

no separate peace

A news-magazine for construction workers.

May 1, 1978, Vol. 3, No. 2

14



750 Strong Support Auto Mechanics Strike

Auto mechanics in the Seattle area, on strike for 12 months, led a march through the north area of downtown Saturday afternoon, April 1.

Workers from many unions and trades joined the march in solidarity with five unions: Automotive Machinists, Lodge 289; Auto Sheet Metal Workers, Local 387; Auto Painters, Local 518; Teamsters Garage and Automotive, Local 44; and Teamsters Salesmen, Local 882.

750 men and women marched past large auto dealerships—S.L. Savidge, Frank Hawkins, Westlake Chevrolet, and Frederick Cadillac—to protest the anti-union stand of these employers. The march ended with a fund-raising dinner at the Labor Temple, where more than \$2,000 was raised to give material support to the strike.

The Issue: A Closed Shop

The mechanics are demanding a closed shop where all workers will be obliged to belong to and support the same union.

The security of the union and the strength of the workers depends on this issue being won.

The employers know an open shop divides and weakens the workers' ability to protect their rights on the job. In an open shop non-union workers resent having no voice in what is negotiated by the union, while the union workers resent those who do not pay dues but receive the same benefits.

This strike is a concrete example of how the interests of employers are in total opposition to the interests of workers. It clearly shows the need for rank and file workers to organize themselves into a strong union.

This strike also points out the importance for workers in other trades to actively support the Auto Mechanics strike. If the Auto dealers get their way, employers in other industries will think they can do the same. But if the mechanics win, employers will know they can't run over workers who are organized and united to achieve a common goal.

What You Can Do

To support the strike, workers are encouraged to join the mechanics on their picket line in front of auto dealerships on Saturdays from noon to 4:00 p.m. And for heaven's sake don't dare cross any picket line, and boycott the anti-union dealerships.

The mechanics and their families can use all the financial support we can muster. Donations, no matter how small, should be sent to:

Auto Trades Strike Support
Committee
2701 - 1st Ave, Room 300
Seattle, WA 98121

Finally, talk about the strike with family, friends and fellow workers. Make sure to point out the issue so folks are clear on just how important it is for the mechanics to win. If they win, we all will be in a better position when time comes for our respective contracts to be negotiated.



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no separate peace
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Feedback on your Feedback

by Beverly Sims

"NO SEPARATE PEACE" is a new magazine covering local, national and international issues that affect us as members of a working community.

NSP embodies and advocates the principle of a combined effort by all workers of all nationalities for the accomplishment of common goals. "No Separate Peace" is a FACT. We believe that no single struggle or issue is separate or isolated from one another. Therefore we, as working people, should not be short sighted in our objectives and goals. Nor should we minimize whatever victories we have fought for. But to stop fighting or relax because a segment of our working community has won "better conditions" or "better wages" without realizing the true nature of OUR problems, is a separate peace.

This publication is addressed to a specific audience, construction workers in Seattle, and its intended to stimulate discussion and action. "No Separate Peace" is a publication of the United Construction Worker's Association (UCWA). The UCWA is a Seattle based organization of Third World (national minority) construction workers who are also active members of various AFL-CIO unions.

The magazine is a non-profit publication. We ask a \$2.50 fee for yearly subscriptions. Address all correspondence, criticisms, complaints, and checks to No Separate Peace, 1812 E. Madison, Seattle, Washington 98122.

It's not easy putting out this newspaper when you're not a professional, but work eight hours a day as a construction worker. So we feel a good sense of accomplishment each time we manage to produce another issue. And we feel even better when we learn the paper is being read rather than dumped in the trash.

We were criticized for too much print in the last issue. So we have attempted to shorten the articles and include more graphics. We hope you'll find this issue more appealing.

The only article we heard drew controversy in the black community was the article "CAMP: Victim of Yellow Journalism."

We were approached by folks who had direct dealings with CAMP and who were critical of how CAMP functions. They claimed mismanagement does exist at CAMP and that CAMP's leadership sometimes acts in opposition to the wishes of people in the black community. They criticized us for supporting CAMP by printing the article.

We accept the criticism and agree we should have investigated further and asked folks in the community how they view CAMP.

However, the main purpose of the article was to speak to the unfair and sensational coverage the Seattle Times gave CAMP. To this purpose the NSP article was factual and accurate, though we are self-critical because we did not say clearly and distinctly that the Seattle Times was racist in its attack on CAMP.

We suggested to those who criticized the NSP article that they organize those concerned about CAMP into a united group to meet with CAMP's leadership and discuss the problems at CAMP. Hopefully such a group could arrive at solutions that would benefit the black community.

NSP needs you. You must take the initiative to share information through NSP for it to be a successful newspaper.

We present here some editorial guidelines to follow in submitting articles to NSP:

- 1) stick to facts and issues
- 2) articles should be 500 words or less
- 3) the deadline for articles to be included in the next issue of NSP is May 26, 1978
- 4) include with article your name, address and phone
- 5) we will answer any questions or rebuttals submitted
- 6) we will not alter any article without the author's permission
- 7) mail contributions or call: UCWA 1812 E. Madison Seattle, WA 98122 Phone 324-3181

TRADE NEWS

Local 32 Fights to Control Leadership

In January of this year a militant rank and file section of Local 32 attempted to exercise their democratic rights guaranteed to them under the Constitution of the United Association (UA) of Plumbers and Pipefitters.

A resolution was made to give workers the right to elect assistant business agents. This would clearly make the assistant B.A.'s accountable to the workers. The present situation with the assistant B.A.'s is they are accountable to the business manager because he is the one who appoints them.

Because this resolution was made to change the union constitution, no discussion was allowed on the floor the first time it was raised. The resolution was read at the following meeting, but no discussion was allowed until the third meeting, when the resolution was to be voted on.

Meanwhile the union leadership gathered its supporters to vote against the resolution. They said the resolution was unconstitutional because it was raised on the floor. Normally constitutional changes are carried out through a resolutions committee that is controlled by the union leadership.

Believing in control from the top down, Local 32's leaders solicited support from the U.A. International. This was gladly given in the form of a letter in basic opposition to the resolution. In February, even though the rank and file struggled to pass the resolution, it was defeated by one vote.

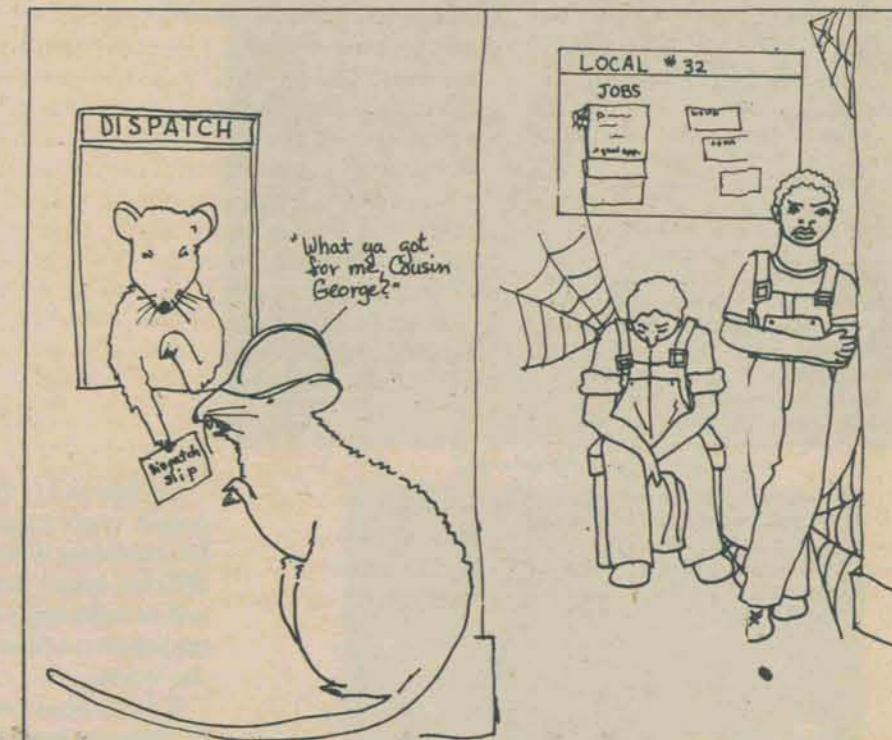
This issue should raise very serious concern among the rank and file in its efforts to maintain some control over the union leadership, which has not consistently upheld the interests of its membership, but has tended to bow to the will of the U.A. International.

If the membership had successfully gained control over its assistant B.A.'s, it would have: (1) stopped the favoritism shown to a select few in the dispatching of Local 32's membership; (2) made the assistant B.A.'s more easily available to the membership; and (3) forced the assistant B.A.'s to respond more quickly in labor disputes.

The defeat of this resolution was clearly a setback for the rank and file. Local 32's members should learn from this defeat to overcome it in the future.

Control of the union should come from the bottom up. The plumbers and pipefitters should begin to realize that there is a lot more to being a union member than just paying dues.

Union meetings are held every second and fourth Thursday of the month. These meetings should be attended regularly so the membership can continue to fight in the union for rank and file control.



MOVIE REVIEW

"Blue Collar": "It ain't the job site but it's hell just the same!"

Richard Pryor's latest, unlike his previous comedies, is a serious statement on today's society.

Racism which intensifies the oppression of all workers is vividly portrayed on the screen.

As workers we can all relate to the scenes in the auto plant where the foreman constantly harasses the employees though it is clear they are all doing their jobs.

Speed up, speed up, speed up—the health and welfare of the workers is sacrificed for production. Management doesn't care whether the workers live, die or go crazy.

When Pryor and his fellow workers leave the plant to go home there is no relief. Instead, oppression takes other forms. At the point of consumption "Blue Collar" tells us workers are harassed and exploited just as we are at the point of production.

Even though his job is making cars, Harvey Keitel's auto needs repairs that he can't afford. Just as garment workers make clothes they can never buy; just as aircraft workers make planes they can never fly; just as construction workers make buildings they can never own or use.

A weakness in the movie is how the wives of these workers are depicted. Neither wife works, which is not typical of a working class family today. Both men

shoulder the burdens of the family while they shelter their wives, who play a secondary role. Pryor's wife watches plenty TV on the color set he worked to buy. Keitel's wife, when they are faced with a \$2,000 dental fee for braces, feebly suggests a garage sale to raise money. Watching the screen you cannot help but ask, "Why don't she get a job?"

The only relief for Pryor and Keitel is to sneak off to an org equipped with women, weed, coke, liouor and music at Yaphet Kotto's. This relief is momentary and degrading and provides no solution to the problems of being a worker in America.

So our stars turn to rime. They steal from their union. This does nothing but bury them deeper in their dilemma. Never does the movie speak to the strength workers have in unite in an organized way to fight corrupt union leaders who are in cahoots with management. Watching the film we are left with a feeling of despair instead of feeling hopeful and inspired.

But Kotto was right when he said in the middle and at the end of the movie that they keep us divided—yung against old, black against white. But his next line should have been, "So we must break down these barriers to build a strong organization to fight for vorkers' rights!"

Bakke Attacks Affirmative Action

by Leonard McNeil

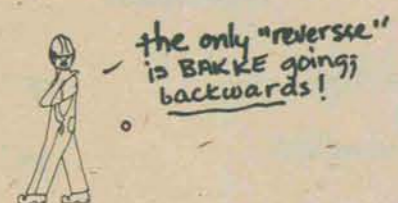
Leonard is a black ironworker from the Bay Area. He got into the trade under a federal program to integrate the ironworkers union similar to Seattle's court order. Presently he and other minority ironworkers have formed a committee to fight racism inside their union.

One of the most important and far-reaching cases in the struggle for racial equality is now pending in the U.S. Supreme Court. Not only are the meager gains made as a result of the civil rights struggles at stake, but affirmative action, as a just and democratic concept, is also in serious danger of being destroyed.

Allan Bakke, a white man and one of over 2,600 applicants to apply for only 100 openings at the University of Calif. at Davis, was denied admission to medical school. U.C. Davis had reserved 16 off the 100 openings for students from "disadvantaged" backgrounds. Although some of the white students admitted had entrance test scores lower than Bakke's, he filed suit, charging that he had been discriminated against because of his race. In September, 1976, the California Supreme Court ruled in favor of Bakke. The case is on appeal before the U.S. Supreme Court and a decision is expected this spring.

Bakke Claims "Reverse Discrimination"

The Bakke decision, which is based on the idea of "reverse discrimination," is a serious attack on the rights of minorities and women in education and jobs. If the U.S. Supreme Court upholds Bakke, the false notion that white people are discriminated against because of their race will be legitimized.



It has been 24 years since the Supreme Court ruled to end segregation in schools, but, according to the NAACP, there is even more segregation now!

By and large minorities continue to be excluded from the skilled, professional and higher income brackets. We are in the unemployment and welfare lines in disproportionate numbers. The medium income for minorities is about 60% of white income—the same as 20 years ago. Black people are 12% of the population but 25% of the jobless. Thirty-one per cent of black people live below the "official" poverty line. Life expectancy for Native Americans is less than 50 years.

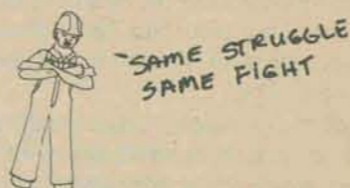
Effects on Labor

While the Bakke case does not directly affect labor, an unfavorable decision would set a legal and political precedent in challenging and contesting affirmative action programs in trade unions.

The proponents of racism falsely claim that minorities and women are trying to take the jobs of white men, and unfortunately, all too many white men believe this lie. This division of racism keeps white workers pitted against minority workers rather than all workers uniting to

Lawrence Walsh, a construction company owner. A group of Republicans have submitted a bill (HR9804) to repeal damn near every civil rights law ever enacted. John Cunningham (Rep., Wash.) and James Abdnor (Rep., SD) have sponsored a bill (HR9054) that would declare null and void 379 treaties Native Americans have with the U.S. government. On a national level we are witnessing the increased visibility of racist groups such as the KKK and the Nazi party.

Across the country there is also a reactionary drive by non-union employers in the construction industry that is part and parcel of the general attack on labor, most glaringly represented by the recent UMW coal strike.



Labor's Responsibility

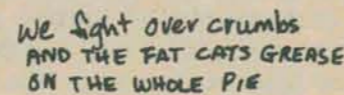
What should the response of labor be on the question of affirmative action? If this is to be a democratic society; if this is to be a nation free of race and sex discrimination; then steps must be taken to make this reality come about.

In the main, minorities have conducted the fight against racism alone, without white workers who have, to one degree or another, been party to that very racism. For the most part, women have been waging the battle against sex discrimination by themselves.

The only way that the labor movement can be united is for our unions (especially the building trades) to fight racism and male supremacy. How else will women and minorities come to see that the union fights for the needs, aspirations and rights of all workers and that unions represent them too? As long as we remain divided, we will get our behinds kicked. The employers are together, so we can do no less.

Labor must militantly fight not only to defend affirmative action but also to expand programs of equal opportunity. Without affirmative action the struggle against racism is nil. Affirmative action is not "reverse discrimination," it is a method of reversing discrimination.

secure and advance the cause of labor—at the expense of the employers!

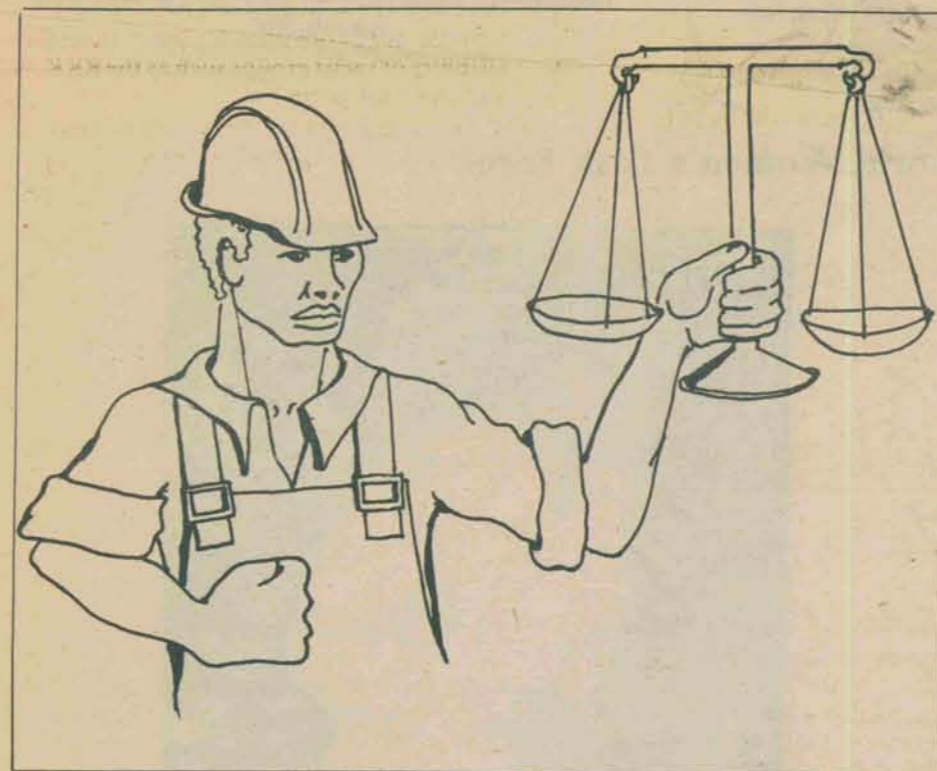


What should Bakke have done? He should have joined minorities and women in accusing our economic system of not providing equal opportunity for everyone.

All of the medical school applicants should have had the opportunity to go to medical school. Bakke's stance (which is racist) asserts that he has rights at the expense of minorities.

More Backlash

The Bakke case is but one example of the attack on affirmative action. In California, attempts are being made to place an initiative on the November ballot that would ban quota systems and affirmative action programs. The initiative was launched by Democratic State Senator



Black Electricians Sue Cochran Electric

Three black electricians filed a race discrimination lawsuit against Cochran Electric last month.

The lawsuit was filed only after the electrician journeymen and apprentices involved in the case tried to meet with Cochran representatives to work out the problem. Cochran refused to meet, leaving no alternative but to file the lawsuit.

The issue in the case centers around a foreman who harasses and fires black workers, even though these workers have been with the company for six months and more. When a black worker gets assigned to a job that this foreman is in charge of, he finds a reason to fire them. This practice has gone on for a period of six years. UCWA is also a plaintiff in the lawsuit to represent the black electricians who

were not named in the suit.

The lawsuit is important to all black workers. This problem is by no means the only situation where blacks are deposed of a job not because of their performance but due to their race.

Often foremen lay off black workers because they are not in their clique, or for some petty infraction of a rule.

The demands in this case are (1) that the electricians, who were discharged from Cochran because of this foreman, be given back pay; (2) that this foreman not be allowed to continue in a supervisory position; and (3) that Cochran Electric pay damages for knowingly continuing to employ in a supervisory position a racist white worker.

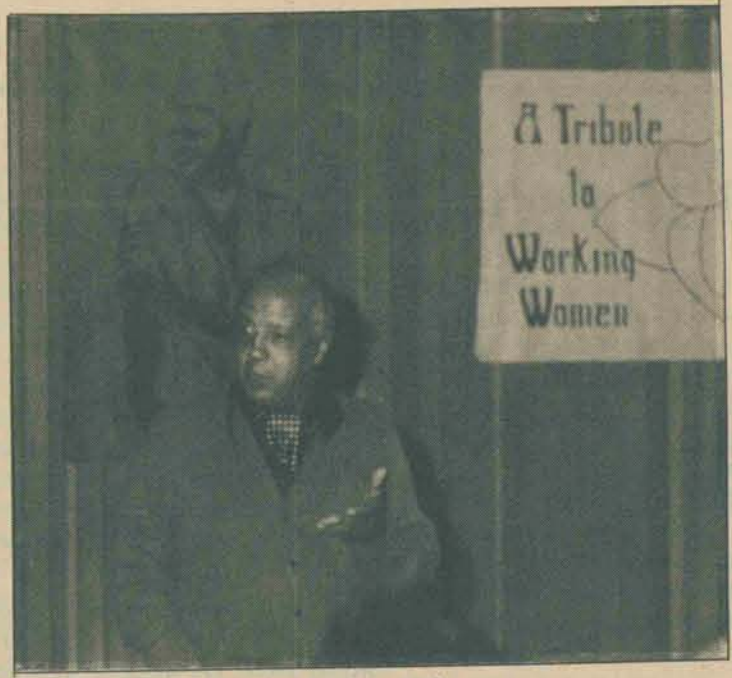


Harvey Keitel, Richard Pryor, and Yaphet Kotto (left to right) as the three auto workers in "Blue Collar."

A Tribute to Working Women



Beverly Sims & Charles Drew — MC



Bill Sutherland

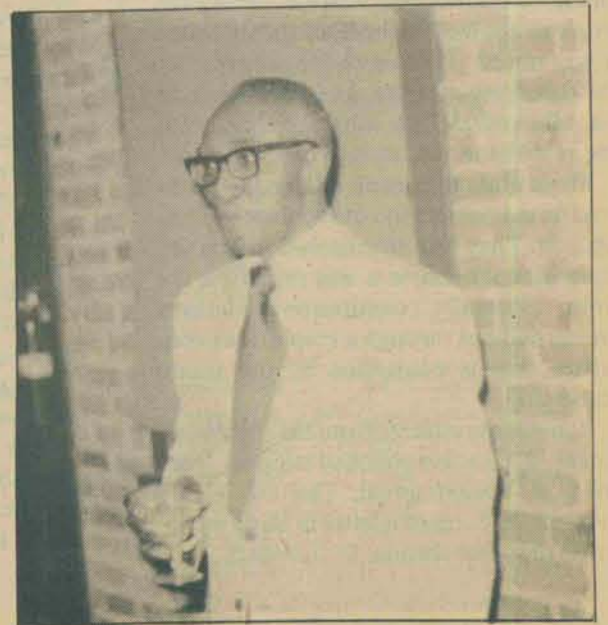


A toast to working women

On March 11, 1978, approximately 80 people came together to commemorate International Women's Day, which since 1910 has been a day to celebrate the gains and contributions women have made for the progress and struggles of the people of the world.

Beverly Sims and Charles Drew served as mistress and master of ceremonies, while the people were entertained and educated by the July 26 Choreopoets, Margaret Greenwood, who did an outstanding reading of "For the Art for Art's Sake Artist", a poem by Tyree Scott. Bee Smith, veteran performer, made an excellent contribution to the program, as did Bill Sutherland, who has lived and worked in Africa for over 20 years. Sutherland briefly shared what is happening with women in Africa and its relationship to people here.

After the program a cabaret began featuring the outstanding sounds of the Ernie Hatfield Trio, who set a mellow tone for the remainder of the evening.



Ernie Hatfield

Sponsored by UCWA and Third World Women's Task Force



Enjoyable evening for everyone



Bea Smith



Choreopoets