

# ON THE LINE

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## Nicaragua BUILDING FROM RUINS

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"I do not expect any help for a libertarian revolution from any government in the world. Maybe the conflicting interests of the conflicting imperialists might have some influences on our struggle. But we expect no help, not even from our own government in the final analysis."

"We have always lived in slums and holes in walls. We will know how to accomodate ourselves for a time. For, you must not forget, that we can also build palaces and cities, here in Spain and in America and everywhere. We, the workers. We can build others to take their place. And better ones. We are not in the least afraid of ruins. We are going to inherit the earth. There is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world here, in our hearts. That world is growing in this minute."

from an interview with Buenaventura Durruti  
(anarchist, worker & fighter) Spain, August 5, 1936



AT THIS TIME OF CELEBRATION FOR THE VICTORY AGAINST CAPITALISM AND ITS FASCIST WATCH-DOGS WE JOIN WITH THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE IN THEIR HAPPINESS.

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD , AND ESPECIALLY WITHIN LATIN AMERICA , PEOPLE FOLLOW THE RADICALISATION OF THE STRUGGLE FROM PROPAGANDA ACTIONS AND GUERRILLA WARFARE TO POPULAR ARMED INSURRECTION . THE SAME STRENGTH , COURAGE AND DETERMINATION SHOWN TO DEFEAT SOMOCISMO AND ITS CAPITALIST BACKERS WILL HAVE TO BE USED TO EXPROPRIATE THE RICH , THE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS THE BANKS , THE BOURGEOISE STATE AND ITS INSTITUTIONS OF WHICH SOMOZA IS ONLY A SYMBOL . PRODUCTION THROUGH EXPLOITATION AND THE DIVISION OF SOCIETY BETWEEN WORKERS AND THEIR PATRONS MUST BE UPROOTED TO OPEN THE WAY FOR TOTAL LIBERATION .

THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION WILL BE SUBJECTED MORE AND MORE TO PRESSURE AND TO BLACKMAIL FROM IMPERIALIST POWERS AND THEIR PUPPETS .

A PEOPLE THAT HAS REACHED THE EXTENT OF SUFFERING AND THE LEVEL OF MILITANCY THAT NICARAGUANS HAVE SHOWN , DESERVE A REAL SOCIAL REVOLUTION AND NOT ANOTHER REPRESSIVE REGIME , CALL IT "BOURGOISE DEMOCRACY" OR "DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT" .

WE SUPPORT TOTALLY THE REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE OF NICARAGUA AND THEIR ORGANISATIONS OF STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM .

AS LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISTS WE HOPE THAT THE STRUGGLE TOWARD LIBERATION WILL CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN DAILY AND THAT THE PEOPLE THROUGH THEIR BASE ORGANISATIONS , REVOLUTIONARY UNIONS , NEIGHBORHOOD COMITEES AND SOCIAL & ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS WILL ACHIEVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CLASSLESS SOCIETY WITHOUT PRIVILEGE . FROM HERE WE MUST OFFER ALL THE MATERIAL AND MORAL SUPPORT WE HAVE SO THAT THESE ASPIRATIONS BECOME REALITY .

PATRIA LIBRE O MORIR !      MUERTE AL CAPITAL !      NO MÁS EXPLOTACIÓN !

(text of a leaflet distributed by the Libertarian Workers Group at the demonstration in support of the Nicaraguan struggle, July 22 in Washington, D.C.)

CHILE : 2 years before the C.I.A./Pinochet fascist coup the M.I.R.(Revolutionary Left Movement) had asked Allende to arm the workers organisations to protect the revolution from right wing sabotage.

IRAN : One of the first actions taken by the Ayatollah Khomeini "Revolutionary Government" was to disarm the people that fought the Shah for years.

NICARAGUA :  
One of the first statements of the Government of National Reconstruction concerned the disarming of the people who had taken arms from Somozas defeated National Guard. The armed Nicaraguan people, gave their lives for insurrection; they should remain armed to protect the revolution.



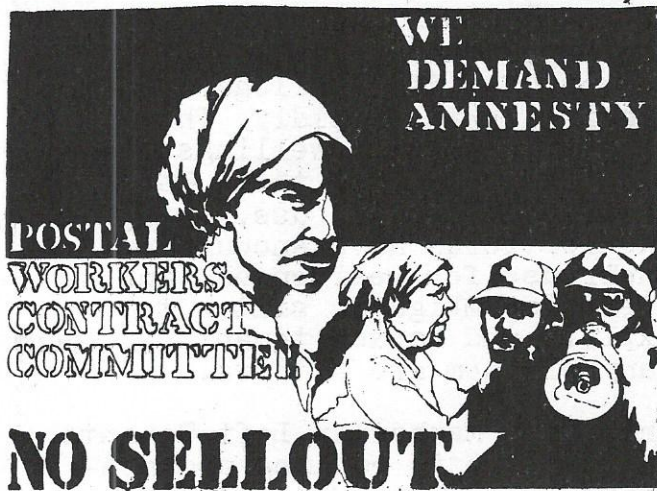
## POSTAL WORKERS

Once again, rank-and-file rights have been stepped on in the American Postal Workers Union.

On July 2, after receiving an arbitrator's decision upholding the firing of union V.P. Kenny Leiner (a Mailhandler), Pres. Andrews expelled him from his elected position and from the union.

Leiner is one of 150 postal workers from the N.Y.-N.J. area who was fired for taking part in a wildcat strike last summer over a sell-out contract. He was elected to office after he was fired and has played a major role in the fight to win the fired workers' jobs back.

As his 'legal' excuse, Andrews used the national union constitution, which says that to be eligible for union membership you must be a postal employee. However, he ignored the section that guarantees due process and the right to a hearing.



The constitution of Leiner's local, N.Y. Metro, says that any worker fired for union activity retains union membership. At the June meeting the local went on record supporting all the workers fired in the '78 strike, and that all fired workers would retain union membership.

It should be noted that Andrews and many of the national officers are not now postal employees, but retirees, collecting a civil service pension as well as big

union salaries and lavish expense accounts

For postal workers, the division of their ranks into craft unions and domination of these unions by bureaucrats has meant disaster for them. The 1978 contract sell-out and the resistance by union misleaders to support amnesty for their members is merely one symptom of the problem. The problem itself is that the union is undemocratic, over-centralized and not directly controlled by the rank-and-file. Only by struggling to turn the union into a

industrial and militant fighting force, and through the struggle on the shop floor will the rank-and-file ever be able to make any headway.

In two related matters, in late June over 1000 N.Y.-N.J. postal workers rallied in Washington demanding amnesty for the fired postal workers and presented a petition to the Labor Dept. and to Congress signed by 36,000 postal workers demanding amnesty for their fellow workers. The petition also called for full back pay for those fired.

On July 21, exactly one year after the strike, roughly 100 postal workers and supporters rallied at the Jersey City Bulk Mail Center to demand amnesty.

Prior to the rally, on the night of July 20, 35 postal workers, both fired and employed, set up camp, which they appropriately named Bolgerville, in honor of the U.S. Postal Service head. Those postal workers at Bolgerville have vowed to remain camped until their fellow workers are rehired.

-- M.M.





### Phantom Wages

According to a recent issue of Forbes magazine, workers can look forward to astronomical wages. Based on the average annual increase attained since 1962, the average production worker, according to Forbes, will have gross earnings of \$48,802 in 1999.

But as usual under capitalism, there's a catch. After tax earnings adjusted for inflation and expressed in terms of 1962 dollars will only be \$8,688, which is almost 15% less than the \$10,156 production workers took home 17 years ago. Forbes estimates that the average one-family house in 1999 will cost \$368,975 and a haircut will cost \$16.93. Even if you are willing to eat at McDonalds, things will be pretty tough. A Big Mac will set you back \$3.21. And if you give a pizzeria \$5.00 for a slice, the change will be 20¢.

--M.M.

### T.W.U. Blasts Junta

On July 26, some 200 members and supporters of the Transport Workers Union rallied outside the U.N. to protest the junta-controlled Argentine Airlines' refusal to negotiate with striking U.S. ground employees and A.A.'s use police state tactics to specifically harass and intimidate Argentine strikers.

About 230 T.W.U. members, most of them of Argentine origin, struck the A.A. in May over the use of part-time employees, mandatory overtime and the reclassification of 60 employees into managerial titles. Since the strike began, there have been many reports of Argentine strikers being 'shadowed' by agents of the junta's secret police, tapped phones, opened mail and harassment with threats against relatives still living in Argentina.

In an article in the N.Y. Times (7/27/79), Mel Brackett, president

erized Argentina as a "fascist state", and A.A.'s management as "militaristic officers of the government", stated "Our dealings with Argentina have been a direct reflection of their type of government."

--S.P.

### Loft Tenants

The rent strike of loft tenants at 47-49 and 55 Walker St. and 71-73 Franklin St. in lower Manhattan against loftlord Eli Lipkis is almost 2 years old, and yet despite continuous legal maneuvering and physical harassment by Lipkis, the tenants determination has not let up.

The tenants now have a legal basis for their rent withholding, since a Civil Court judge has ruled that as long as the building has not been brought up to housing code standards, and has no Certificate of Occupancy, the tenants need not pay rent.

Meanwhile, the movement of loft tenants for decent, legal housing is growing rapidly. The majority of loft dwellings now are illegal, since their leases are for commercial use, though the loftlords have encouraged their use for residences, and use this ambiguous status to exploit and harass tenants, many of whom are artists.

The Lower Manhattan Loft Tenants Association is calling a demonstration at City Hall on Wed., Aug. 1st, from 3-6:00 PM, to let the politicians know that they will not be pushed out without a fight.

For more information, contact L.M.L.T. at 344-8860 or write to:

P.O.Box 887  
Bowling Green Station  
New York, NY 10004

--S.R.



## An Adventure Which Befell The Student

The semester was over and I desperately need a job. Having failed to follow certain bureaucratic procedures, I learned that I was ineligible for summer student employment. I was uptight!

I picked up the school newspaper and found a vaguely worded ad for a sort of caretaker/casual laborer job way out on eastern Long Island. I called and was given the run-around for weeks.

My prospective boss, (a scheming, wheeling-dealing contractor) explained in the most evasive, under-handed manner what the job entailed. I would stay in a trailer that "needed just a little bit of repair" and I would be helping to renovate a near-by house that the boss intended to make his "weekend pleasure dome". I was to be paid \$125. a week, minus \$50. for rent on the trailer. Despite my reservations, I took the job. I was so hard-up and at least it would mean some money coming in.

All my fears turned out to be real, unfortunately. It took the boss 4 days to put a bed and cooking gas in the trailer and one week to get cold water--mind you, only cold, and rusty brown at that. He left me with a rickety, one-speed bicycle to get around this isolated, recreationless area.



When my boss was in the middle of repairing something, or making arrangements to have it done, some party, picnic or tennis match that he simply had to attend always seemed to pop up! To relieve my boredom, the boss had me sweep and re-sweep dusty floors, haul heaps of demolished debris, and serve as his 'go-fer' --a blue collar butler!

By the second week I began to smolder with rage, realizing that my boss allowed me to live and work under sub-standard conditions that he would never have tolerated for himself.

At the end of the third week, still with no hot or clear running water, I cut out!, without even a minute's notice.

Scheming, corner-cutting, small-time businessmen like him really take advantage of desperate, job-hungry students. Crap like this ahs happened to me before and to other 'hungry' students I've known. Bosses like this grubbing shit-faced weasel love to exploit student labor, since we're considered so pliable, intelligent -- and so cheap! One of the things we must do is demand that our school administrations provide us in the fall, spring, and summer with decently-paid (not bullshit minimum-wage) truly useful work. In this way we can devote ourselves to our studies and not just to our survival, and contribute something really meaningful to our society.

--G. Merovich

The Libertarian Workers Group is affiliated with the Anarchist-Communist Federation, and is the New York group of the Syndicalist Workers Committee, which is the American group affiliated to the International Workers Association, the world federation of libertarian syndicalists organizations.



## HARD TIMES IN THE MILL

For those who think unhealthy conditions in textile mills are only limited to the South or history books should think again. In fact, at the Dye-Tex Corporation in Passaic, New Jersey, one would think they've entered into a time lapse. Not only is the mill one of the oldest in Passaic, but conditions and some of the machinery don't appear to have changed much since the mill was built. On top of that, a majority of the work-force is made up of immigrant labor, predominantly Latino and Polish.

Depending on which department one works in, conditions range from poor to barbaric. The worst conditions are in the dye and "flopping" departments. In these departments workers are subjected to intense degrees of heat and high levels of cotton dust, with virtually no ventilation.

In the summer, when the temperature is well over 100 degrees, workers in the flopping department are not allowed to open windows more than a crack because the material "bunches up." Also, the cotton dust that is dumped outside by the blowers tends to blow right back into the shop. Workers in this department also face the problem of breathing the cotton dust that blows in their faces from the machines. To "protect" the workers' lungs, management supplies plastic fiber face masks that are impossible to wear and in the long run simply don't prevent the cotton dust from entering the lungs.

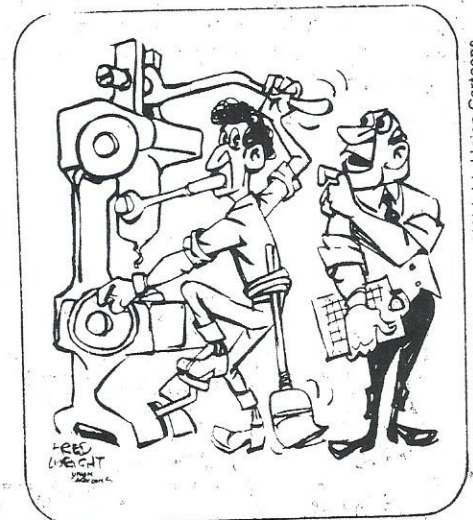
The work day for the day shift begins at 7 AM and doesn't end until 6 PM. Night shift works 12 hours, and all workers must work a six day week. Both shifts are only allowed one break and a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour lunch/dinner period. If a worker doesn't work the full shift they're more than likely to be fired, and because

the pay is low--starting hourly rate is \$3 and hour--most workers are forced to work such long hours.

Many of the Polish workers work on Sunday as well as Saturday. It's apparent that most of the workers have no knowledge of federal regulations concerning overtime, nor do they know about the Occupational Health and Safety Administration, and the work conditions regulated by that agency and the federal government. As poor as these government regulations are, they would afford quite a bit more protection than the workers are afforded now.

On the surface it would appear that Dye-Tex is simply another open shop that is rampant in the textile industry. On the contrary, the shop is ostensibly unionized by the United Textile Workers Union. It should be noted that the UTW is an old AFL craft union since gone semi-industrial, and has a long tradition of class collaboration with the bosses, has scabbed on striking workers, and is well known for its undemocratic internal structure. Thus, it would come as no surprise to hear that the workers have no idea what is in their contract, and from all impressions it appears that the contract is a "sweet-heart" contract.

(cont. next page)



"When you get a free hand scratch my back."



## PRISON REVOLT

On May 9, 3 members of the Anarchist Black Dragon Collective at Washington State Prison at Walla Walla seized a building at the prison as well as 10 hostages. They held the building nonviolently for 12 hours and no one was hurt. Throughout the whole seizure the prisoners were in constant contact with the media, other prisoners and people on the outside. While the occupation was in progress over 100 prisoners stayed in the yard to protect their comrades and prevent the guards from attacking the building. Following a one hour news conference the prisoners surrendered and the hostages were released.



The demands of the prisoners were that there be a Federal investigation of prison conditions, for protection and transfer to Federal custody, that they be allowed to have lawyers present their cases at a formal jury trial and that they be placed in segregation cells for their own protection, since they feared for their lives.

As of this time the prisoners are being denied due process of law and were denied lawyers at 3 special hearings. Their mail is being censored and they have not been allowed visitors or to contact the media. Worse still, they have found pills put in their food and were told by a guard that one of them will not make it through this ordeal.

Letters of protest should be sent to Gov. Dixie Lee Ray, State Capitol, Olympia, WA; and letters of support should be sent to:  
Susan Waymire  
189924 S.E. 116 Pl.  
Issaquah, WA 98027 --M.M

## HARD TIMES (cont.)

Dye-Tex workers not only have no idea what is in their contract, they also don't know who their shop stewards are, as well as when union meetings are held and where they're held. While the workers have a health plan, they must travel into New York City to be able to take advantage of that program.

The only visible sign that the union exists is the \$40 initiation fee that is taken out of the pay check, and when monthly dues are also extracted from the workers'

pay. there is also a UTW sign posted to the bulletin board by the time clock; but beyond that there is no evidence that the union exists. Simply put, the union is practicing class-collaboration par excellence and only has in mind the interests of its highly paid staff.

The labor fakers of the UTW local have no interest in educating their foreign born members the principles of militant unionism, nor the meaning of job control and how a good contract can help them to win decent working conditions and a living wage.

While there is some direct action (actions that are taken on the shop floor by the workers, without the "sanction" of the union bureaucracy,) these actions are far and few between. As it stands, most workers are afraid to take any sort of action because they are either afraid of losing their jobs, or afraid that their work visas will be revoked.

--M.M



## WHO WE ARE

We call ourselves "anarchist-syndicalists" and we have named our group the Libertarian Workers Group. We are a committee of working people and students who live in the N.Y. metropolitan area. We publish ON THE LINE because we feel that the news and experiences which come from many small battles between exploiters and exploited, powerful and powerless, must be shared if the workers are someday to win.

## WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe that the capitalist class is unnecessary and that government (the political state and all its bureaus) is inherently oppressive. The state and the capitalist class, while not seeing eye-to-eye on everything, are built on exploitation and domination. By "stealing" from the real producers--the workers--and then selling to consumers--most of whom are workers too--the capitalist is able to make profits and keep power. Landlords and the utility companies steal from workers in a similar way. The government insures that business goes on as usual and even runs some industries. Education is bought and sold like a commodity, and students are trained for further exploitation in factories and offices. The decisions and what will be produced, how much will be charged and how goods and services will be distributed are made in a "top-down" way in political centers by bureaucrats and capitalists.

People are taught to play a passive role in society, to take uninteresting and low-paying jobs, to vote for candidates that really have nothing to offer, to experience life through television and movies and to accept racial and sexual oppression as normal. Meanwhile, thousands of people are going to jail, becoming addicts or committing suicide.

## WHAT WE WANT

It is not enough, we think, to try to reform society. The exploiter-exploited relationship, protected as it is the world over by all of the governments and social institutions (churches, philanthropies, schools, etc.), must be done away with. The capitalist system, in which one person works for another's profit and then lives only to work in that framework, is full of contradictions and shortcomings. The decisions on what will be produced and distributed, on how housing and community problems will be solved, and on how natural resources will be allocated must be made by the working class on a local level through democratic organizations controlled by the rank-and-file.

Education must be democratic and non-hierarchical and must be available to all. Racial and sexual barriers must be abolished. In short, the working class must emancipate itself. We think that it can only do so by building organizations in which all workers and students can participate, and from which all will benefit. The center of the organizations must be the workplace, the school, and the community.

The tactics we think are most useful are the general strike and the takeover of workplaces, schools and communities for rank-and-file control and for necessary immediate gains. Revolutionary unions and councils must be created to fight for decentralized economic planning and generalized self-management. Anarchist-syndicalism is the sum total of these objectives and offers the means by which to obtain them.

Subscriptions to ON THE LINE are \$1.00 for 6 issues. Send subs to:

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