



# LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE

#846 February 2, 1977

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#### COLLECTIVE NOTES

In the aftermath of all the media coverage of  
Rupert Murdoch's takeover of the Village Voice,  
New York Post and New York magazine, we thought it  
would be useful to put this in a context of the  
increasing consolidation of the media in this  
country. The article we're running in this packet  
also goes into the response of Voice employees--  
unionization.

Also in this packet is an article about the  
recent Amnesty conference in Canada--there will  
be photos in the packet to follow. In the next  
week there will be a National Vigil for Veterans'  
Rights in Washington, D.C. and we'll be covering  
that too.

With all the cold weather (at least here in  
the East) alot of people have been laid off from  
their jobs. We want to call your attention to an  
article we ran in the last packet about how to  
collect unemployment benefits if you've been laid  
off because of cold weather.

Speaking of cold weather, one of our staff  
members just returned from icy Chicago where she  
was talking to steelworkers about the upcoming  
union election (Feb. 8). We'll have an article  
about the Sadlowski campaign in the next packet  
and an interview with a woman steelworker soon  
after.

WE ONLY HAVE ENOUGH PAPER FOR THIS WEEK  
and the paper company won't deliver any  
more until we pay them. Folks, our  
money situation is very serious so we  
need you to pay your bills immediately,  
as well as back bills.

Thanks, LNS

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IF YOU ARE MISSING A PAGE OR GET A BADLY PRINTED GRAPHIC, LET US KNOW AND WE WILL SEND ANOTHER SOON.

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CROWN CORK STRIKERS FIGHT FOR  
NON U.S.-UNION IN PUERTO RICO

(The following information comes from an article by Saul Faeter in the January, 1977 issue of Puerto Rico Libre, bulletin of the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee.)

NEW YORK (LNS) -- Workers at the Crown Cork Company of Puerto Rico have been on the picket line for four months in their battle for an independent union. These 140 workers refused to settle for the U.S.-based Seafarers' International Union (SIU) -- one they said had failed to represent their interests.

At its factory in Carolina (near San Juan), Crown Cork, a U.S.-owned corporation, produces almost all of the cans and bottlecaps used by the soft drink and beer producers on the island.

Workers Form Independent Union

As far back as January, 1976, a group of workers decided they had to start their own, democratically run union. At that time they were members of the SIU.

At a general assembly of Crown Cork workers in May, the overwhelming majority decided to establish the Independent Union of Crown Cork Workers (IUTCC). Soon afterwards, they filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) office in Puerto Rico, demanding an election be held to determine which union was to represent them.

"The SIU was not interested in problems which we were encountering at the plant," explained Luis Nigaglioni, president of the IUTCC. "The SIU did not even know what our problems were because they never came to the plant to talk to the workers. When we went to talk to them, they would listen, but nothing got done." The SIU failed to act, he continued, when "the doctors in the area refused to honor the SIU medical services for our families."

"We finally realized that only a union really run by the employees ourselves would be interested in providing the best services possible," he explained. "Once we discussed the alternatives, everyone agreed that we had no other choice but to start our own union."

Since then, a combination of forces -- including the SIU; a strikebreaking agency called Security Associates; the NLRB and the police -- has been mobilized against the independent labor unionists.

In June, for example, the SIU challenged the right of the IUTCC to seek an election. When the conflict was resolved in favor of the independent union, the SIU filed charges against Nigaglioni, which were later shown to be unfounded. But the SIU's tactics succeeded in delaying the election.

Company Backs the SIU

By August 12, Crown Cork signed a "temporary" contract with the SIU, granting increasing benefits. The contract was executed behind the backs of the Crown Cork workers. The effect of this "sweetheart" contract was to make the independent union appear powerless.

Further provocations by the company included the transfer of some of the oldest, most active members of the IUTCC to the night shift and the firing of the union's president and vice-president. With no

date set for the elections and with the independent union under severe attack, the employees had no alternative but to go out on strike. Only a few days later, the NLRB set the date for the election.

Same Tactics Used to Repress Cement Strike

Response to the Crown Cork strike bears a strong resemblance to the 1975 cement workers' strike in Ponce, Puerto Rico. Those workers were defeated by the same forces now fighting the Crown Cork workers.

The same lawyer who engineered the attack on strikers at the Puerto Rico Cement Company, Hector Laffitte, was hired by Crown Cork. Soon afterward, Security Associates showed up at the Crown Cork plant, just as they had done during the cement strike.

Crown Cork entered into an agreement with the SIU to hire only strikebreakers referred by that union. It proceeded to hire double the regular number of workers to ensure an SIU victory at the election.

Although the Crown Cork election was held October 28, the results are not yet clear since the IUTCC has challenged the right of strikebreakers to vote.

NLRB Calls The Shots

The NLRB will play a critical role in the resolution of the strike. The law gives the NLRB exclusive, unappealable power to decide who is eligible to vote.

The result of the year-long cement workers' strike came down to an NLRB decision on whether or not strikebreakers could vote. Despite the illegal actions of the company and the SIU, the NLRB decided in their favor and granted recognition to the SIU.

Although the same forces are in action against the Crown Cork workers, the picketers refuse to give up. Workers there have asked for and received support from the large United Labor Movement (MOU), which has mobilized labor leaders throughout the island to join the picket line. And member unions of the MOU have taken up collections to aid the strikers.

"We knew the possible consequences when we started the strike, but we had to take the risk," said Nigaglioni. "We think we are going to win this strike no matter what the NLRB decides. But even if we don't win this year -- even if we lose our jobs -- we know that we made the right decision. Each time workers at one plant in Puerto Rico take a stand, all of us come a little closer to achieving our goals."

"Since we've started picketing in front of Crown Cork," he went on, "workers from five or six nearby companies have asked us to help them form independent unions in their plants. All of us on the picket line agree that we've made the only choice and that it is the right one."

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TORONTO AMNESTY CONFERENCE ATTACKS CARTER'S PARDON;  
CALLS FOR RENEWED CAMPAIGN IN WASHINGTON FEB. 1-10

by Dee Knight

TORONTO (LNS)--Over 350 American war resisters, Vietnam War veterans and amnesty supporters met in Toronto January 29-30 and unified their response to President Jimmy Carter's pardon of Vietnam era draft resisters. Despite a heavy blizzard and hurricane-strength winds which turned back two busloads and several car-loads of would-be participants, the conference hall at the Lord Simcoe Hotel in downtown Toronto was jammed for the opening session.

Of nearly 200 people kept away because of the weather, over half were veterans; but more than 100 veterans managed to attend, and the conference demonstrated militant solidarity between those forced to fight in the unjust U.S. war in Indochina, and those who resisted.

The conference sponsor was the National Council for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty (NCUUA), an umbrella group which represents over 100 national and local organizations working for total amnesty. AMEX-Canada, the Toronto-based exile group, was host.

Vinh Quy, President of the Union of Vietnamese in Canada, received standing ovations both before and after he spoke before the conference, expressing the support of his newly-unified country and requesting our solidarity for its continuing struggles. The Vietnamese delegate had no trouble gaining a strong resolution from the conference demanding an end to U.S. attempts to sabotage Vietnam's reconstruction and diplomatic relations abroad. The resolution also called for diplomatic recognition and reconstruction aid to the new Indochinese government, in accordance with the 1973 Paris Agreement.

Bob Chenoweth, a former POW who spent over five years in North Vietnamese prison camps during the war, followed Vinh Quy to the mike to declare his support, both for the new Vietnam and for war resisters. Pat Simon, the coordinator of Gold Star Parents for Amnesty, whose only son was killed in Vietnam combat nine years ago, also declared her support.

"Some of our leaders tell us that some of our sons might be alive if you had gone to take their place," Simon told the war resisters. "But you know and I know that our sons would be alive if our government had listened to what the resisters were saying and had stopped the war."

The main work of the conference was to show Carter and the American people that the amnesty movement would not stop its efforts in the face of the new president's token pardon of draft resisters. Joe Jones, the draft resister delegate from Vancouver, British Columbia, read the following statement of unity to reporters Sunday afternoon.

*"This conference believes that President Jimmy Carter's 'draft resisters only' pardon excludes veterans with less than honorable discharges, military deserters and civilian war resisters. Unlike the majority of draft resisters, a disproportionate number of deserters and veterans are poor, oppressed and minority people. The pardon therefore discriminates on the basis of class and race, despite Carter's campaign promises to the disadvantaged in the U.S.*

*"Whereas draft resisters, vets, deserters and civilian resisters all opposed or were victimized by*

*the same unjust war, but only draft resisters have been pardoned, be it resolved that draft resisters will use their new mobility to continue the fight for universal and unconditional amnesty for all war resisters and war victims, including the immediate upgrading to Honorable of all discharges, and a single-type military discharge for the future."*

After reading the statement, Jones passed the microphone to black Vietnam veteran Joe Certaine, of the Veterans' Action Committee in Philadelphia, who detailed plans for a National Vigil for Veterans Rights in Washington DC, February 1-10, through which the mood of the conference will be conveyed directly to President Carter.

Speaker after speaker throughout the conference attacked the racism inherent in the limited pardon, as well as in the military itself. Tom Wynn, director of the National Association of Black Veterans, based in Milwaukee, issued a statement saying: "There was no justice in a Military Justice system that awarded Blacks one-third of the adverse discharges, most of which were Administratively processed and without trials, hearings or counsel.

"Over 300,000 Black youth were returned to their communities with dishonor and without benefits as a result of unjust laws and racism. Today they are the unemployed, the incarcerated. Black soldiers on the front lines of Vietnam were used as cannon fodder; Black veterans on the home front are the victims of the Vietnam war."

Carter "has indicated there will probably be some kind of case-by-case review for deserters -- with more bad discharges, no doubt," said Gerry Condon, who leads the Amnesty for Vets organization in San Francisco. "But Dishonorable Discharges and Bad Conduct Discharges will not even be reviewed." He said that "soldiers who resist in the most direct and effective manner are court-martialed," but "Jimmy Carter, Charles Kirbo and the Pentagon would have us believe that all people with DD's and BCD's are murderers, rapists, criminals. It just isn't so."

Condon said the inherent injustice of the discharge system points to the need for a single-type military discharge for the future, and honorable discharges for all Vietnam-era vets. He admitted, however, that it would be a tough battle. "The military is the cutting edge of U.S. imperialism. And resistance in the military is the cutting edge of American resistance to the unjust wars of tomorrow -- be they in Western Europe, Southern Africa, Mexico, Korea or Detroit."

The ultimate irony of the pardon proclaimed by Carter, according to the joint statement from exile delegates in Sweden and France, is that the new president's cabinet is filled with architects of the Vietnam war. For instance, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, who served as MacNamara's Deputy Secretary of Defense under Johnson, now says the war "was a mistake," their statement said. "We don't believe it was a mistake, but if he does, why do we have to pay for it?"

Bruce Beyer, who was convicted in 1969 of assaulting federal officers who attacked him and a friend in a church sanctuary where they sat in refusal of the draft, called for support of all who are accused of "violent crimes" in opposition to the war.

continued on page 6 . . . .

SUPREME COURT FURTHER WEAKENS SUSPECTS'  
FIFTH AMENDMENT RIGHTS

NEW YORK (LNS)--In yet another broadening of law enforcement powers, the United States Supreme Court ruled January 26 to limit suspects' protection against self-incrimination. The decision is consistent with earlier rulings by the Berger court which have made evidence admissible even when it is gained through the violation of constitutional rights, for example illegal searches or entrapment.

In its landmark 1966 Miranda decision, the Supreme Court ruled that police must inform arrested people of their rights to remain silent and to have a lawyer. However, the present ruling attacks the Miranda decision broadside by limiting the conditions under which it can be used. The Berger court stated that the Miranda decision does not apply to people who have gone "voluntarily" to a police station and who are not under arrest.

The state of Oregon had asked the Supreme Court to review a ruling in which an Oregon court had ruled that a person convicted of burglary should have been informed of his rights even though he was not under arrest when he confessed.

However, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on the case without hearing any arguments on the issues. In his dissenting opinion, Justice Stevens said that "the issues of this case are too important to be decided summarily (without hearing oral arguments.)"

In the Oregon case, the defendant was a parolee who, according to the police officer involved, came voluntarily for questioning. He was told that he was suspected in a burglary, and that his fingerprints had been found on the scene. This was a lie, however, designed to force a confession.

The suspect then admitted his guilt; whereupon the police officer read the suspect his Miranda rights and proceeded to tape the suspect's statement.

The Oregon court ruled that the man's statements were inadmissible because the interrogation had taken place in a "coercive environment"--especially since the defendant was on parole and was being questioned behind the closed doors of the state patrol's offices.

"The open question was 'do you have to give Miranda rights in a non-custodial but coercive situation?'" commented Jesse Berman, a New York criminal lawyer.

"Now the cops will know there's one more thing they can do," said Berman. "It's one more chipping away to let the cops say, 'we didn't know if we were going to book him or not--we just asked him to come down. It was only after he told us that we decided to book him.'"

"It also encourages cops not to give the warnings," Berman continued. "The idea is, the person shouldn't involuntarily incriminate themselves; they should know their rights."

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FEDERAL COURT RULES AGAINST WILMINGTON 10,  
NORTH CAROLINA CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

NEW YORK (LNS)--A North Carolina judge has refused to accept the retraction of testimony by the government's sole "eyewitness" against the Wilmington 10. The ten civil rights activists were convicted on charges of arson and conspiracy in 1972 for protests in Wilmington, North Carolina a year earlier.

Allen Hall, the state's witness, admitted in the fall of 1975 that he had been coerced by the state prosecution and a federal law enforcement agent into fabricating his entire testimony. Defense lawyers immediately filed a motion in court demanding the dismissal of charges against the ten, or a retrial.

But the January ruling by U.S. magistrate Logan Howell said that Hall's statement would not be accepted by the federal courts as part of the appeal process at this time. He insisted that the recantation must first be considered by the state courts. Yet, the man who will represent the state of North Carolina in this process, District Attorney Allen Cobb, has been named by Hall as one of the officials who coerced him to lie in the 1972 trial. "We can't possibly get a fair hearing under these circumstances," said defense committee spokesperson Imani Kazana.

In the judge's ruling he also denied bail for the Wilmington 10, who have been in prison for a year. They are imprisoned on sentences ranging from 29 to 34 years each.

The civil rights demonstrations that led to their arrests began in 1971, with a demand that a memorial service for Martin Luther King be allowed at a Wilmington high school. Violence broke out after police and members of the Ku Klux Klan attacked protesters. In the following weeks, two black teenagers and a member of the Klan were killed by gunfire, and several homes and stores were burned. Shortly afterwards, the ten were arrested. They include Ben Chavis--a well-known civil rights activist--eight black men, most of them high school students, and a white woman who was a Vista worker at the time. The conviction against the Wilmington 10 is still in the process of appeals.

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For more information contact the Wilmington 10 Defense Committee, 1851 9th Street N.W., Suite 104, Washington, D.C. 20001.

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ARMY POLISHES A ROTTEN APPLE

NEW YORK (WIN/LNS)--"So far you have created a desire for an apple . . . You must polish this apple so brightly that the prospect will say, 'That is the only apple that will satisfy me.'"--So reads a manual for army recruiters.

The manual instructs its salespeople to "lull the prospect into a false sense of security" and then "hit him with your sales story and drive hard for a decision . . ."

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(See graphics for photo to go with this story)

#### CHICAGO COALITION LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO HALT REMOVAL OF POOR FROM 11-SQUARE MILE AREA IN THE CITY

NEW YORK (LNS)--A four-year effort by residents of the poor sections of Chicago to prevent the city's attempt to move them out of their neighborhoods is building up steam.

The wide-scale removal, delineated in the "Chicago 21 Plan," is part of a program launched by city officials and corporations for moving the urban poor and minorities out of the city and redeveloping it for white middle class occupants by the 21st century.

#### Plan For Year 2000

The Chicago 21 Plan covers 11 square miles of downtown Chicago and surrounding area. Announced by Mayor Daley in 1973, it is spearheaded by several organizations of businessmen: the Chicago Central Area Committee, the Chicago 21 Corporation and the State Street Council (composed of 90% of merchants in a several-block area whose total earnings come to about \$600 million annually). Their goal is to make the central city "secure and attractive" in order to attract middle and upper class families into the area, a move they feel will shore up their financial and political base in Chicago.

The plan details changes for every neighborhood in the area. In many neighborhoods the plan is already being implemented, with cutbacks in services such as schools, hospitals, and garbage collections, and with a build-up of police forces. Tenants in some housing projects are now forced to carry photo ID cards to get in and out.

The Chicago 21 Plan also blueprints the construction of new neighborhoods, such as one to be called "Dearborn Park" in the South Loop area. Dearborn Park will be an entirely walled-in city with only one entrance. Prospective residents will be screened according to certain "community living qualifications," in order to move into the condominiums that will cost from \$45,000 - 70,000 each.

#### "Stop the 21 Plan" Campaign

In recent months, a city-wide coalition has launched a campaign to "Stop the Chicago 21 Plan." The plan's opponents picketed a luncheon for members of the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council in December, urging citizens to "resist the attempt to make Chicago in the 21st century a haven for the upper and middle classes."

Meanwhile, inside, members of the Planning Council elected new officers for their organization, among these representatives of Commonwealth Edison and several banks. Their main topic of discussion was the possibility of obtaining federal funds for the 21 Plan.

Earlier, in November, over three hundred people had attended a People's Tribunal on the plan. One woman discussed the terminology of the 21 Plan--"Urbanization, urban renewal, slum, blighted, rehabilitation, revitalization, renovation, condemnation--I now realize what all these words mean," she concluded. "They all mean 'Get rid of the poor.'"

Another woman testified, "In the last 16 years I have moved 23 times. I'm fighting my tenth eviction. Four of the buildings have been burned. Four of them have been replaced by gas stations; (another by) a House of Pancakes; and one building had eleven rooms and was converted into a three-apartment building."

Many testified that the Chicago 21 Corporation is choosing to remove the poor from their neighborhoods, rather than to assist in building up these areas. The "master plan" involves two strategies, they charge: the destruction of low-income housing, and severe cutbacks of social services in the affected areas. One school teacher testified at the Tribunal. "This process of overcrowding the schools and denial of funds, is part of the conspiracy that's been alluded to here, over and over."

Many of the speakers represented Puerto Rican, Black and Mexican neighborhood organizations. One man from the predominantly Mexican neighborhood of Pilson explained, "We came to the U.S., to places like Chicago, looking for work and homes, because multinational corporations have caused the economic and political conditions that make it impossible for Mexicans to live healthy lives (in Mexico)." He stressed that during World War II and the economic boom of the 50's and 60's, many Mexicans were encouraged to come to work in large American cities. "But at present the U.S. economy is in crisis . . . (So) today deportations increase and attempts to render us powerless intensify. We see the Plan 21 as such an attempt."

"It is imperative that we realize that mere individuals do not destroy neighborhoods," another speaker stressed. "The destruction of neighborhoods is consciously planned and executed, even to the extreme of burning people out."

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"ROOTS OF CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE SOUTH"

NEW YORK (LNS)--"I want to draw a picture of the working class of the South a little bit different from the familiar one, which is Southerners as victims, Southerners as helpless," said activist Ken Lawrence at a talk on labor history. The text of his talk has recently been published in an illustrated pamphlet called "The Roots of Class Struggle in the South."

Lawrence traces the tumultuous history of southern workers' struggles from before the civil war, illustrating the central role of black working people in the development of the working class in this country.

The pamphlet also traces workers' struggles in the reconstruction period, with a critical look at the early formation of the Knights of Labor, and later the American Federation of Labor and the CIO.

"The Roots of Class Struggle" is available from New England Free Press, 60 Union Square, Somerville, Mass. 02143.

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(See graphics.)

NEWSPAPER MAGNATE'S NEW YORK BUYS:  
LATEST IN MEDIA CONSOLIDATION;  
VOICE WORKERS START UNION DRIVE

NEW YORK (LNS) -- When Rupert Murdoch's purchase of the New York Post, New York magazine, the Village Voice and New West magazine became front page news in mid-January, the event was "explained" by an "inside look" at socialites and financiers tapping martini glasses with East Coast publishing powers.

Meet Rupert Murdoch, the 45 year old Australian newspaper heir, owner of over 80 newspapers and a dozen magazines in Australia, Great Britain and the U.S. and now of three New York City publications with a combined circulation of more than 1,037,000. Meet his (losing) opponent in the battle for control of New York magazine, the Village Voice, and New West magazine -- all subsidiaries of the New York Magazine Company: Clay Felker.

And Carter Burden, "heir to one of the city's classier fortunes", the young socialite who, vacationing in Sun Valley, sold his 23.8% stock in New York Magazine Company to give Murdoch the controlling 51%. Not to mention Newsweek and Washington Post publisher Kathryn Graham who entered a rival bid for Felker's group of publications. Or Burden's lawyer, Peter Tufo (who by the way is a "steady beau of Lee Radziwill" -- Newsweek). Or Ben Sonnenberg, "the elegant art collector and public relations man" who introduced Felker "to some of the better things -- and better names -- in New York life." (Newsweek)

Newsweek pictured Murdoch and Felker a now-familiar figure in New York City's fiscal crisis, investment banker Felix Rohatyn, on a sun deck in Long Island's plush Hamptons. The point of it all being how a big barracuda got eaten by a bigger and slyer shark when caught unawares on the waters of high finance.

Who rubs shoulders with who in the whole affair is partially illuminating. But the story is also the older and less glamorous one of centralization and consolidation of the media, and of publishing workers' response to that process -- for instance the Village Voice employees' decision to organize into a union.

#### Media Consolidation

The coup that put three major publications in a city of eight million into one man's hands in the space of six weeks is only a dramatic version of what has been happening gradually over the course of the century. In newspaper publishing, the consolidation of independent dailies into chains (two or more papers, usually in different cities, owned or controlled by the same person or group) looks like this:

In 1910, a time known for national newspaper giants like Hearst and Scripps, 3% of the existing U.S. dailies were chain-owned. By 1968, 47% of all daily U.S. papers were chain-owned; by 1974, 54.9%. And by 1990, if the current trend continues, it's been estimated that all dailies in the U.S. will be chain-owned.

Publishing chains and broadcast networks are only one form of media consolidation. In newspaper publishing, one of the largest U.S. manufacturing industries, joint operating agreements in more than 20 cities permit separately owned newspapers in the same city to

combine operations such as printing and ads -- and sometimes news and editorial functions.

Critics maintain that other competitors are squeezed out by the strength of combined operations. Pooling of operations, they say, gives joint operations added commercial clout, and diminishes their independence.

A third source of media consolidation is cross-media ownership, in which two or more outlets in the same city but in different media are owned by the same person or group. By the close of the 1960's, a single owner controlled at least one TV station and one newspaper in 24 of the largest 50 cities.

Cross ownership of newspaper and broadcast stations was banned by the FCC in 1975. But Charles Firestone, a Washington D.C. lawyer who represents citizen groups in media monopoly suits, explains that the FCC -- "a captive of the industry it regulates" -- "grandfathered" the rule. That is, it allowed the existing cross-owners to keep their properties except in cities where they maintained a complete monopoly. "So they broke up the 16 smallest markets where there's only one newspaper, say, and one television. But in 72 medium sized and larger cities, where there's extreme concentration and control, they immunized the existing broadcasters from challenge. It was fully conscious. They knew every cross owner in the country."

The media is further consolidated, along with corporate power in general, when companies not primarily in the communications business own or are owned by mass-media outlets. Besides its TV network, the CBS conglomerate owns radio and TV stations, a record company, a publishing house, Creative Playthings, and Steinway pianos.

RCA is able to help control what the public knows and thinks about its operations -- which include RCA records, Hertz car rentals, Banquet frozen foods, Coronet carpets and Cushman and Wakefield real estate -- through ownership of NBC and a number of radio and TV stations.

With mass-communications outlets controlled by a small class of people with the economic means to own such high investment operations, even different ownership does not assure that newspapers, magazines, radio and TV programming provide a genuinely free flow of ideas. As Ben Bagdikian points out in The Information Machines, "in most cases when a newspaper owner sells his paper, he looks for a buyer who will perpetuate the same political values."

"When the Du Pont interests speculated on selling their monopoly newspapers in Wilmington, Delaware, the leading suggestion was 'Outright sale to an outside newspaper organization whose political and economic views closely parallel those of the present ownership.'"

Defendants of these patterns of media ownership like to minimize the relationship between who owns a newspaper and what its editorial policy is, saying that editors often maintain autonomy. But journalists often say that, like trustees of a college, the owner need not intervene on a daily basis in order to maintain control of an operation. Once the owner has chosen the top editors, reporters soon learn what stories they can expect to escape the editors'

blue pencils.

### Village Voice Employees Seeking to Unionize

In Murdoch's case, New York magazine and the New York Post have already been assigned new editors. And Murdoch tried to do the same thing at the Village Voice. As Joel Burger, a member of the Voice's advertising sales staff explained, Murdoch promised, upon taking control, to maintain the "editorial integrity" of the paper, but immediately attempted to bring in an outsider as editor-in-chief over the present editors. Murdoch bought the paper on a Friday, Burger explains, and by Sunday 100 Voice employees were meeting to call for unionization with District 65, Distributive Workers of America. Over 90% of the Voice's paid employees signed union cards.

"It was the fourth time the Voice had been bought and sold in its 21 year history," explained Burger.

Besides his reputation for exploiting sensationalistic sex and murder stories for the big profits they bring, Murdoch is known for staff management techniques such as appointing two people to every important job, giving them slightly different titles so that neither have a sense of job security.

Yet both Burger and Nat Hentoff, a Voice journalist active in the unionization drive, are quick to point out that it's not merely a question of personalities:

"Management fails to realize that people were never in love with Clay Felker, either -- we tolerated him," says Burger. "I think it's absurd," protested Hentoff, "to be outraged at individuals when what you're dealing with is an economic system."

About 100 Voice employees and supporters were out on the sidewalks in front of the office with an informational picket January 31, hoping to avoid a strike, but willing to begin one at the end of the week if the new management does not recognize the overwhelming sentiment for unionization.

Voice employees have tried to unionize three times before. But this time, as Hentoff explained, "the fact that they'd been acquired by a multinational corporation, weren't consulted, and their interests weren't considered...pushed people over the edge."

At New York magazine, when Murdoch took over, 57 staff members staged a walkout protesting their status, as one writer called it, as "lumps of meat...being bartered and traded around."

District 65 organizer Kitty Krupat, assessing the significance of Voice workers' demand for unionization, explained, "I think the myth that professionalism and unionism don't mix is rapidly dying as people in publishing see the ownership of their business become more and more remote...and that they have less and less direct control over the product they're producing -- as publishing and journalism become more and more a business and less and less an art or a commitment or a mission."

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### ASBESTOS COMPANIES SUED FOR WORKER'S DEATH

NEW YORK (LNS)--Emanuel Cohen, a Brooklyn sheet metal worker, died in May of 1976 at the age of 61 from peritoneal mesothelioma, a form of cancer of the stomach lining caused by exposure to asbestos. His widow, Dorothy Cohen, filed suit in late January against 17 major asbestos companies demanding \$3 million in damages.

Cohen charges that since 1929 all 17 companies had possessed medical and scientific data clearly indicating that asbestos was hazardous to health. "But prompted by pecuniary motives," the court papers said, "the defendants, individually and collectively, willfully and wantonly ignored and failed to act" on that data.

Not only were the dangers of asbestos kept secret from her husband, Cohen said, but the companies also did not recommend safe wearing apparel for handling the mineral, placed no warnings on asbestos containers and took no steps to adopt and enforce a safe method for handling asbestos.

Defendants in the case include the Johns-Manville Products corporation, Armstrong Cork, Combustion Engineering Inc. and the Owens-Corning Fiberglass Corporation. By way of defense, a spokesperson for the Johns-Manville corporation, (which employs 26,000 in 110 asbestos plants in the U.S. and Canada) said the industry had been placing warning signs on asbestos containers since a law requiring such notice was passed in 1972. He added that the industry has paid for most of the research on asbestos poisoning.

At the same time, however, the asbestos industry has tried to narrow the definition of asbestos in safety regulations, and omit a number of asbestos-like materials from strong regulatory restrictions.

Mesothelioma has thus far proved invariably fatal, usually within months of diagnosis. Dr. Irving Selikoff, an expert in the field, believes that because of past exposure to high levels of asbestos, as many as 70,000 workers may die of mesothelioma in the next four decades.

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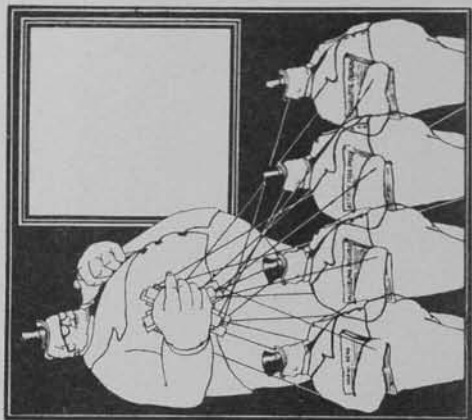
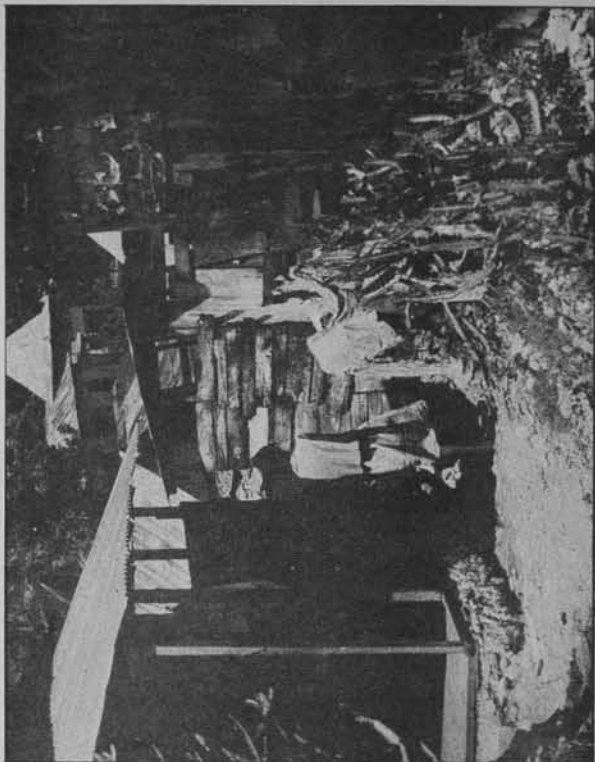
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AMNESTY CONFERENCE, continued from page 2.

"By pushing their definition of violence," Beyer said, "the government is attempting to put us on the defensive. They are trying to force us away from the real issues of murder and genocide committed against the people of Southeast Asia. By accepting their definition, we are forgetting who it was who carried out the massacres at Jackson State and Kent State. Remember that Bobby Hutton and Fred Hampton died from bullets fired by police agents in the hire of the government."

There was debate and struggle at the conference over whether the demands for amnesty should be delivered in a militant, anti-imperialist fashion, or in the form of an appeal to Jimmy Carter's Christianity and sense of humanity. Overwhelmingly, the militant posture was agreed on, as participants felt that only in this way could we sustain a movement loudly proclaiming the right of Americans to resist unjust wars and to support the right of all peoples to independence and freedom.

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TOP RIGHT: Photograph from Port-au-Prince,  
Haiti.

CREDIT: LNS Womens Graphics

SEE THE STORY IN THE LAST PACKET.

TOP LEFT: Viewing the Inaugural parade  
in Washington D.C. 1977.

CREDIT: Sophie Rivera/LNS

MIDDLE RIGHT: strings.

CREDIT: FIFTH ESTATE/LNS

TO GO WITH THE STORY ON PAGE FIVE.

BOTTOM LEFT: The Carter Inauguration in  
Washington D.C. 1977.

CREDIT: Sophie Rivera/LNS

BOTTOM RIGHT: Representatives of the  
Coalition to Stop the Chicago 21 Plan  
protest the destruction of low-income  
housing in front of the City Council.  
winter 1976.

CREDIT: KEEP STRONG/LNS

SEE THE STORY ON PAGE FOUR.