

the press

## New York Times Gloats Over Hopeless Trade Union Strike Wave

NEW YORK, July 19 (IPS)—As part of a coordinated attack on the North American working class, the CIA-controlled press is attempting to open up a critical second front. With more than 600 strikes now in progress around the country, papers like the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, as well as the national broadcast media, have begun to talk of a “growing strike wave” and “serious labor unrest.” Their intention is to portray these desperate and hopeless provoked strikes as the method of working-class struggle in this period—a period in which no trade union, purely economic struggle has a chance of winning anything but Brazilianization. With talk of “whopping demands for wage increases” and an “escalating pattern of settlements,” the press is trying to encourage other nonpolitical and thus readily smashed strikes—in conscious collaboration with Rockefeller’s attempt to gut the American industrial and municipal sectors.

### The Nature of The Strike Wave

Developments at Framingham (Mass.) GM show the real character of this so-called strike wave. As with almost every one of the 600 strikes now occurring, Framingham is being set up by blatant provocation. Brutal speed-up and the total collapse of the union grievance machinery backed the men into a corner, enabling the UAW bloodsuckers to get strike authorization. Workers who can’t handle the pace are given disciplinary layoffs and told to try again in a month. Workers know that they will be crushed if they strike, that they will be locked out; yet they will probably follow the leadership out.

### Cost-Push Inflation?

The *New York Times* would have people believe that the strikes are “spontaneously” erupting around the issue of inflation, around wage demands, rather than as the desperate attempt of workers to resist Brazilianization. The *Times* labor experts give their

analysis of the “strike wave” in an article entitled “Inflation-Weary Unions Pursue Cost of Living Increases.” The current rash of strikes, according to the *Times*, is the response of the trade unions to the inability of the Nixon administration to control inflation; the logical outgrowth of the April 30 expiration of wage-price controls. This analysis characterizes articles appearing in papers in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Seattle as well.

The *Times* naturally omits the fact that the strike wave has been consciously set up by Rockefeller. Instead, the *Times* portrays the continental assault on the construction industry, an assault that has already produced massive layoffs and forced lockouts around the country, as mere economic battles between the unions and contractors.

### Contracts For Slavery

The *Times* in various articles and in a feature of July 18 labels recent slave wage settlements as “victories.” Workers are now getting wage increases of 10 per cent a year, much more than the 5.5 per cent guideline of the defunct pay board. The current actual rate of inflation is in excess of 20 per cent; the fraudulent rate determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics is pegged as high as 12 per cent.

The *Times* is hiding the fact that the object of all economic struggles—the contract—is now utterly worthless. In this period, a contract is only an instrument with which to further the process of Brazilianization. Should the contract negotiated through the “collective bargaining” process get in the way of Rockefeller’s game-plan, it is simply discarded.

The wage level of the Brazilianized working class of this continent has already been set. It has nothing to do with the wage figures being retailed by the CIA press, the 10 per cent increases with fringe benefits and a COL clause. It will hover around \$60 a week, the below-subsistence pittance of millions of unemployed.