



COLLEGE WORKERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER -- 3/15/73

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT--First general meeting of the College Workers Association--Thurs. March 22 in room SS396. ALL MEMBERS WHO CAN COME SHOULD DO SO. Non-members are welcome.

OPEN LETTER FROM THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE COLLEGE WORKERS ASSOCIATION

We accuse:

the College administration, the Financial Aid Offices, and the Board of Higher Education of a flagrant disregard of the human rights of the workers in the City University of New York and the community and city in general.

We, of the College Workers Association, accuse you of the continued exploitation of the student-workers on campus. Using them as a reserve labor force, you persist in paying them sub-standard wages of \$1.85/hour for work that commands \$3 or \$4 in the outside community. This is even more outrageous, because they are put in the position of slowly but surely replacing workers who would be paid at union scale and would receive benefits that student-workers do not. Students are reduced to virtual slaves when they make \$8 or \$9 per week. While cost of living goes up and up, our real wages go down.

We accuse you of exploiting the most needy of the college community through the "Financial Aid" office, which has instituted a virtual slave-labor program, which forces students to work for their stipends at minimum wages. This is reminiscent of the Nixon Phase III Program, now going into effect in the NYC Welfare system, which gives welfare clients the alternative of starving or working for a welfare check of \$46 a week. We will not allow the campuses to be turned into labor camps.

(cont.)

Moreover, a special breed of discrimination is being fed and nurtured by the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Office requires students to take on a campus job, in addition to, their academic and family responsibilities and obligations. They are kept away from home and community and on top of this, are sorely underpaid.

We accuse you of capitalizing on the misfortunes and poverty of working-class students by forcing them to work for inadequate pay, while those people with "special connections" get higher paying jobs and "special loans".

We accuse you of complicity in the imposition of high taxes on the workers of the city and state to finance CUNY while the large corporations, the Rockefellerers, the banks, the foundations and special interest groups with political connections go inadequately or completely untaxed.

We accuse you of sitting by idly, while the imposition of a \$650-\$800 tuition on CUNY is being planned in Albany.

We demand on behalf of the College Workers Association, and the student body and workers of CUNY:

- Minimum wages of \$3/hour for every college worker
- Cost of living raise
- Mandatory raises for workers employed for one or more years
- Medical and dental coverage under the CUNY medical and dental plan for all workers
- No lay-offs without the previous filing of charges with the Association's membership.
- No cut-backs of the college work force by attrition.
- No lay-offs for organizing activity
- No tuition for CUNY
- Taxation of large corporations, banks, etc. to pay for the just and equitable demands of the Association

- A minimum 5 hour work week for those workers who want it.
- The signing of a contract guaranteeing the right of the college workers to organize and to the above demands
- Any expense incurred in the challenging of the above contract shall be borne out by CUNY
- Paid legal holidays.
- Sick leave: 1 hour for 8 hours of work per week. A minimum of one hour per week.
- Expansion of jobs and services to aid the unemployed in the area

FLASH!--3 workers have been laid-off in the Q.C. Chem Dispensary. There has been talk of other firings recently. We suspect foul play. We will inform everyone of the details as soon as we have them.

C.W.A. PROGRESS REPORT

We now have approximately 150 workers signed up at Queens College. There are still many more people that we haven't been able to reach. It is important that we make this organization as broad-based as possible, and to do that we must explain what we are doing and why to as many people as possible. We need more college workers to join and help build the organizing efforts, and the support of the student body, college workers in other unions, the community and workers in general. If you need authorization forms, info on C.W.A., a crash course in how to organize, or if you have questions yourself you want answered, please call one of the members of the Organizing Committee.(numbers at the end of the newsletter)

3 fellow workers in York College and 2 others in Brooklyn College are starting to organize at their schools. We also recently visited CCNY, where the people on the school newspaper there expressed interest and promised to print an article from us. We are trying to get the Open Letter and other articles on the conditions of college workers printed in student newspapers throughout CUNY and also in some community newspapers. If you know someone in another part of CUNY who might be interested or have an article for either the newsletter or

for a school or community newspaper, get in touch with the Organizing Committee.

What is the CWA Organizing Committee? Around January some of us got the idea of organizing student workers in Queens College. We came up with the idea of forming a College Workers Association and then started circulating authorization forms to different workers. We started in the Library, and slowly but surely started to spread around campus. Things are really starting to move now, and it looks like there's a lot more to come.

Basically any member can be on the Organizing Committee. All it takes is being willing to sign up new people, a good knowledge of CWA principles and some ideas on how a militant, democratic organization of college workers should function. ~~XXXXXX~~ We don't make the decisions for CWA, only the membership has the power to do that. We just do the day-to-day organizing and try to coordinate various organizational functions. We are:

Russell Harris and Ann Harris 793-8420 Steve Rabinowitz 263-0188

Unfortunately, we can't print everyone's name because of possible reprisals.

On the job; what you can do.

Building solidarity on the job is an important first step to winning anything for college workers. By discussing worker issues on the job and finding out what other workers think we can learn how to build a concrete organization. The CWA is only as effective as its' membership, and you can't be effective when workers are divided as they have been up to now.

Anyway, let's make sure that CWA is here to win and here to stay!