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the rank and file in action

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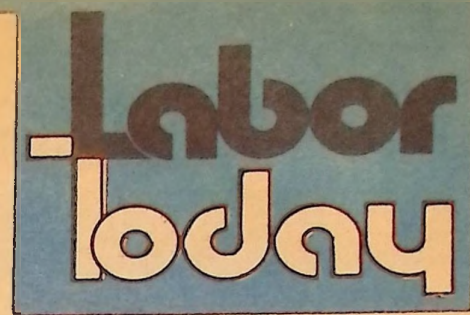
JUNE 1985



Unionists visit USSR

United pilots strike

From strike to decert fight



by Debbie Albano

"Only once did something like this happen in my forty years on the job. It's next to impossible." Those were the words of a representative of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) at the close of a decertification election (that failed) at the Chicago plant of Danly Machine. They sum up an 11 - month struggle waged by Local 15271 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). By a margin of 2 to 1, the workers at Danly voted to retain the union.

Joe Romano, who was re - elected without opposition to a third term as the Local's president, told Labor Today, "The company attempted everything you can think of. But it didn't work."

In a candid interview, Joe explains why the company's schemes didn't work and how Local 15271 got a contract and saved their union.

Q. Did you really anticipate such a prolonged strike?

Well, we knew we were in for some difficult times. Two years prior to the expiration of the contract Danly was bought out by the Ogden Corporation. At that time, the new owners asked for concessions - asked for the contract to be reopened and renegotiated.

We scrambled and did some research. We wouldn't even discuss the idea of reopening. We ran them in circles - but kept away from it. Discussing would be the same as reopening we thought.

They were very angry. They wanted the union to take a vote. We wouldn't. There was nothing to vote on. The contract hadn't expired.

But, we anticipated problems in negotiations. We had a lot of people laid off. We were distributing food already to the people on lay off. So, we continued that, but every Friday, along with the disbursement of food, the laid - off workers also had to attend a meeting (about negotiations). So, I talked to the laid - off people every single Friday. At the end of the shift at 4:00, I'd have a meeting for the people who were working that day. Then I'd come back again at midnight and have a meeting with the night shift people.

We did this every single week for 6 months prior to the expiration date of the contract. And on May 1, 1984, the members voted 97% to reject the contract.

After we went on strike, continuing to date, we'd have a meeting every single Sunday.

By doing this it helped to dispel the rumors, to educate the members about things that were happening or things that we anticipated happening. by telling the people ahead of time, and they would then see it take place, it built a trust and a confidence in the union and our judgements.

Q. What were the main strike issues?

That's unique about our strike, too, I think, for these times. There were really no monetary issues.

They wanted a two - tiered wage structure, change in seniority provisions and representation rights. It was really about union principles.

We had 18 people terminated for strike activities. They reduced 12 of the terminations to disciplinary suspensions and the other 6 they said they would remove all discipline from their record and they'd give them \$25,000 each, but they'd have to go. That was included in the second offer - which was also turned down. Only 6 people voted for acceptance - and that after being out 8 1/2 months.

After we rejected the second offer in

December, we got a decertification election notification.

Q. Had you expected a decertification fight?

Well, not at that time. We had thought that if the strike went for a year, we'd probably face that.

When we got notification we were obviously a little nervous. We had worked on the firings and had gotten all of them changed to suspensions. . . and gained in getting in the contract a provision for a good percentage of the people to go back to work immediately. So we recommended a contract.

We did so reluctantly, though. The people were ready to hold. But the work was there. Danly was getting busy. We didn't want to win the battle

and lose the war. We set the vote for January 21 and the contract was approved. We thought it would cut off the decertification petition - but, obviously, it didn't.

The Board (NLRB) ruled that since the petition was filed when we didn't have a contract that it was a valid petition. Now we were really in a rough situation.

Q. How did you fight the decertification?

Well, there was so much bitterness . . . so much bitterness. I'm not going to lie. I was one of the worst. I projected it from the podium every week. In fact it was suggested by some of the people from the International, and I listened to them, that during the decertification fight everyone could and

Continued On Page Six



NOT SO FRIENDLY SKIES!

Pilots ground United

By insisting on preferential treatment for the handful of pilots who crossed the picket lines of the Airline Pilots' Association, United Air Lines has unfolded another page of its carefully prepared union busting campaign.

United's decision to prolong the strike in an effort to reward strike breaking is a deliberate attempt to sow division and fear in the ranks of the Airline Pilots. It is meant to frighten and intimidate members of the Flight Attendants Union who, in a magnificent show of solidarity, have refused to cross ALPA picket lines.

United has bigger goals than the defeat of 5,200 pilots who are members of the Airline Pilots' Association. United's decision to lock out its employees is part and parcel of Corporate America's overall attack on the labor movement. It is meant as a message to all of organized labor that it's futile to

fight back, that there's no way workers can win these days.

The pilots at United are doing their job. Their refusal to cave into United's back to work demands - their insistence that there be no disciplinary action taken against members of other unions - are in the best traditions of the labor movement. Now it's up to the rest of us to do our job.

If we've learned anything from recent years - if we've learned anything from PATCO, from Greyhound, from Phelps Dodge - it is that the motto "An injury to one is an injury to all" is as true today as it ever was.

We've also learned something else: The only way to defeat union busting is with labor unity and solidarity - and the sooner it happens, the better.

Although it may be that more drastic

action will have to be taken to help things along, four things can be done immediately to put the heat on United Air Lines:

- 1) Don't fly United, and don't patronize Westin Hotels.
- 2) Join the pilots' picket lines. (They've got them in 60 cities around the country.)
- 3) Send messages of support and financial assistance to United Air Line Pilots Contingency Fund, 10700 W. Higgins Road, Rosemont, Illinois, 60018.
- 4) Write to Dick Ferris, President, United Air Lines, (he received salary and bonuses of \$425,000 in 1984) UAL Executive Offices, Chicago, Illinois, 60066, demanding United settle the strike.

THIS MONTH IN LABOR HISTORY

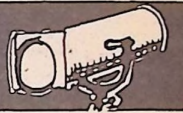


by Tony Michaels

JUNE

- 1822:** South Carolina begins mass hanging of 37 slaves involved in the revolt for freedom led by Denmark Vesey.
- 1827:** Carpenters strike for 10 hour day in Philadelphia
- 1836:** Tailors strike in New York. Numerous strikers arrested and charged with restraint of trade and conspiracy. More than 30,000 people protest which leads to the charges being dropped.
- 1863:** Harriet Tubman leads Black union soldiers on raid that frees 750 slaves.
- 1877:** Members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Molly McGuire) executed on trumped up charges of murder stemming from a strike in the mines of Pottsville, Pennsylvania.
- 1893:** The American Railway Union founded with 150,000 members.
- 1894:** 4000 Pullman workers strike, led by Eugene Debs.
- 1905:** Industrial Workers of the World, known as the "Wobblies," founded by Debs and Big Bill Haywood.
- 1918:** Federal Child Labor Law declared unconstitutional.
- 1938:** The Fair Labor Standards Act passed, establishing the minimum wage and time - and - one - half overtime pay for all hours worked in excess of 40. Child Labor provisions also included in Act barring employment of youth under age 16 in stores and under age 18 in mills and mines.
- 1947:** The Taft - Hartley Act passed by Congress, limiting union activities and restricting the rights to collective bargaining.
- 1955:** UAW won a 3 - year agreement establishing a supplementary unemployment compensation plan.
- 1968:** The Age in Employment Act signed by President Johnson, making it illegal to discriminate against elderly workers.
- 1970:** TUAD founded.
- 1976:** Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union established after merger of Amalgamated Clothing Workers and American Textile Workers.
- 1983:** Rudy Lozano, ILGWU Organizer and Community leader, assassinated in his home on Chicago's West Side.

THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHT



Justice sought in Lozano case

On June 8, 1983, Rudy Lozano, an organizer for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, a key figure in Mayor Harold Washington's campaign, and a member of Washington's Transition Team, was gunned down in his own kitchen in the presence of his two year old son.

By early July, 1983, Gregory Escobar was arrested by police and charged with the murder of Rudy Lozano. Though the young man who pulled the trigger is now in jail, the Commission for Justice for Rudy Lozano is still trying to find out who was really behind Lozano's murder.

One of Lozano's major areas of work while he was alive was with rank and file union members, helping them pressure their labor unions to defend the rights of all workers, including the undocumented. In 1979 he became an organizer for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union where he directed his attention to organizing the unorganized, especially immigrants working in "sweatshops" in Chicago.

Among the many workers he came in contact with were those employed by the Del Rey Tortilla factory. By the end of 1982, they had forced an election for representation in this shop. Del Rey fought the workers all the way, calling in the Immigration and Naturalization Service to detain and deport rank and file leadership. The workers and the community then organized a boycott to bring pressure against the company. Eventually, they forced the company to recognize the union.

By 1983, Rudy had become the Director of Organization in the Chicago area of the ILGWU and a Board member of the Hispanic Labor

Council. He was also a national board member of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, and a founding member of the National Congress of Unemployed Organizations.

Concern for effective and accountable political representation and the unity among all people, Black, white, and Latino, led to the development of an independent political organization in Chicago's 22nd ward of which Rudy was a leader and a candidate for city council.

He came within 17 votes of forcing a run - off election against the Chicago democratic - machine incumbent.

Rudy continued to work for unity in the Washington campaign and following the mayor's election on April 12, was appointed to the new administration's Transition team.

At age 31, on June 8, 1983, Rudy Lozano was assassinated in his home.

Many questions remain:

Did Rudy's fight against the exploitation of undocumented workers cause the employers to see him as a danger to their operation?

Were the threats from specific individuals before and during Rudy's campaign connected with his death?



(The State's Attorney's office has refused to question the individuals who made threats on his life and the lives of his family.)

Was Rudy's success in unifying Hispanics and Blacks for political reform, which posed a challenge to the entrenched and powerful "machine", the motive for his assassination?

To help bring the real murderers to justice, the Commission for Justice for Rudy Lozano has continued working. They have asked Representative John Conyers, chairman of the Congressional sub - committee on crime, to conduct a federal investigation of Lozano's death.

For further information about the progress of the Commission's work, to donate funds, to request speakers, etc., contact the Commission for Justice for Rudy Lozano, 2500 S. Millard, Chicago, IL 60623, (312) 762-1771.

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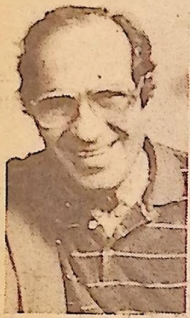
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ESOPs: The way out or the way under?

by Norman Roth

Today, when record profits are accompanied by record business failures, a growing number of workers are being sold the idea that an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) is the solution to their problems.

According to the National Center for Employee Ownership (NECO), more than 6,000 companies set up ESOPs between 1973 and 1984, bringing the



Norm Roth

total in the country to approximately 7,000. The NECO also predicts that by the year 2000, "As many workers will be under ESOPs as will be members of unions."

This rapid, widespread increase in the number of ESOPs poses serious questions for the labor movement and working people in general.

ESOPs CAPITALIST SUGGESTION

Though workers may be attracted to an ESOP because they see it as a way to achieve worker ownership and power, the ESOP form of employee ownership is not a radical socialist idea. Rather, it grew out of a "theory of Capitalism" advanced more than 25 years ago by Louis O. Kelso, a San Francisco lawyer who founded the Kelso and Company Investment firm. The capitalist system, he argued, could be saved only by turning workers into capitalists through stock ownership. To acquire stock, he said, workers needed a credit mechanism to gain access to capital funds. Through banks (including Kelso and Company) that receive special tax breaks for loaning money to ESOPs, workers are able to get these funds.

(In fact, 16 pieces of legislation that guarantee favorable tax breaks for support of ESOPs have been enacted by Congress since 1974.)

Or even worse, workers are coerced by management teams to use their union pension funds to buy initial stock in a company. Says Lester C. Thurow, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "ESOPs that substitute for regular pension plans are riskier because the retirement benefits then depend on the fate of only one company." He argues that too much wealth is indeed concentrated at the top in the U.S. — 48% of all common stock is owned by only 1% of the population — but does not believe that ESOPs are the answer for redistributing that wealth.

NOT NEW

Employee stock ownership plans date to the decade of the 1920's when rising

security prices and increasing dividend payments encouraged employee stock ownership. In exchange for company loyalty, increased production, better quality work and greater profits, employers sold stock to their employees at lower than prevailing market prices.

Then came the crash of 1929. The bottom dropped out of the securities market and with it the dreams and hopes of the workers who lost their jobs, their savings, and the value of the stock. All that remained was bitterness.

EMPLOYEE-OWNERS LOSE CONTROL

According to Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, authors of *The Deindustrialization of America*, control over everyday decisions in "worker - owned" companies tend to remain in the hands of the firm's original managers. Bluestone and Harrison claim that hourly workers have a majority financial interest in less than one - tenth of all ESOP companies.

In all too many recent worker buyouts, managers have retained (or have been granted) far too much power, freezing out the shop floor worker - owners, giving themselves high salaries, devising ways to intimidate or eliminate opposition on the Board of Directors, and even serving on business committees that advocate right - to - work legislation or support union decertification campaigns.

As Morton Klevan, a deputy administrator in the Department of Labor says, "A lot of ESOPs are really MESOPs — management enrichment stock ownership plans."

In order to keep workers from having a real voice in workplace decisions,

The ESOP established at National Steel's Weirton Works in Weirton, West Virginia proved to be a gold mine for the company, but not for the shop worker - owners.

Weirton, an 80 - year - old complex was sold to the ESOP for \$386 million. Each of the 7,700 worker - owners gave up 20% of their wages and part of their fringe benefits in order to "buy" shares.

In a telephone conversation with Mike Hravchek, a union steward with 26 years in the plant, *Labor Today* found out that the company had relied heavily on the workers worst fears, telling them, "If you don't set up an ESOP you're going to be out of a job." Says Hravchek, "The people at Weirton were taken in. We bought the place but we don't have a damn thing to say about it. The company is running it the same way they did before — with the same people as before.

"Although we agreed to a 6 year freeze on wages, Mr. Longhead, the company chairman hired by the banks that



"management's rights" clauses giving the company (read "management") the "sole right" to manage the affairs of the business and to direct the working forces of the company are a part of nearly ESOPs.

Those two words — "sole right" — are the real essence of ownership. That piece is not transferred to the workers when they buy "a piece of the action" through an ESOP. Ownership in most cases does not mean control. In addition, workers in most "employee - owned" companies lack the right to vote their stock. A recent study reveals that in 85% of all companies with ESOPs "worker - owners" have no voting rights.

Today, the problems and dreams are much the same as they were in the 1920's. ESOPs are touted as a way to save jobs and restore life to failing enterprises, as a way to promote harmonious relations between capital and labor, and as good medicine to

help cure the flaws of our economic system.

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

But in reality, ESOPs are another way of shifting the economic burden onto the backs of workers. Instead of corporations accepting the responsibility of reinvesting in basic industry, ESOPs take the hard - earned money of workers to retool. Instead of guaranteeing workers a job, the corporations threaten them with a plant shutdown, a layoff, a move to a more profitable area of the country or of the world — or an ESOP.

In short, ESOPs are a way for management to force workers to buy their jobs; to force workers to pay money out of their own pockets — to the tune of millions of dollars — in order to work; to force working people to rescue the very system that has taken the wealth produced by their labor and handed it over to the rich — again, and again, and again.

The conflicts inherent in worker ownership can never be reconciled as long as the main goal of company management is greater and greater profits for those who own and control, at the expense of those who labor.

"There is no way workers on a meaningful basis can be managers and workers," says Lewie G. Anderson, a vice - president of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). "The interests of each group eventually clash. It just doesn't work."

Anderson, who heads the UFCW's packinghouse division, says Rath Packing Co., for example, gave a "corpse to the workers." In 1979, Rath "sold" its 2,500 employees an eventual 60% control for the price of wage concessions. But last year, the company failed, closing its doors and leaving workers with worthless stock and a folded ESOP.

Until now the labor movement's attitude toward ESOPs has varied from hostility to indifference to near wholehearted support. However, labor cannot afford to remain ambivalent in its opinion or plan of action regarding ESOPs. For, in the main, ESOPs are nothing but a series of blind alleys and traps purposely designed to dismantle the labor movement.

Rip-off at Weirton?

designed the ESOP, gave substantial raises to 54 department heads. No one knew anything about it. All we can discuss, it seems, is the location of the toilets.

"Last year," he continued, "the company took \$7,600 out of my paycheck and that does not include what I had to give up in revisions in overtime payments, vacation, holiday and medical insurance cuts."

One year after the establishment of the Weirton Steel employee buy out, the *New York Times* featured an article about the ESOP. "While most steel companies lost money in 1984, Weirton Steel racked up \$48 million in profits in the first 9 months alone," boasts the article. "This was done with a 5% increase in staff, a 20% increase in steel shipped in 1984 over 1983 and far lower labor costs because of the 20% pay cut the workers accepted in order to finance the purchase of the plan." The workers gave up more than 49 million dollars in wages and benefits in the first nine months of the plan in order to show a 48 million dollar profit.

Soviet workers invited us .

My impressions

- ...Preserving the old while building the new.
- ...The openness of the children.
- ...The friendliness of the people.
- ... The desire for peace by the people in the streets.
- ...The role the average worker has in deciding his / her working and living conditions.
- ...The high quality of any endeavor, be it entertainment, work or being on

time.

- ...The cleanliness of the cities, subways, railroad stations, etc.
- ...The cooperative attitude of the citizenry.
- ...The optimism of the people that tomorrow would be better than today.

Marge Matyas, President
Local 190 United Electrical
Workers (UE)
Chicago

Friendly and warm

I had never imagined that my first trip abroad would be to the Soviet Union. But it was, and landing in Moscow was the beginning of a great learning experience.

From my very first meeting with Moscovites, I learned that they were warm and caring people. As I travelled around the city and later, in Leningrad, I saw more and more of this friendliness and could easily see that it was sincere and heart - felt. Later, I came to admire their strength, their courage and their perseverance.

Both cities are beautiful with centuries of history behind them. One could not



help admiring the wonderful work that has been done to restore these cities and the Soviet economy from the horrible destruction of World War II.

Everywhere we went the air was permeated with hopes for peace. Every toast we drank ended with the wish for "Mir y druzhba" — peace and friendship.

Nearly everyone belongs to a trade union and that is a sure sign of labor's strength. It was wonderful to witness the pride of the hundreds of thousands of trade unionists who marched through Red Square on May Day. It will be a great day for workers in the United States when our unions have a membership as large as those in the Soviet Union.

Johnnie Mae Jackson
ILGWU, Chicago



May 9th in Moscow

I was deeply moved by the sincerity and straight forwardness of the Soviet people.

Although we visited many sites and were able to talk to many individuals, I was most impressed by the activities marking the 40th Anniversary of the Victory over Nazi Germany. The Soviet people take great pains to preserve the history of that period; the pain as well as the glory.

On May 9, after the hoopla of the parade was over, Red Square ("red" means "beautiful" or "large") was full of people wanting to share their memories of the Great Patriotic War and with younger people eager to listen, to learn — to become a part of

what happened 40 years ago.

It was, at once, a festive occasion and a sobering experience. For, underlying the flash of metals, the recounting of nightmares and homage to those who died, was the constant call for peace.

By keeping the meaning of the war alive among themselves and their children, the Soviet people have created a consciousness of the importance of and the urgency for a peaceful co - existence among nations.

Twila Hayes
United Brotherhood of
Carpenters and Joiners
Chicago



Victory Day in Moscow

After the parade, celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the victory of the Soviet and Allied troops over Nazi facism, we walked through the crowds of people in Red Square. The sun was shining and the Square was decorated on all sides with colorful banners and billboards.

It was packed with people, mostly families. The veterans, with their jackets covered by rows of medals, were especially noticeable. They were accompanied by children and grandchildren. Occasionally, two former comrades - in - arms would spot one another and a rib - cracking hug would begin their reunion.

We spoke, through our interpreter, to many people. Our congratulations and questions were greeted with open, warm-responses. The veterans told us what their medals represented — fighting in Germany, Poland, defending Stalingrad, Leningrad, driving tanks, serving as partisans in occupied areas — they were proud of their contributions to the war. Their families shared this feeling.

People had come from all parts of the Soviet Union to be a part of the celebrations in Red Square. We met a tank - driver from Siberia, a family from Uzbekistan, another from Mongolia.

We spoke the longest with a group of 10 or 12 former nurses and doctors — a women — who had served together at the front. They now live in various parts of the Soviet Union and meet once a year. They urged us to bring home a message: The Soviet people paid a terrible price for peace during the last war; not only soldiers lost their lives, but the civilian population suffered terribly as well. Knowing the price of war, all Soviet people want peace.

They are concerned that the arms build - up and the "Star Wars" plan will bring about the destruction of the entire world. These women hugged us and pressed flowers into our hands.

One woman, a doctor, said, "I have seen war — it is blood, it is death, it is having the very ground beneath your feet in flames. I hope it will never happen again. Please tell this to the people of the U. S. A."

We were stopped by a younger woman who had her 12 year old daughter with her. "I was a child during the war," she said, "and I do not want my child to have to live through such a time. Please tell the people of your country that we want peace."

So, I am telling you just exactly what everyone we spoke with in the Soviet

Meeting with Moscow cabbies

My visit with Lev Yakoulev, head of the 4 million member Teamsters Union was very interesting. After spending two hours discussing the function of his union in servicing his members, brother Yakoulev invited me to attend a rank and file meeting of Moscow taxi drivers.

We went to Depot 19 which has approximately two thousand workers. There are 20 such depots in Moscow and about twenty thousand cab drivers. Depot 19 was to receive the "Red Banner" for excellence in work along with a cash bonus of about \$5,000 to be used for their gymnasium. Yes, the depot had a gym, cafeteria and museum. The museum displayed cabs, still in mint condition, which had been used since 1925.

First, I was given a tour where I learned that each cab was cleaned inside and out every day. Dispatchers sat with each cab driver prior to their tour and described the daily traffic situation. The cabs were kept on a stringent safety and maintenance schedule. On a wall next to a beautiful

tile mosaic were the pictures of two recently fired drivers and a written description of the reasons for their dismissal. The entire depot, including the mechanics' area, was spotless.

A classroom had been set up to teach drivers various languages to help them deal with foreign visitors during the Victory Week celebrations and the upcoming International Youth Festival.

Lev opened the meeting, which was attended by approximately 400 off-duty workers and was held in the union's own 500 seat auditorium, also on the depot's premises. Lev, along with other local union officers and managers, presented the banner and complimented the workers for their achievements.

I was invited to speak and obliged with a ten minute pitch. I took the opportunity to assure them that American workers, like them, want peace and a future for their children — mentioning the fact that I had three teenage sons. The meeting erupted in

applause. When the meeting adjourned, many workers walked over to shake hands and say hello, as well as to present me with union and peace movement pins. I reciprocated.

Hopefully, some day, when the cold war mentality no longer prevails, the exchange of ideas, people and experiences will be common place.

Dan Kane, President
Local 111 ACA/IBT
New York City



TUAD visits Moscow

This year, as for the past several, a delegation of trade unionists organized by TUAD - Labor Today recently visited the Soviet Union as guests of the All Unions Central Council of Trade Unions of the USSR. We left the United States on April 28 and, after staying overnight in Montreal, arrived in Moscow about noon on the 30th. We returned, again via Montreal, on May 13.

(We had to travel via Montreal for two reasons: The first, because the United States government cancelled landing rights to the Soviet airline Aeroflot in 1980 and second, because, since 1981, no U.S. airline can honor Aeroflot tickets. Sound assinine, doesn't it — but that's the way it is.)

We had been invited to Moscow as part of an international delegation of some 400 trade unionists from all parts of the globe — the socialist countries, western Europe, the nations of the Caribbean and South America, southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Our delegation was later joined by

another group from New York and a member of the United Electrical Workers of Canada. (Eugene Glover, International Secretary - Treasurer of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers had arrived in Moscow a few days before us, leading a delegation from the IAM that had come to discuss occupational safety and health.)

BUSY, BUSY

Although our schedule was hectic — shopping in Moscow and Leningrad, attending the May Day and Victory Day parades in Red Square, an evening at the Bolshoi Ballet and another at the circus (can you imagine trained cats, pelicans and hippos, or a trapeze act with a dozen performers, all flying in different directions at the same time?) — we had ample opportunity to visit enterprises and talk to trade union leaders and rank and file workers.

WITH PEACE, ALL; WITHOUT IT, NOTHING

Our impressions of the Soviet Union and its people can be summed up in a few words: Above anything else, they want peace.

They, as perhaps no other people, have witnessed the horrors of war and are determined to do all in their power to prevent the outbreak of another. Even though our visit coincided with the 40th Anniversary of Victory over Nazi Germany, the scars of World War II still remain. (Of the some 50 million people killed in WW II, about 300,000 were from the United States and 20 million were from the USSR. More than 1,700 Soviet cities and villages were destroyed and countless billions of rubles that would otherwise have been spent to improve living conditions were sacrificed during what they call the "Great Patriotic War.")

THINGS WORK

Our second impression is that their system works and enjoys the over-

whelming support of the people. Everywhere we looked we saw cranes standing over new high-rise apartment complexes. (Nine were visible from our hotel windows.) We saw new factories being built and older ones being modernized. (No one we talked to could understand us when we told them that blast furnaces were being blown up in the United States.)

We traveled freely about Moscow, saw no one eating out of garbage cans, no one sleeping in the streets. (Those of us who took early morning walks, however, did see pump trucks washing the streets down every morning.) People are obviously happy, well-fed, and according to a member of our group who had first visited the Soviet Union in 1975, much better dressed.

DON'T BE FOOLED

Although we spent only two weeks in the USSR we think it important to say two things more: It would be wrong to think that the people of the USSR are ignorant of the policies of their government — or that they disagree with them.

People we talked with knew as much about what was going on in El Salvador as we did, were repelled as were we with Reagan's visit to the SS graves in Bitburg, constantly asked us the meaning of the embargo against Nicaragua and assured us that they didn't hold the people of the United States responsible for the deeds of our government in Latin America, South Africa and the Middle East. (Nor, for that matter, did trade unionists whom we met from Afghanistan, Guatemala and Nicaragua.)

And our final conclusion: Despite their hatred of war, despite their longing for

Continued On Page Six



...ion told us. We met factory workers, union representatives, and families enjoying a holiday. They all did the same thing — the Soviet people want peace.

Anne Gordon
Free-lance photographer
and librarian
New York City



Photo by Twila Hayes

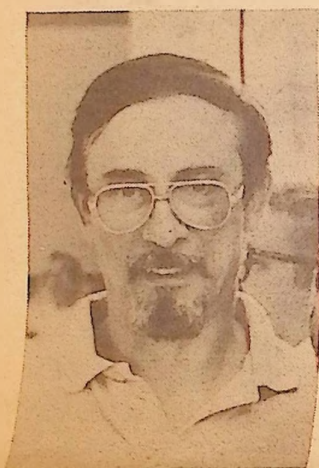


From strike to decert fight

Continued From Page One

should go out to the gates "except you."

We were faced with the situation under the Board ruling that the majority of our people were not going to be able to vote. 2/3 of the eligible voters were going to be scabs. Yet, in the end, we



Joe Romano

defeated them by a significant margin. So, we had to do some turn arounds that were just impossible — or that people felt were impossible — but, obviously, they weren't.

We had people on the phones every day. People who were the most militant who would bite hard and call people they knew. They brought in some "crossovers" for me to talk to.

All the time we spoke with them, though, we never apologized, never said "sorry" for anything. If we had called 'em a son of a bitch, it was because they had been. We wouldn't surrender any of our dignity. We told them - it wasn't us but you who did wrong. The main focus was trying to make people understand that in spite of the fact that they were scabs (we didn't say it that way, exactly) the real villain was the company who produced this. That our common interest, as workers, needed a vehicle to fight the company.

We leafletted every single day with a different leaflet, trying to address every question that possibly would come up. In that three week period we sent out seven mailings. We made lists and developed phone banks so that every new hire, every "crossover", every union member working or on layoff, was reached.

People realized the need. The workers had put too much of their life into this. People spent time, not just at the gates, but here in the hall cooking, cleaning, answering phones. People visited workers at their houses, waited for them at the gates. Some put in 14 to 15 hours a day here.

Q. What about other union support?

The kind of solidarity between major unions that took place here is rare.

During the strike, not only people from other locals would come out, but a lot of money was sent too — from USWA, UAW, the Chicago Federation of Labor, the Food and Commercial Workers, the Jewish Labor Council — and so many small locals.

One time, we had a fire truck from the Chicago Fire Department pull up in front and block the gate! That was really terrific. When the Firefighters had had their strike, we had been there, too. They remembered and responded.

Q. Did you have an organized women's support group?

No, we didn't. In retrospect, we should have. So many women participated, Danly workers and wives of Danly workers were on the line every day. But, we took this tremendous resource for granted, I think.

Q. Was there any attempt to use racism to break the strike?

Yes, there was. But the company made it so obvious. We found out that the company had targeted certain areas in the black community for recruitment. It was an obvious attempt to create something "racial."

We had a little problem with that with our people. But, we'd say, look, don't you see this Black guy sitting next to you at the union meeting? Don't play that shit. That's their shit — the company's shit, not ours.

Q. What were the lessons for your local — and for the labor movement?

More than anything we really developed an understanding of what it takes to build a unified fight: the educational process and keeping the contact with the members all the time.

I don't know if I'm saying it right, but, there were people that I never got along with too well. But because of a common goal, something emerged that created a closeness as workers — not just as my buddy Charlie. In some cases, buddy Charlie crossed the picket line. But the relationship with those who didn't cross was one of workers who understood what unions were about.

Labor has to understand that if it's going to survive at all, it has to change its approaches. Concessions have blown up in steelworkers faces. We can't embark on concession bargaining. We've got to give people a reason to belong to a union. People won't defend their unions if we allow the companies to get away with trying to force us back to sweatshop - like working conditions.

TUAD visits Moscow

Continued From Page Five

peace, the Soviet people are willing to make any sacrifice necessary to defend their system, their country and its achievements. For Reagan or anyone else to think otherwise is to fly in the face of history.

WHY NOT SEE FOR YOURSELF?

We return home even more committed to work to build and rebuild bridges of communication with our counterparts in the USSR. And, as trade unionists, we accept one other challenge — to help break down the artificial barriers, be they imposed by government agencies or some in our own ranks, that stand in the way of exchanges, formal or otherwise, between workers and unions in the United States and workers and unions in the Soviet Union.



Soviet trade unions at a glance

The AFL - CIO leadership says they are opposed to contacts and exchanges with trade unions in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries because unions there are "state controlled" and lack any authority — or desire — to defend the interests of workers.

We disagree and offer the following facts in an effort to help clarify some of these questions.

*** More than 130 million Soviet workers, representing 98 - plus percent of all wage and salary workers belong to trade unions. Union membership is voluntary and is granted upon individual application.

*** There are 32 national unions (roughly corresponding to international unions in the United States), each organized on an industrial basis. The largest is the agricultural workers union with more than 28 million members; the smallest is the geological workers union with 600,000 members. Each national union is affiliated with the All Unions Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU) of the USSR.

*** Dues are one percent of salary or wage. Two - thirds of dues money remains at local union level, one

third goes to regional and national trade union organizations. The total trade union budget, including dues and government funds under direct control and administration of trade union organizations, amounts to more than twice the entire military budget of the Soviet Union.

*** Meetings of "primary" (departmental / local union) organizations

Soviet TU budget TWICE their military budget!

are held monthly and are attended by about 85 percent of those eligible to participate. No binding action can be taken by any trade union organization unless that action is agreed to by 75 percent of those affected by it. About 40 percent of all union members are involved in one or another official union activity.

*** Officers of primary organizations

are elected by secret ballot for terms of 2 - 1/2 years. Elections to higher trade union office — regional bodies of national unions, area and city trade union committees, etc. — take place at the appropriate level from among the delegates to these bodies. Only about 7 percent of trade union officials work full time or draw salaries from union organizations.

*** The official AUCCTU paper, TRUD, with a daily circulation of 13 - 1/2 million copies and an estimated readership of 50 million, is published simultaneously in 57 cities. TRUD is supported entirely by subscriptions and realizes an annual profit of 40 million rubles, all of which is turned over to the AUCCTU. Each of the 500,000 letters sent to TRUD each year are answered.

*** No worker can be discharged without the agreement of the regional trade union committee and then, only after the union finds another job for him / her. (Single mothers may not be discharged, period.) However, regional trade union committees have the absolute right to remove the manager of any enterprise found guilty of violating the working agreement, safety provisions, etc.

Golden arches are wearing green!

May Day visits to the Soviet union do more than offer opportunities to get to know and understand the life and people of the Soviet Union. They also offer the chance to meet trade unionists from other countries.

This year Labor Today's delegation met with representatives from El Salvador, Afghanistan and Nicaragua. And then there were less formal discussions with others during the evening.

One of these discussions with Sister Noirin Greene, a member of the National Executive Council of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, offers an interesting example of what an aggressive and creative organizing campaign can accomplish.

The Transport and General Workers Union has 180,000 members and is the largest union in Ireland where, it is estimated, more than half of the workforce is organized. The Transport Union organizes workers in transportation industries — docks, public and private transport, airlines, and workers in general.

The modern Irish labor movement goes back to the Great Dublin Lock Out of 1913. During that 9 - month struggle, with its street battles in Dublin, the Irish labor movement was

able to establish some traditions — and one of them is that companies deal in an aboveboard manner with unions.

However, we've come across a number of American companies that refuse to abide by this general practice. And one of these is McDonald's.

McDonald's opened their first franchise in Ireland in 1979 and, sometime in 1980, two young people who saw their job there as a full - time job rather than just a part - time source of what we call "extra shillings," came to our office asking for help to organize a union.

We signed them up right off and then we signed up some more of the about 60 people who worked there. Then we went to McDonald's expecting recognition of the union and the right to negotiate a contract.

McDonald's said, "No", and told us that, as a matter of policy, there would be no union in any McDonald's franchise anywhere and that we would not be the ones to force them to change that policy.

So we signed up some more workers. After a few weeks we went to them again and got the same answer. That's when we called a strike.

It turned out to be a very hard fought battle, but we'll get to that later. But two things are important to remember — we were working with very young people and McDonald's went all - out to break our strike. They brought in American advisors — you call them "consultants" — to coach the local managers on the best tactics to break the strike.

getting their supplies in. They flew buns in from England, frozen hamburger from Canada and trucked their milk from Northern Ireland.

We were able to locate these products and our people who worked for the airlines and trucking companies were able to stop these as well.

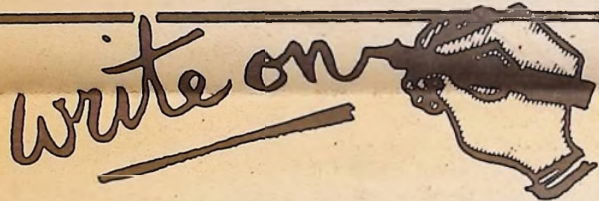


As the strike developed we put up a mass picket line and organized demonstrations. But McDonald's wouldn't budge and we decided to broaden the support for the strike by cutting off the supplies to McDonald's. Because we have the lorrie drivers in our union, we were able to cut off the buns, the hamburger and the milk for milk shakes.

Eventually, the combination of mass public pressure, trade union solidarity and the lack of supplies forced McDonald's to recognize the union, put all strikers back to work and raise wages to double what they were paying before the strike.

Then we discovered that they — McDonald's, that is — were still

It took nine months but the golden arches in Dublin are wearin' green these days!



CHILEAN TRADE UNIONIST

Dear Editor:

The Trade Unions International of Workers of the Building, Wood and Building Materials Industries have launched an international campaign for returning Hector Cuevas, president of the Building Workers Union of Chile, into his home country.

Hector Cuevas is an exemplary champion for the realization of trade union rights and democracy in his

Some particulars of Hector Cuevas are:

— 47 years old, born May 24, 1937

— Married, four children: one daughter and 3 sons. One of his sons is studying abroad. Other children in Chile. The daughter is expecting a baby.

— Position in his Union, the Building Workers' Union of Chile: 1964-1970 - member of the Union leadership; 1970-1973 - Organization Secretary of the Union; 1973 - President of the Union.

— Expelled from Chile December 12, 1982

— Imprisoned in various contexts

I am convinced that this kind of campaign would be a powerful demonstration of the expansion of international solidarity among workers and their trade unions, and if successful, a great moral victory as well.

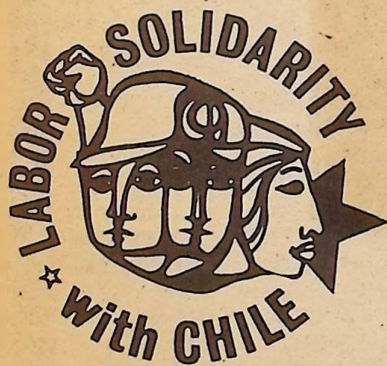
Please send letters, telegrams, etc. to the:

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Washington, DC 20036

Louis Weinstock
Founding Delegate
World Federation of
Trade Unions and
Retired Officer
International Brotherhood of
Painters and Allied Trades
District 9, California

country. The struggle against Pinochet's regime of violence has led him into prison several times, and finally into banishment. Now he has been in exile for over 2 years and is seriously ill. It is the wish of everyone that he could return home, to his family.

As Pinochet will not allow Mr. Cuevas to return into his own country, it is our international duty to raise a campaign which will force Pinochet to retreat.



CHICAGO ANTI-APARTHEID TRIAL

Not guilty!

Eight individuals, among them Steve Culen, International Vice - President of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and Director of District Council 31, were found innocent of trespass charges in connection with the anti - apartheid activities at the South African Consulate in Chicago. The trial, stemming from arrests last January and February, was the first "anti - apartheid" trial in the country. In acquitting Culen and the other defendants, the 10 - man, 2 - woman (the only two Afro - Americans on the jury) also upheld the Illinois "necessity statute" that had been the legal foundation for the defendants' case. While admitting that they had refused a lawful order to leave the building where the consulate is located, the defendants argued that they should be acquitted because

Illinois law gave people the right to act in violation of the law to avoid a greater public injury.

"And certainly," Culen said, "the crimes of apartheid and our Government's unwillingness to oppose them is a 'greater public injury' than our non-violent refusal to obey an order to leave a building."

In the words of "Buzz" Palmer, another of the defendants and publisher of New Deliberations, "This was the first instance in the country where the actions of those who oppose the policies of the South African Government have been judged by their peers. In acquitting us, the jury said that the rights of people transcended the rights of property and, of equal importance, the jury's verdict is an affirmation of the right of protest."



Our July Issue

The recent announcement of the American Iron and Steel Institute that the industry will no longer engage in co-ordinated bargaining with the Steelworkers Union when the basic steel industry contract expires next August is little short of a declaration of war against the entire labor movement.

It is an arrogant announcement to all workers that U. S. Steel, Bethlehem Steel, Inland and the rest of them have concluded that the time is ripe to go from just resisting unions to actually destroying them.

In response to requests from a number of our steelworker friends, we have decided to make our July issue a Steelworkers' Special. We will devote

several pages to the problems facing the steelworkers and the union in the next several months.

Although we've not got things entirely under control, several steelworkers are already working on articles for the issue which will be off the press on June 27.

We urge all of our readers to plan special steps to guarantee that thousands of steelworkers have the opportunity to read and study these articles.

In order to make it possible for you to do this, we've reduced the price of bundles of 500 or more to a rock-bottom 6 cents per copy.

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