouldn't be killing him. His health means a lot more to me than a little more in his paycheck.

—Steelworker's Wife

## Job-Hunting in Detroit's "Pocket of Unemployment"

**DETROIT.**—I've been out of work going on four months now.

Ford had ads in the paper saying they were hiring, so I went out to the River Rouge plant at 4:30 in the morning. There got to be such a long line that it reached from the gate clear past the iron bridge — and that was more than a double line. I'll bet if it was straightened out it would have reached clear down town.

Finally, the man came out of the office and said they weren't hiring anybody. Most of the guys drove off, but some stayed around. They just couldn't believe he wasn't hiring.

### JOBLESS SENIORITY

I went out to different plants on different days. I went way out to 17 Mile Road and to Shore Lake. But it was the same thing there — no jobs.

Some of the guys in the line were talking about the seniority they had. Some of them had worked for Chrysler, and some of them had worked for Ford, and some of them had worked for GM, some of them had worked for Packard. One guy had nine years seniority, one guy had seven

years, one guy had 11 years, but they were out of work anyway.

### CHASED BY COPS

One guy said he had five kids and hadn't worked for six or seven months. His compensation had run out and he was really worried how was he going to feed them.

He had a big box and he had got out to the plant around midnight and had slept all night in the box. He wanted to be the first in line when they opened in the morning. He needed the job so bad. The cops were called and they made him move.

Sometimes they had a lot of trouble with the guys in line and then the man from the office said he would call the cops. He was really mad.

I tried a lot of other places. At Ford-Highland they said they'd keep my application for a year and then throw it away. The City isn't hiring anyone for two or three months. I've tried construction jobs. I tried the DSR (the City's bus system), but there's too much red tape there even though they keep advertising for drivers.

—"Getting Worried"

## Way of the World

By Ethel Dunbar

### Desegregation & Who to Vote for Are Talk of Town

Voting is the talk of the town. You can pick up your newspaper and you will find that the papers are asking anybody to send in their candidate's name.

All of this is because people are undecided who they want for president.

Talk with people about who they want for president. No one wants Ike. And no one wants Stevenson. Because neither one is for the black race.

### WHO TO VOTE FOR?

A lot of whites don't know who to vote for. They are afraid that the Republicans will bring on another Depression to starve the poor people to death and the rich will live. They also think that if the Democrats get in for president, there will be another war. Which means that their hearts will be broken again when they take some of their husbands and some of their sons.

Then who would you vote for?

### NOT MUCH LONGER

The next big talk is about the segregation-schools in the South. How the older white people are still going on about the mixing of schools. But it can't last much longer about the children not going to school together.

The young white children have learned that there is nothing wrong with the colored children—they just have dark skin.

Once a white woman told me that the only reason she was afraid to let Negroes touch her was because she thought it would turn her black. But she found out better. She said that colored are just as sweet as white people and they have just as much sense.

So the white South will soon give in, or we will have a war against them. So beware white Southerners, because we are going to win this race that we are fighting for our freedom.

## The Working Day

By Angela Terrano

### They Hide the Real History of the Common People

What is work like these days? You get up in the morning, go to work, come home, more work. Somewhere, somehow, squeeze in some recreation, some "leisure time."

They say, people have more time for themselves these days. (Yes, the man who has no job has more time.) What did they do in the days when they worked 14 to 16 hours a day? That was literally existing to produce power and wealth for someone through your labor.

### WHERE IS IT KEPT?

Where is the history of those days kept? The history of the struggles for freedom? Of the ordinary man? Where is it kept? Where is it written?

You can't trust the history of society that has been written to date, at least not the one they teach in schools or the movies or books.

What picture on the Civil War ever shows the Negro people and the white people who were against slavery fighting together to gain freedom for them-

selves? Oftener than not, it is a story of a returned Confederate officer, still bitter, still fighting the war, but ending up joining his fellow Yankee officer to fight the Indians. This is what comes down as the history of that time.

### GLIMPSE THE REAL

There is a little pocket book out on the American Indian Nations. It says that every treaty that was ever made with any of the Indian Nations was broken by the white man. When could you see or hear that in a picture?

In "Our Life & Times," (Oct. 2), Peter Mallory said that the English are doing to the people of Kenya what was done to the Indian people here. He said further that the English kill, rape and herd these people onto reservations under the name of "Western Civilization while those thus persecuted are known as the Mau-Mau terror."

Those few words can give me a glimpse of what the real history, that is being made there, is.

EDITORIALS

The Reality of Automation

The new production standards Chrysler is attempting to establish for its "New Forward Look" models show the reality of automation today.

In the past days, Chrysler production workers have been given warning slips and threatened with firing if they don't produce more.

The worker says, "How can they give me a warning slip? There's no timing on the job. The time-study man came slipping around for five or ten minutes—it's the first time I've ever seen anything like this—he wrote something on his board, no worker knows what, and no time has been announced.

"The company just says, 'You're not doing enough and if you don't do more you'll be paid off.' What the hell is enough? How can we get a warning slip if we don't know production?" That's what the worker told the steward who told management and management didn't process the warning slip.

In all the years before, when a new job was to be timed and new production standards set, the foreman would tell the men in his department that the time-study man was coming. He himself didn't want the speed set beyond what he felt he could push the workers.

Now, Chrysler workers tell us, the foreman tells nothing and the time-study men are hiding and spying and secretly working out some fantastic standards on the basis of brief and disguised observation.

As any runner knows, the fact that you can run 10 yards in one second doesn't at all mean you can run 100 yards in ten seconds. The new standards being "timed" don't even pretend to be based on the human capacities of a worker on a given job over a period of time. They are based on what the company has decided it wants regardless of anything.

Finally the time-study man came down and told the foreman that the timing, on one particular line, is 50 jobs an hour.

As every production worker knows, after years of struggle, it is accepted even by management that the worker is entitled to six minutes rest each hour. And, as every production worker knows, even a 54-minute hour is a brutal and killing pace.

When the foreman announced the time at 50 jobs an hour, the workers all said, "That's impossible. It can't be done even if we work 60 minutes an hour, eight hours around the clock. It's inhuman."

The Algerian Revolution

"Messali Hadj (leader of the Algerian National Movement) has been exiled to lonely Belle Isle, in the Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Brittany—the same island where the great revolutionist Auguste Blanqui was jailed by Napoleon III. Over 15,000 members of his party are imprisoned in concentration camps scattered throughout Algeria, whilst in France 200,000 or more lie in constant fear of police persecution.

"The Algerian revolution is now developing at a rapid pace. . . . In some respects it is of even greater significance than the Indo-Chinese struggle, especially in the field of international politics. Whereas the Indo-Chinese conflict temporarily halted Wall Street imperialism in Asia, Algeria has become the testing ground for the policy of so-called 'peaceful co-existence.' To the French colonists peaceful co-existence means the right to peacefully exploit the people of Algeria. This right is supported by the French Communist Party, whose deputies, on March 13th, voted for the sending of 300,000 troops, including three NATO divisions, to crush the 9,000,000 Arabs and Berbers who comprise the population of Algeria.

" . . . In the interests of an agreement with French imperialism Moscow is willing to sacrifice the people of Algeria . . . "

(This excerpt is taken from the August 9, 1956 issue of SAMASAMJIST, English Weekly of the Lanka Samasamaja Party, Ceylon.)

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Readers'

MINERS' CONVENTION

There were a good number of delegates at this convention who spoke out against the contract that Lewis was putting up for ratification. Most of the criticism was that the contract didn't say a thing about the terrible working conditions miners face every day with the new automatic machinery. The men are more concerned with a 6-hour day than all the double talk about wages.

Almost all of the criticism came from young delegates. One old stooge of Lewis' got up and criticized the young guys. He said they didn't know the hard times the old-timers went through; that they should be thankful that they had what they have; that Lewis is a great leader, etc., etc.

To hear that stooge talk, you'd think everything is just wonderful today, that nothing needs to be changed anymore, and that the world stopped when he stopped.

—UMW Member
West Virginia

These old guys keep yelling that the young fellows ought to quit complaining because things were tough in the past. They try to make you think that us old-timers have nothing to complain about.

There are thousands and thousands of us who are 45 years and up who have been laid off permanently. We don't have much chance to make a living unless we can get a job in some scab hand-loading mine. If the big mines won't take us with all our experience, how will we get a job in another industry, without experience, and "too old?"

—Unemployed
Old-Timer
West Virginia

GM STRIKE
IN LOS ANGELES

The main purpose in the recent strike at GM-South Gate was to negotiate the line speed. In 1936 the union would shut the line down if too many cars were sent down. The union doesn't do this any more, anytime.

GM Worker
Los Angeles

The strike had been on for two weeks and a little progress made. We had a soup kitchen. The men walking the line could all get a hot meal. The International Union gave \$12 a week to a married man and \$6 to a single man for the duration of the strike. This was only given on the basis of need. If your wife was working or if you had any other income, you wouldn't get it.

GM Worker
Los Angeles

A person who is living fairly good and hasn't had the hardships we had in 1936, doesn't worry like in the old days. In those days when the workers had to fight for a living, just to eat, they were a lean and hungry bunch and tougher than they are these days. Workers wouldn't take much then. But now they don't worry.

GM Worker
Los Angeles

LEADERS & RANKS

That letter you reported (Oct. 2) that the president of Chrysler Corporation sent to all Chrysler workers saying they were going to speed-up or else—well, we got the same letter here in Los Angeles.

Chrysler Worker
Los Angeles

Three or four years ago, in Collier's magazine, they had an article by Winchell and Reuther. I had to laugh because Reuther said after the Third World War, we would be victorious and that he would be labor commissar in Russia. He claimed there would be a negotiated line speed and there would be no speed-up. What I want to know is, why can't he do this for us now?

GM Worker
Los Angeles

HEALTH & SAFETY

More information is appearing on the development of leukemia in Japanese as much as a mile from the center of Hiroshima; and in England among those treated for a form of severe arthritis of the spine by X-ray. The subject is hot.

Medical Doctor
California

Nine or 10 construction workers were buried under tons of debris in Jackson, Mich. They were killed when a portion of a building under construction there, collapsed. In the weeks to come, they will be further buried under lies and half-truths in the "expert" testimony of an investigation which will get under way at the state capital in Lansing. Will any labor paper be there with an editorial power-shovel to clear away the debris over the bodies of the construction workers? It will, if enough construction workers in their locals light a fire under the fat editorial backside.

My polite suggestion is that you get busy with some news and basic information about this accident at Jackson.

Construction Engineer
Detroit

It rarely makes the headlines, but construction workers are still being killed on the job. Just the other week, 10 were killed in the collapse of a building under construction in Jackson, Mich. Two Edison workers were killed the same week on high voltage electric lines. Little or nothing is done to enforce safety regulations that will cut down the death toll.

Construction Worker
Detroit

THIS WHITE WORLD

When you hit Michigan Ave., downtown, you'd think you were in Dixie. The bar owners serve all people except Negroes. Then they call the cops and say you are drunk. The police can be so hateful while they are questioning you, here in Detroit. They talk to you as they would talk to children. I am over 30 but they talk to me and other grown-ups as though we had no rights at all.

Negro Worker
Detroit

If Negroes were given a chance, I do believe that the world would be a better place for everybody to live in. I know a lot of colored girls and boys who went to school with me and had a college education and can't do a thing with it, unless they are in politics or have contact of other sorts.

Negro Housewife
Pittsburgh, Pa.

# Views

## ELECTION CAMPAIGN

I'm a Democrat but I'm not going to vote for Stevenson. He said he is going to leave it to the States. Now you have to know the South. If you say you are going to leave it to the States it means you are going to do nothing.

These officials in the South get elected by speaking out publicly on how they will keep the Negro in his place if they are elected.

Even some integration in the Southern cities means nothing if the rural places remain without schools. Those white people in the rural communities know if a Negro kid goes through high school he will never work for them again. And they just make sure he just doesn't go very far in school.

Rubber Worker  
Los Angeles

They won't do anything before the elections. Everyone is afraid of losing, so they let the States play around. I'm a Democrat but I don't much like Stevenson. I can't see how this gradualism will work. It's been a hundred years and we're still waiting. Aren't we citizens?

I lived in Phoenix in 1940 and the people I roomed with came there in the 1920's. They said that then they could go everywhere, to clubs, dances, everything was mixed. But it isn't that any more. It's due to the influx of Southerners from Texas and other states getting into the State Government.

Laborer  
Los Angeles

## WAR & PEACE

Everybody knows these politicians are lying opportunists who come out with all kinds of campaign promises every time they want the vote. But look at what they have to promise now, how close it is to what the people want.

Nixon double-talks about the four-hour working day and Stevenson turns right around and promises to ban the H-bomb. That traveled across the world like lightning and the Russians pick it up and say they want to ban the H-bomb too.

Now Ike's going to have to promise something more than a grin. This campaign fall-out is like the H-bomb fall-out; widespread and uncontrollable, it travels on the

wind. —Intellectual  
Detroit

This is the year of world peace: Algeria, Morocco, Cyprus, Suez, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Kenya, Poznan. Have I left anything out?

—Student  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Your last issue, dated Oct. 16, reminded me—if my memory is right—that exactly 16 years earlier on Oct. 16, 1940, was the day we all had to register for the first peace-time draft in our lifetime.

It's only 16 years ago, but we're getting middle-aged and old now. There's a new crop of youngsters who keep doing that same thing, year after year, since we did it the first time. My son wasn't even born when I registered, but pretty soon he's going to follow in his father's footsteps. What a tradition to hand on from father to son.

—World War II Vet  
New York City

## ABOUT NEWS AND LETTERS

I am so enthusiastic about the re-born News & Letters, especially about the second and third issues (Oct. 2 and Oct. 16) that I feel like doing some work for the paper. Up to now I have just been sending money—and not too much of that.

Previously, News & Letters was too much of a fighter that was just mad and swinging wild. Now, it's beginning to look like a trained fighter who is going in there to win victories (maybe take a few beatings on the way) . . .

The most discouraging thing in the world is to see truth buried below tons of garbage. On the other hand, there is nothing more encouraging than to see a newspaper like yours, a small but powerful bulldozer, getting in there to clear it away.

Professional  
Detroit

In showing News & Letters to readers and friends, I am always asked, "Where do you see a new society?" This time, I was asked by a housewife whose husband is in the garment industry. She is active in all sorts of social groups, PTA, etc. and she's anxious to do something about democracy.

I sat down with her and showed her that what the

average worker does to change his working conditions will eventually culminate in a better way of life.

Housewife  
Los Angeles

## READERS ABROAD

Thank you very much for sending me News & Letters regularly. I am one of the "professional intellectuals" of whom Charles Denby . . . writes. I am the political editor of a social democratic daily here . . . For some time now, I have been very interested in reading in your paper what the working people there think and feel . . . I am particularly interested in the Negro question and I take every opportunity to intercede for the rights of the colored people . . .

I shall be very happy to receive the next issue of News & Letters and also, when I find it possible, to contribute something toward your publication fund.

Newspaperman  
West Germany

Please find enclosed a few International Postal Coupons, the only way for me to pay you for my subscription. I will send you another lot within a few weeks. I always enjoy your paper which gives a lively unofficial picture of life in USA.

—Subscriber  
Paris, France

I am happy to see your paper back again. I missed not getting it during the period when you were not able to publish. I find it a breath of fresh air in the midst of propaganda fog put out through the official channels from America, and repeated by the foggy propagandists here. I find News & Letters an invaluable source for insights into what the American common man is really thinking and feeling.

I remember some time back you advertised the first English translation of "Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks." Would you please send me a copy?

—Socialist Writer  
London, Eng.

Editor's Note: We are sorry to inform "Socialist Writer"—and all readers who have recently made similar requests, that we can no longer fill orders for "Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks." The edition has been completely sold out.

## Notes from a Diary

# TWO WORLDS

## THE ABSENCE OF A MASS LABOR PARTY IN THE U.S.

Although it has no labor party of its own, labor dominates the current election campaign. That is natural since they constitute the majority of the population and this is the time when everyone is out to get "the labor vote."

## IT'S FANTASTIC

The labor bureaucracy is busy "getting out the vote" for one of the capitalist parties—the Democratic Party—while the other capitalist party is suddenly showing a hypocritical concern with the rank-and-file's detestation of their labor leadership. From the fact that the trade union heads "cannot deliver the labor vote," the Republicans draw the fantastic conclusion that they will have the labor vote.

The absence of a mass labor party is the fundamental factor in American life. It underlies the politics of the big parties as well as the little groupings, the daily lives of people and the general direction of the nation's development.

There is certainly no stranger phenomenon, anywhere in the world, than the Democratic Party which, since the Depression, has gotten the labor vote. Here is a capitalist party which, within one and the same body, contains the most reactionary element in American life—white supremacy South which is openly boasting of its "contented" (that is to say, non-unionized, underpaid, sweat labor)—and the labor vote of the North. This is due to the absence of a labor party.

It isn't that the workers, during the Depression, left their fate up to the NRA. Quite the contrary. They built their own organization, the CIO. They did that, to the astonishment of the world, in a few short years. But they voted Democratic.

## THE REALLY BACKWARD ONES

From this, the small radical groups conclude that the American worker is "politically backward" and tell him, year in and year out, that he "should" build a labor party.

The labor bureaucracy itself, at least in words, has threatened to do just that. For the old radicals, now is always the time to build one. For the labor bureaucracy, now is never the time to build one. Neither of them pay much attention to what the workers themselves are thinking on the subject.

In some respects, the American workers may be at a disadvantage in not having built a labor party. On the other hand, they may also see the advantage of not doing so and thus escaping the stranglehold of the bureaucracy that dominates the mass party in each country that now has one. In England, for example, the worker certainly had much less freedom of action when "its" Labor Party was the Government.

It is true that during the war the labor bureaucracy tried to shackle the workers with a "no strike clause." But the labor bureaucracy here is so weak, that wildcatting went on all the time and, at the end of the war, the workers broke out in the GM general strike.

## ONE THING IS CERTAIN

What to do now? No one can tell the workers. One thing is certain and that is the one thing that all forget, be they capitalist leaders or labor leaders; big bureaucrats or little, old radicals or liberals:

The next fundamental political development will come from a new, a deeper layer in the population and not from the so-called most advanced, politicalized workers. It will come spontaneously, from below, and not be a plan handed down from above. That is why what form it will take cannot be known.

It may very well be that the American workers will "skip" this "stage" of traditional mass labor party.

Just remember it was the completely new "raw workers" who formed the CIO and changed the industrial face of America. It was not the AFL which was transformed into the CIO. The CIO grew up out of other roots. Not only that. Even unions like the International Ladies Garment Workers Union which did form part of the organizing committee for industrial unionism, came from the pressure of these unorganized workers.

The people most ready to reorganize society were found not in the union apparatus, nor even in the "leftwing" caucuses but among these "backward" workers.

—R.D.

# YOUTH Thinking It Out

By Robert Ellery

## LIVING TWO LIVES: One at Work & One at Home

You can make a lot of friends at work but so many of the friendships seem to last only as long as you're inside the factory gate. When the whistle blows at the end of the shift everyone goes his own way.

One of the guys I work with told me he comes from a small town in Mississippi, with a population of a few thousand. He said he knew everyone in the town, they knew him, but it's different in Detroit. He's been here eight years and scarcely knows anybody.

## NOT NATURAL

It doesn't seem natural working with one group of people and then in the hours you're able to relax, you find yourself with another set.

I think one thing about life in the Army was a lot more rational in that sense. The guys you worked with were the guys with whom you lived.

I think this is true, on the whole, about youth, too. You spend all your time with one group of friends. When you look for a job it becomes a misery because you're leaving the crowd behind and launching yourself into the world

where everyone is living two lives: One at work and one at home. I believe that accounts for a lot of absenteeism. People just can't stomach the proposition that they must separate their lives in that manner.

## GET TOGETHER

I've known a few workers who have come to work really ill, when they should have stayed home, "just to get out of the house," or because they had "nothing to do."

As jumpy as the factory makes every one, it has a good aspect. It is a place where people have to get together to earn a living. Negroes and whites are thrown together and many not only get along but seem to enjoy each other's company. They trade experiences and common problems are talked about. For half his day, the most prejudiced white is behaving himself. Sometimes even he forgets himself and fraternizes.

## JEKYLL & HYDE

Outside of the factory, so many of these whites hustle off to their exclusive all-white neighborhoods. Another let's slip a Jim Crow remark. I wonder which is the real man in this Jekyll and Hyde.

## Russia Robs Teen-Agers of Their Youth

People are used to the idea that the Russian totalitarian regime has forced labor camps. What is not really known is how young teen-agers are forced to work for the State in the State Labor Reserve. This is not a military force but it is under military discipline.

Each year, a minimum of one million boys and girls, 14 years of age—and in many cases as young as 12 — are forced to start State training for a period of six months to two years.

In exchange for this, they are forced to work for the State for the next four years, "at the prevailing rate of pay," wherever the State decides to send them. These youth are the State Labor Reserves.

The law establishing State Labor Reserves was passed in 1940 as an emergency war measure. It has not only not been removed from the books, it has now become a very important

and standard means for establishing a labor force wherever the Russian bureaucrats decide it is needed.

Thus, when Khrushchev launched his fantastic agricultural program last year, he sent 150,000 boys and girls to be agricultural laborers in the wilderness of Siberia and the Urals.

Currently, miners are leaving the Don Basin by droves because they refuse to live any longer under the sub-human conditions and in the miserable shacks which are provided.

In an effort to keep the miners from leaving the mines, the State has sent 85,000 boys and girls to live in those miserable shacks while they build new homes for the miners.

Instead of using the regular labor force, the State is increasingly using the forced labor of boys and girls in the State Labor Reserve. This is the promised life for Russian youth until they are 18.

## "HOLLYWOOD MUFFLER"

DETROIT. — I know a guy called Pee-Wee.

He went down to some town in Georgia to visit his folks. He got arrested for having a "Hollywood muffler" on his car.

He didn't have any money on him to pay the fine, but he could have got the money from his father. But the Georgia cops wouldn't let him call up and they wouldn't let him get the money from his father. They made him work it out in jail. They wouldn't let him pay the fine. He had to work it out on that labor gang in jail for 60 days.

—Alabama-born

## Real Estate Agents Discriminate Against Mexicans in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES.—Out in the Southeast district there's prejudice against any Spanish-speaking people, mainly Mexicans. Any real estate salesman who has dealings with Mexicans will lose his commission. This is the unwritten law of the Southeast Realty Board.

It's darn hard for a salesman to tell who is and who isn't Mexican since people don't look all alike. He can't always tell by name or by color.

The Board might find out later that a family is Mexican and they'll have a hearing and the salesman will lose his commission.

Somebody came into the real estate office the other day whose name might have been Italian. I asked the salesman how he knew without asking. He didn't know what to do, but where there is any doubt they steer clear.

He said a person came into his office whose name was "Garcia." He said he wouldn't even talk to him. The name itself was enough, even though the fellow

looked like an American.

One fellow came in who appeared to be Mexican and said his name was "Roach." The salesman then upped the price of the property in question from \$3000 to \$6000 down. The fellow said, "Well that's a very high down payment. I didn't think I'd have to put that much down on a house that just sells for \$10,000. Don't you believe my name is Roach?" He said, "I'm a Mexican. Does that make any difference?"

The salesman said, "Oh no, Mister! It's just one of those things. We just don't have any places for sale with a low down payment."

The fellow, of course, knew what the score was all along. As a rule the agents get away with it, although sometimes there are bitter arguments. Most of the time, though, it's taken for granted.

A few agents will be honest enough to come right out with it and say that they belong to an organization that will not let this sale go through.

## Kids Need More Than ABCs, Says Mother —but Schools Don't Even Give That

PITTSBURGH — Before our children began school we were told not to try to teach them anything ahead of time. We read all sorts of articles about how it might make a child "bored" and a problem to the teacher, and how it would only confuse a child to be taught by old-fashioned methods when the methods they'd learn at school would be so different.

We left it up to the schools. And now our oldest boy who is in third grade is in real trouble. By third grade he was supposed to know how to write, but he had never been taught. His teacher now sends word home to me that it's up to me to teach him.

## NIGHT WORK

It doesn't make sense. And it isn't just my child—all the mothers have the same complaint. It has reached the point where they now have a typed form they tack on the child's night work, to bring home to the parents. It says, "Teach your child this." This night work that we're supposed to teach our children takes hours.

A mother has enough work to keep her busy all day. We're plenty tired by night time. We not only don't feel like doing "night work"—we really can't do it right. My husband suggested that I might be able to teach my boy his arithmetic while I'm cooking supper!

For mothers who work

out, it's completely impossible. Our neighbor had to take her boy out of public school and put him in a private school. She just couldn't help him any other way.

There doesn't seem too much the parents can do about it. I've gone to the PTA meetings, but they never give you a chance to talk about things like this. All they ever discussed was how to get money. The PTA was run almost like a syndicate, by a few on top.

## MORE THAN ABC'S

I don't think that that's the whole problem with the schools, though. For even if they did teach the reading and writing properly, there's a lot more to education than that. I'd like my children to be taught how to live in this world. Learning the ways of the world is more than the ABC's.

When you do find a teacher who tries to take time for a little more, they stop her. I'm thinking about one teacher who was letting the class discuss "communism." She wasn't preaching about Russia, she was just letting them learn and talk about different ideas. The kids all liked the idea, but the school made a big fuss about it and got rid of her.

They can blame things all they like on "crowded classrooms." But classes were crowded when I went to school, too. We didn't get taught one by one, but

the teachers took a little time with us. And they can holler all they like about more "money" for the teachers. Looking at it that way won't solve a thing. Those things don't seem like the real problem to me.

—Housewife and Mother

## SEVENTEEN

I got a big bang out of reading in the daily paper that a 17-year-old boy in North Carolina had Army and other government officials upset because he had built, in his basement, a liquid-oxygen six-foot rocket equipped with fuel injection.

The incident brought to my mind a recent public appeal by the government to amateur experimenters to work along certain projects, such as developing metals that wouldn't break down under super-sonic speeds. The government sort of admitted in making this appeal that the research workers in their own laboratories were so hampered by security restrictions and bureaucratic management that they expected independent researchers, working under possibly primitive base-ment conditions and with inexpensive equipment but with the advantage of being free and open-minded, to equal and better the work done in expensively equipped government laboratories by professional scientists.

Machinist  
Los Angeles

## Sweatshop Grind Drives Women to Cutthroat Acts

LOS ANGELES.—I used to work at a faucet factory which was piece-work, and where there were more men than women. When I saw how hard the men and women had to work, I was glad my job wasn't piece-work, even though the women were bringing home \$80 and \$90 paychecks at a base rate of only \$1.25 an hour.

### THEY HAD A UNION

This place had a union, but it was new and only half the shop belonged to it. But when they took a strike vote, everyone voted—whether they belonged to the union or not.

Only three women out of the day shift voted against the strike, and they scabbed. They were the three fastest women there.

After the strike was over, everyone got a 25c raise. I was making \$1.60 an hour, the most I've ever made. But the quotas on the piece-work jobs were nearly doubled. It turned out that even with the big 25c raise, everyone had to work twice as hard to make the same money as before.

The union was very quiet about the quotas. Instead, they talked about "fringe benefits," "big raise," and so on.

### Union OK's Work Out of Classification

LOS ANGELES — The other day I was put on a job out of my classification. It was working on a surface plate with a layout man. He gets around \$3.00 an hour and I get around \$2.00 an hour on my job.

I thought I was just going to help, but when he started to show me how to do the job I told him no. I told him it was a skilled man's job.

He said that the foreman had asked him if I could be trusted on the job and he told him yes.

I told him the next time he asked, to tell the foreman that I couldn't be trusted to do any of that kind of work. For only \$2.00 an hour, I'm liable to do some damage to those expensive gauges.

After I got started the skilled man was taken away and I was left alone to do the job. I called the steward over and asked him what could be done about me working out of my classification.

He told me that they'd put in several grievances on that in the past and had lost them all. He said the only thing I could do is go ahead and do the work.

### WOMEN ARE FRIENDLY

The women were very friendly to me, a new girl, and went out of their way to show me the ropes. They made me feel as though I'd been there for years. I liked it there because of them. I worked there for six months and then I was laid off.

After that I went to work in a paper mill. I've been working there for the last three months. It's piece-work too, but there is no union and there are mostly women.

When I first started here, at \$1.20 an hour, I was put on a piece-work job. At this place the quotas are so high that I've seen women work ahead just to have time to blow their nose or go to the rest room. It's much faster than the faucet factory.

My first day there, the foreman just told me to watch the girls and then sit down and do the job. When I started working, I was doing everything wrong, and was working twice as hard as I had to.

### WOMEN AREN'T FRIENDLY

None of the girls would stop long enough to show me what to do, even though I was sweating bullets and was just about ready to quit. Finally, one woman came over to help me, even though it meant that she would lose time. Even five minutes lost means you go in the hole for the day. She

had been there for three-and-a-half years and she hardly ever made the bonus. Most of the girls can't, it's just too high.

The women who've been there a long time look ten years older than they are. They are so busy trying to make the bonus, they have no time to make friends.

Because there is no union, the company can get away with murder. They don't lay off by seniority. They keep the new fast girls, so the pressure is always on you to make more, not for the bonus, but to keep your job. Only the "right" girls ever get the jobs where it's easy to make the bonus.

### NEED A UNION

On the other job, in the faucet factory, I used to be able to come home and have time to sit down and think. But on this job, I come home so tired I can hardly stand up long enough to make dinner. Then I'm too tired to do anything but just sit until it's time to go to bed at night.

I don't ever want to work in a non-union place again, the boss can fire you for looking at him cross-eyed and you have to take it. If I have to work here a whole year before I get called back to the faucet factory, I'll still go back.

—Woman Worker

## A Woman's Viewpoint

PITTSBURGH.—When I first started working, after I got out of school, I used to spend every penny I made on clothes. But that didn't last for long.

I did it only because all I ever had was a hand-me-down, until I started to work myself. I don't remember my father ever being able to buy me a coat of my own, all the while I was growing up. So when I got my first job, I spent it almost all on clothes. I had 11 coats that first winter.

Now I'm married and have a family. I spend hardly anything on clothes for myself. I might like to, once in a while, but we can't afford it. It doesn't really bother me. Other things come first.

### SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO

I think what makes a difference is whether you have a goal you're working for. Something you can look forward to. If you

have that, you can take a lot.

When we were first married, we knew we wanted a home of our own. And we knew we'd have to do without a lot of things we might like to have in order to get it. We did without furniture and clothes and expensive food. I remember our first Christmas dinner was chicken necks and greens. But we knew we could look forward to something better.

I have seen some of the communities in West Virginia. There are places where the people don't even have running water. They get their water by carrying it up the hill in buckets.

If you live with nothing and don't have anything better to look forward to, I don't see how you could take it. I wouldn't live like that. Life just wouldn't seem worth struggling about.

—Steelworker's Wife

## A DOCTOR SPEAKS

BY M.D.

### ATOMIC RADIATION: What Can It Do? (Part III)

The potential dangers to human life from radioactivity are quite varied. Some are very real and immediate, such as sterility, severe toxicity or poisoning. Other injuries are strongly suspected but delayed.

Lung cancer has followed the long exposure of mine workers to the dust of radioactive ores. Fine particles taken into the body and there deposited, can remain a source of radiation for years. This will probably influence the life of workers now active in uranium deposits.

### MAY LEAD TO CANCER

While knowledge on the subject is still not complete, it is beginning to appear that chemical substances resulting from the breakdown of petroleum products—coal tars and tars from cigarette smoke and of related chemicals we inhale daily from factory chimneys and auto exhausts—may produce lung changes that, in certain people, may lead to cancer. So far, only the cigarette industry seems to be a little disturbed over this.

Following the use of radium compounds to paint the hands of watch dials for purposes of illumination, a number of workers, some years ago, after repeated exposure, became ill with bone destruction due to malignancy.

Physicians and others who work around X-rays, have a higher death rate from Leukemia, a malignant disease of the white cells in the blood. It is believed that this disease too may, at times, be induced by excessive radioactivity.

Before summarizing the dangers of radiation—using knowledge obtained from accidental or industrial human exposure and from animal experimentation—we can state that each exposure has some effect and that every new exposure is added to the old. The effects vary with the different body tissues and degree of exposure. In general, there may be a shortening of the life span and premature aging.

### SUMMARIZING THE DANGERS

Damage to the sex glands has been mentioned. The blood may be affected, producing Anaemia (a shortage of red blood cells), and, after some years, Leukemia. The intestines early may ulcerate and bleed, later may form scars and malignancy. On the skin, burns may be produced, which degenerate to cancer. Hair-growth may be temporarily or permanently lost. In the lung, congestion, scarring and cancer may be produced. The thyroid gland may suffer depression of the metabolic activity. In the eye, cataracts may develop. Pregnancy may be interrupted. There may be various deformities of the new-born.

### SAFE IN MEDICAL USE

This material is not presented to put fear into people, concerning the use of radioactivity in medicine. X-rays, Radium and Radioactive isotopes are in the hands of people aware of their dangers as well as of their healing effects.

While these powerful tools of medicine need to be safeguarded even further, with the proper application of the knowledge available, they can be safe to human beings.

What I am concerned with is the real danger of adding to essential and limited medical action of radiation, the uncontrollable, unpredictable and unnecessary addition of atomic activity that we are now playing around with in military missiles.

In the next issue of NEWS & LETTERS, I will present further aspects of industrial and military use of radiation.

### UMW Convention Ignores Rank & File

(Continued from Page 1)

in District 31 with this warning: "Carry the message back," he said. "Don't do it again. You will be fully conscious that I am breathing down your necks."

#### AUTONOMY DEFEATED

On the question of the right of miners in a District to elect their own representatives, the miners wanting it didn't have a chance. This matter is brought up at every convention with the same result—nothing doing.

The policy is clear. The Constitution provides for District autonomy. Do what it says and you can have it. The catch here, is that an International Commission investigates any petition for autonomy presented to the International.

They investigate, but when they do, it is always "just a few individuals" who want it, not the membership. That, as far as the International is concerned, ends it. Besides, Lewis pointed out, not every man who is elected is qualified to handle, and protect, the members in a District.

A delegate put it more correctly when he said that an appointed man depends upon the one who appoints him. He need not heed the wishes of his membership so long as he remains in the good graces of the one who appoints him. The one who appoints him is Lewis.

Perhaps the most sickening episode during the convention was the increase of dues for the pensioned, disabled and unemployed miners. Their dues was raised from \$1 a month to \$1.25. Every delegate who spoke, and there were many, spoke out against it. They said they would much rather have their own dues increased than to have these people—who are often in the most destitute of circumstances—have to pay the increase.

Lewis said it was a sound business proposition. He said these people would thank the delegates for looking out for a sound financial arrangement which would provide more revenue for the locals, which he praised for doing the bulk of the paper work for these men.

#### SAME OLD STORY

To delegates who had never been to a convention before, it was a new experience. They saw Lewis' machine in operation for the first time. They came hoping to do something for their membership. They left wondering just what had happened. For those who had attended the conventions before, it was the same old story.

A delegate who has been to many conventions, said, "Trying to fight Lewis and his boys is like trying to beat him in a game of poker, deuces wild—with Lewis holding all four deuces."

### News & Letters Committees

DETROIT — One day last week, three of us went out to a Ford plant to hand out sample copies of the paper. We wanted the workers to see for themselves that News & Letters "belongs to the people who read it and write for it."

We were in front of the plant around three o'clock in the afternoon to meet the Ford workers at shift change. We distributed about 500 sample copies of the October 2nd issue with the lead story on automation.

It wasn't more than 20 minutes after we got back when the phone rang. The man on the phone introduced himself and said, "I just got a copy of your paper that you were handing out at Ford a little while ago."

He said, "There's a lot of good stuff in there. That story on Chrysler you have on the front page," he said, "that was pretty good."

Then he said, "You know there's conditions and things going on here at Ford that's worse. We were just talking it over and we'd like to write you a letter about it. Will you print it?"

After a few more minutes of talking, he said, "O.K. We'll work it out and send you a letter about what's going on here and we'll keep in touch and come up and talk it over with you."

This is just one sign of how things are here in Detroit, especially among auto workers. We feel pretty confident that, in the weeks to come, as more workers get to know about News & Letters, they will not only recognize it, they will make it their own, as the only paper in the country where they can write freely about the things that matter most to them.

—Committee Member

# Our Life and Times

By PETER MALLORY

#### RUSSIA—POLAND

The trials growing out of the Poznan revolt mark a deep departure from what has come to be considered normal secrecy for the iron curtain countries.

The seemingly open character of the trials, and the mildness of the sentences, are not so much a sign of a new "liberal attitude" by the communists; they are a sign of the workers' unrest and thus, of the instability of the satellite regime.

By having separate trials for the youth, and others for workers, the totalitarians try to imply different motives for different groups in the revolt.

There are no open "confessions" such as we have become familiar with. The defense attorneys openly accuse the state of promoting the conditions leading up to the events. Maximum sentences are not expected to be harsher than five years for those accused of killing policemen. This is a sharp break from previous policy.

Not unconnected to this is the visit of Khrushchev to Tito and Tito to Khrushchev. This does not mean that Khrushchev is responsible for the "liberalization" policy. Quite the contrary. Nor does it mean that the Russian bureaucracy is numbering Khrushchev's days.

All such reports are the wishful thinking of not-any-too-astute reporters. What is true, however, is that the unrest in the satellites is giving the Russian totalitarians quite a few sleepless nights.

Not the most ruthless police state can withstand a really spontaneous mass outburst. Even where they still have the power to put this down, as they did in East Germany, the regime is never the same.

The East German revolt was the last nail to be driven into Beria's

coffin. Khrushchev is certainly thinking of that. The trips to and from Yugoslavia were followed by a wave of replacements of public officials in Poland.

The connection of all this with Russia is seen most clearly in the fact that Russia itself is in such a state of crisis, that it too had to come out with a new minimum wage law.

Thus, both inside of Russia and in the satellites, cracks in the totalitarian regimes are appearing.

Note: As we go to press, the headlines proclaim new tension in Poland. The above paragraphs were written before the Polish revolt assumed the currently reported military dimensions.

On the one hand, the newest developments appear as a factional fight between two wings of Communism.

But on the other hand, there is no doubt at all that this new outbreak of inner conflicts was brought to a head by the spontaneous strike of the Polish workers at Poznan and their militant defiance of Russian oppression.

These new tensions, among the ruling Communist bureaucrats, are the further inevitable mark of the beginning of the end of Russian totalitarianism. The beginning of the end which first announced itself to the world in the East German Revolt of June 17, 1953.

#### GERMANY —AND THE U.S.A.

The workers of West Germany, today, are being made to pay the price for Hitler's losing World War II. The German industrialists are riding high. They are exporting autos and machinery; they are building up vast new fortunes and another army. At the same time, the workers must work longer hours at low rates of pay and high prices.

The average factory worker does not leave the job until 7 p.m.

At the same time, under American direction, the Germany Army is being reconstructed by leaving it in the hands of the old Army clique that served Hitler loyally.

Storm Troopers are back in uniform, without benefit of civilian scrutiny of their Nazi records.

No less a criminal than Nazi Field Marshal Eric von Manstein is serving as advisor to Adenauer.

Thus the stage is set for the re-birth of the old military machine just because Washington has the illusion that, where Hitler lost, they can win in a war against Russia. American workers hated Nazism no less than they hate Russian totalitarianism, but Washington never learns.

#### ISRAEL —AND DULLES' ASSOCIATION

Since 1951, the use of the Suez Canal has been denied to Israel.

This action was first taken by ex-King Farouk and has been carried out by the British ever since.

Meanwhile, Dulles has his "Canal Users Association" all set up. All they need now is a canal.

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