The Alliance for Labor and Community

ACTION!

Vol. II No. 1 Special Anniversary Issue October 25, 1976



John Monte,
Newly-Elected President
Local 722, S.E.I.U.
Wash. Hospital Center,
Leading the Victorious
Slate of Rank & File
Hospital Workers Who
Won Back Their Union on
September 29.

"No organization can function efficiently without a committee program that encourages the participation of the entire membership."

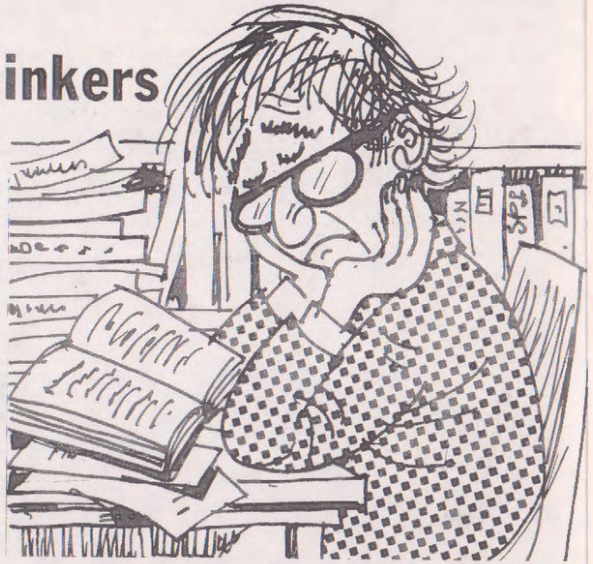


Pete Raffo,
One of the *Post 15*
Leading the March of
500 Trade Unionists &
Community Activists
on Oct. 2, 1976 -- to
Mark the First Anniversary of the Longest,
Most Important Strike
in the Washington area.

"The Post Owns the Media...But It Don't Own Us."

"One More Year... We're Still Here"!

Workers Question Thinkers



Immediately after hearing of the terrorist murders of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt, hundreds of area workers and leftists spontaneously volunteered to help organize the protests and memorial service. Local 6, the Alliance, July 4th Coalition, and the June 16 Coalition were among the many different groups which worked cooperatively with the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), the "thinktank" where the Chilean Marxist and his associate worked, to give as much dignity and political meaning as possible to the lives and deaths of our brother and sister.

However, in these hectic days, three actions by IPS people insulted Post strikers and their supporters. In a letter from Everett (Ray) Forsman, President of Local 6 and its Legal Defense Committee, the insults were described. They included the placing of an ad in the Post by IPS, in the face of a boycott the Post campaign which has been in effect since the strike started a year ago; two IPS members discussing the Post coverage in the presence of a leader of the strike; and the inconsiderate way that IPS people went on talking and drinking while a Post striker and a June 16 Coalition leader carried heavy tables back from St. Matthew's and into the IPS building.

Parts of the letter are reprinted here.

EXCERPTS FROM LETTER TO IPS BOARD/STAFF

..."What is the set of assumptions which lay behind this insensitivity?...It is our observation that...you(IPS) have operated on the assumption that the way change is going to happen within the U.S. is by feeding your ideas and proposals to the 'good people' within the government.

"...You still fail to recognize that it is the organized U.S. working class--the black and white workers who have the most to gain by standing up against the owners of industry, banks, media and government--who are the motive force for change within our borders...

"Again we extend to you our deepest sympathies on the loss of our sister and brother. We know that they died in the same struggle that we are in, and their example serves as a beacon for us to redouble our efforts to win our strike at the Post and in the process, educate all our sisters and brothers in the working class about the need to wage long and principled struggle against the big business interests which are out to break our unions, our solidarity, our spirit, our dignity and our lives."

Toward Solidarity,
(s) Everett Forsman

June 16 Coalition

On Monday, October 25, the local June 16 Coalition is sponsoring a massive demonstration in front of the White House at Noon. The Demonstration is to protest the U.S. supported racist Vorster regime in South Africa, and its scheme to herd the black people into 10 big "reservations" called bantustans, much as the U.S. Government did to the Indians in this country.

The Alliance has endorsed the demonstration, and will be providing warm refreshments and hospitality for those who participate afterwards.

If you would like more information, or a speaker/slide show about what is happening in Southern Africa for your union or community organization, call 829-6484 or 667-0226.

96.3 FM

WHUR NEWS THREATENED

t/81520
15—

A couple of weeks ago the General Manager at WHUR-FM hired two full-time permanent news reporters. So what?

WHUR-FM is Howard University's radio station. It has the biggest listening audience of any station which has news of interest to the Black Community in particular, and to Washington area working people in general.

Katharine Graham and the other rich owners of the Washington Post gave WHUR to Howard as a tax write-off and to train a few black workers in radio so they could be hired into their big white stations. But the Post and other rich corporation owners, and Howard's other big financial backer--the U.S. Government--are not about to allow Howard's radio station to present the news in an accurate and objective manner.

So...it is significant to the labor and community movements here that two people were hired in the WHUR news department without the recommendation and without any prior consultation with the News Department staff or Director.

Sources at WHUR say that the station management has been trying for 9 months to put an end to democracy in station affairs, to cutback coverage of labor and community struggles, and to prevent the coverage of anything from a working class/left point-of-view.

The radio workers union, AFTRA-AFL-CIO is protesting the undemocratic hiring. And a broader community mobilization is developing to save the News Department from this violation of their rights and the rights of all labor and community people here and internationally to have our struggles covered in an accurate and objective manner.

WHUR-FM (96.3)...6:15 pm Daily...*compared to*....NATIONAL NEWS MEDIA...24 Hours/Day

1. Over 40,000 protest U.S. imperialism at rally in Philadelphia on July 4, 1976.

"Counter-demonstrations in Philadelphia failed to materialize."
Washington Post, July 5, 1976

2. Students and workers in South Africa and Zimbabwe are fighting courageously for their rights and liberation.

Henry Kissinger is off on another round of shuttle diplomacy to try to prevent the violent racial war from developing in Rhodesia and So. Africa.
National Media, Summer 1976

3. Washington Post workers have families and are just like you and me. They have just demands. The Post management has refused to bargain with them.

The Pressmen are violent animals. Their demands are so extreme that their union must be busted so we can maintain freedom of the press.
Washington Post, since the beginning of the strike.

ALL OUT NOV. 8-9

Local 6 Legal Defense meets November 11 at 1226 Vermont at 8 PM. Be there. Volunteers needed for leafletting, jury project work, etc. Call 737-2810.

★ Local 12, at the Labor Dept., is in big fight with William Usery, their boss. See Next ACTION. Also, book review of ROOTS by Illona O'Sullivan next time.

★ October 29--"Salt of the Earth" shown by Magic Lantern to benefit Post 15. Bsmnt of Sumner School, 17th & M NW. 8 p.m. Bring a cushion and cash.

★ The Alliance and the June 16 Coalition will be sponsoring a joint Fund-Raiser in late November. Call Gabrielle Edgcomb 265-4134 if you can help.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM of the INTERNATIONAL PRINTING

and GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS UNION (AFL-CIO)

WHEREAS: For a number of years many local and national labor organizations have practiced discrimination against minorities because of sex, race, color, or creed, and

WHEREAS: This type of discrimination can work to the detriment of our International Union if practices by a subordinate local, and

WHEREAS: Stopping and/or preventing such discrimination can be beneficial to the labor movement as a whole and to oppressed workers everywhere, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: That this Convention of the International Printing and Graphic Communications Union go on record as supporting a standard Affirmative Action Program for all affiliated local unions and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That this Convention instructs the Board of Directors to direct the legal department to draw up proper language for a suitable Affirmative Action Program, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That this Program be made available to all subordinate local unions with instructions it should be incorporated in all future contracts and agreements.

editor's note: The Affirmative Action Program resolution was introduced by Local 6 at its International Covention in New York in mid-September. It passed by an "overwhelming majority" according to members of Local 6.

GEORGE COOK, ROBERT SHELTON, and LEONARD WILLIAMS salute the 500 marchers on October 2, 1976 as they reminded the Post management: "We're Still Here. We're Still Here."

by Ted Overman





by Martha Tabor

OCTOBER 2, 1976...

"Racism and sexism are the greatest weapons of the system which exploits us. Bringing in women and minorities as scabs is an example of the use of those weapons.

"Those who would take advantage of union-busting tactics to get jobs for themselves put themselves in a weaker position without the union, and they lose the solidarity of others in the struggle when they become scabs.

"If you can't have the right to a job, you can't have other rights.

"Equal rights do not include the right to exploit. Women must fight not for equality in a brutal system, but to change the structure and nature of that system. Women who have the right to exploit are not our sisters. Kate Graham is the enemy. And we are willing to fight!

"Katharine Graham is NOT my sister!"

SARA NELSON, from the Labor Task Force
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN (NOW)

Hospital Workers Reclaim 722

A slate of eleven Washington Hospital Center workers soundly trounced the incumbent leadership of SEIU Local #722 in an election Sept. 29 which was supervised by the U.S. Dept. of Labor.

John Monte, an X-ray Technician at the Hospital Center since it opened 17 years ago, received four times the number of votes as former Local 722 Pres. Alton Akinsegun. Newly elected Vice Pres. Michael Forte and Secretary-Treas. Clive Alexis, as well as new Executive Board members and Trustees, won by similar margins. Each of the new officers is an established fulltime employee at the Hospital Center, as the leadership of the striking Pressmen (Local #6) is at the Washington Post.

The former leadership of 722 won in an election last year which was full of violations of union democracy. For example, the International Representative who supported the "winning" slate, took the ballots home in her car and kept them overnight before they were counted!

Rank and file activists immediately demanded a Dept. of Labor investigation. When Labor officials called for a new election, SEIU quickly agreed, because of the strong evidence of ballot-tampering.

Monte and the other new leaders inherited several problems caused by the old officers. They had hired several inexperienced staff, who tried to organize several other health care institutions, and virtually ignored the development and maintenance of a strong Shop Steward system and grievance program--a union's frontline in contract maintenance.

The new officers are going to train a Shop Steward for every 25 employees, "so that Stewards in each department can hold monthly meetings and really get to the roots of the problems in their area," says Monte.

Local 722 is also gearing up to fight back against expected layoffs at the Hospital Center. Recently management announced that as a result of an "efficiency study it is eliminating positions in several departments."



LOCAL 722's VICTORIOUS SLATE AT THE WASHINGTON HOSPITAL CENTER. *Standing:* Vice Pres. Michael Forte, Marchel Smiley, Pres. John Monte, Larry Trimmer, Secretary-Treasurer Clive Alexis. *Seated:* Alicia Coles, Julie McCall, Brenda Buckrham. *Below:* Dorothy Colvin, Brenda West, Aaron Anderson.







NEW JUDGE, TRIAL DATE

* Judge Sylvia Bacon has been assigned the trial of the Post 15. The trial date will be in early December.

* On Monday, November 8 (and perhaps the next day) Judge Bacon will hear several important defense motions. Superior Court, Building A, at 5th an G Sts. NW should be packed. 9 o'clock.

* November 9th Alliance meeting will discuss the Post strike and the Alliance's work in it. A "Discussion Paper" has been reproduced, and will be used to start our meeting. You can get a copy at this Alliance meeting, or by calling Fred Solowey, 737-2810.

* Local 6 representatives got the Central Labor Council to endorse Jo Butler, Statehood Party, for City Council. The first time Statehood has received labor's endorsement.

Editorial

ACTION!... Lessons and Memories

October 13, 1975

We printed 3000 copies of our first issue. It reported on the Alliance organizing at the Unemployment Office, the organizing strike at Neisners, and a full page story (and a Peg Averill cartoon) on the Union-Busting strategy of the Post management.

Shortly after picking up the ACTION from the printers, two of us drove down to the Post and gave a copy to one of the strikers on the picketline. He read it. Then he gave it to another striker. She read it and said, "Hey, look at this!" Soon a bunch of sisters and brothers from the different unions gathered around. It was cold and people bunched up to read the one copy.

Finally one of the strikers asked if we had any more. "We've got 3,000." We gave them 2000 and kept the rest to give out to Alliance members for distribution in their own Unions and community organizations.

The next day, Gene O'Sullican from Local 6 called. "The Union wants at least 40,000 copies of ACTION." We told them that would be fine, but they would have to cover the printing costs, and all the news about our unemployment work and the organizing strike at Neisner's had to be included. So the first issue ran 43,000.

Local 6-Alliance Cooperate

Since last December, ACTION has been printed by Local 6. Burt Seivers and now Bobo Thompson do the printing. Often they run off extra copies for distribution on the picketline and at places where pressmen and their wives speak.

Presently our distribution includes about 20 regular drop points. Our mailing list is up to 625--about half D. C. residents and the rest in the suburbs. Sixty percent are trade unionists, mainly Local 6 members and other Post strikers.

Two Prototypes Planned

Three weeks ago, our editorial committee began our "Introduction to Workers' Jornalism" program. Sixteen people meet regularly on Saturday morning for breakfast and discussion. We are working toward a January issue of a 16-24 page tabloid paper for working people in the Washington area.

We will repeat the program in the Spring and put out a second prototype. Based on these experiences, the Alliance will then be able to determine how we can proceed to our aim of a weekly ACTION reaching at least 50,000 workers' homes--people in unions and people who should be.

Lessons of NEWSWORKS

It is significant that NEWSWORKS, Washington's latest 'alternative' newspaper which began production early last Spring with high hopes, folded last week. We must learn from the successes and mistakes of our sisters and brothers at NEWSWORKS and other papers which failed here.

One lesson is that a paper needs to be part of an organization with a long-range strategy, and that organization needs to reflect the interests of either the working class or the rich owning class. NEWSWORKS was aimed toward a young, professional, hip reader. It represented the interest of no particular class. Despite some good investigative reporting, it was not rooted in any organization.

The rich owners of the multi-national corporations have their organizations, such as the American Newspaper Publishers Association. They have their newspapers, such as the Post and the Star here.

The working class has some organizations here, of which the Alliance is one. But our class lacks a newspaper here.

One Year...We're Still Here...And Growing

As we marched around the Post fortress on October 2nd, in front of the frightened management and scabs peeking out of the windows, we yelled: WE'RE STILL HERE. And we are growing in numbers and organizational discipline.

PLEDGE CARD

Name: _____ *Phone:* _____ _____
(home) *(work)*

Address: _____ *Employer:* _____

_____

_____ *Union:* _____
(zip code)

PLEDGE PER MONTH (Check one): $1____ $2____ $5____ $10____ $15____ $_____
(other)

ACTION! is the newspaper of the Alliance for Labor and Community Action, an organization of employed and unemployed workers in the Washington area. We meet every other Tuesday evening at the First Congregational Church, 10th and G Sts. N.W. If you have to get a babysitter, let the Chairperson at the meeting know, and the Alliance will pay for your babysitter. Our next two meetings are at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 26 and Tuesday, Nov. 9.

ACTION!
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