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WORKING CLASS COMMUNITY OF INFORMAL RESISTANCE: A
THEORETICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF BROOKLYN LONGSHOREMEN ON
THE GUARANTEED ANNUAL INCOME

City University of New York

PH.D. 1981

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WORKING CLASS COMMUNITY OF INFORMAL RESISTANCE:
A THEORETICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF BROOKLYN LONGSHOREMEN
ON THE GUARANTEED ANNUAL INCOME

by

William DiFazio

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The City
University of New York.

1981

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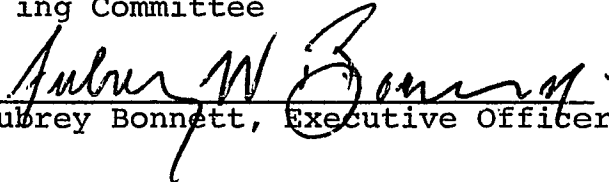
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George Fischer, Chair of Examining Committee

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Abstract

WORKING CLASS COMMUNITY OF INFORMAL RESISTANCE:
A THEORETICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF BROOKLYN LONGSHOREMEN
ON THE GUARANTEED ANNUAL INCOME

by

Willaim DiFazio

Adviser: Professor George Fischer

This study describes changes that occur in the daily life of workers when they are separated from the workplace. The study explores how Brooklyn longshoremen on the Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI) maintain working class community.

The GAI enables longshoremen with high seniority who have been displaced from full-time work because of automation to work rarely and yet receive a full annual salary. These senior longshoremen whom I have studied receive income without the obligation to work.

This study demonstrates that longshoremen and workers in general can better be understood in terms of the dialectic of resistance and accommodation or in the same vein of informal versus formal resistance. For these senior longshoremen the GAI in place of work does not lead to apathy or degradation as social scientists expect but to the transformation of everyday community from workplace to its fringe in the hiring hall or beyond the workplace to the neighborhood.

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This study would have never been possible without my father, who through a lifetime of struggle and hard work has maintained his humanity and class pride. I am also deeply indebted to my grandfather, John DiFazio, and my uncles, Leornard DiFazio, Dominic Mannino and Larry Scelta. This study is dedicated to these men.

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Chapter One

THEORY AND RESEARCH ON THE WORKING CLASS AND SOCIAL THEORY

I. The Main Theoretical Problem

This is a study of a group of workers who receive income without the obligation to work. Most people who receive income without the obligation to work do so through unemployment benefits, welfare or social security. And they do so with a loss of income and status. The community of workers I am studying differs significantly. My study deals with senior Brooklyn longshoremen on the Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI). Hence they receive income without the obligation to work, but do not suffer the subsequent loss of income and status.

I am interested in an unusual situation. A major theoretical problem for this study is: how do these longshoremen redefine their own biographies in view of their independence from both the hierarchical relations of the workplace and the technical operations of work? Specifically, what do such workers do as they become involved in the self-creative structuring of their own lives? Theoretically, what does their unusual situation suggest about the everyday life of today's working people in the United States? And by extrapolation about class and work and family under advanced capitalism?

Empirically, the purpose of this study is to examine how the implications of this unusual situation affect the way these men relate to each other, to the union (International Longshoremen's Association, Local 1814), and to general problems of social class, social change and daily life. In particular, I want to weigh and perhaps modify some key assumptions that social scientists make in these realms.

A key assumption that this study will attempt to modify is the contention that the working class is no longer a source of social change in advanced capitalist society. I argue that the conclusion of Marxist and non-Marxist social scientists that that the working class is politically dead is only possible if we ignore the everyday life of working people.

It is my view that the dynamism of the working class can only be understood in terms of both its resistance and its collaboration with the forces of advanced capitalism. This study is an attempt to define and understand this dialectic of the working class, of resistance and accommodation.

Accommodation can either be voluntaristic or the result of direct force. Either by choice or coercion, accommodation here means "playing the game" by the formal organizational rules. In accommodation actors identify their own interests with system interests, whether they are met or

not. The sociology of Talcott Parsons is exemplary of a social world in which actors accommodate to system needs. For Parsons there is no human action outside of system governed action.

...a social system consists of a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the "optimization of gratification" and whose relation to their situations, including each other, is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols.¹

In this formal world of system governed action, authority is centralized and actors orient their actions to its rational rules and procedures. The formal world is the world of accommodation. It is thus that Robert K. Merton defines formal organization.

A formal, rationally organized social structure involves clearly defined patterns of activity in which ideally, every series of actions is functionally related to the purposes of the organization.²

By resistance I mean that unlike Parsons' actors, who must always play by the formal rules of the system, these active human participants can recreate their own rules and cease at least for the moment to reproduce the prevailing relations of a social system. At times, specifically, the workers I study resist both the shipping companies and the union, institutions that are often defined as opposing the needs of ordinary longshoremen. At such times of resistance, longshoremen cease to play the game and can take action against the formal structures which they clearly see as

opposed to their interests. This resistance is most often of an informal, fragile and intermittent nature.³ It has the potential to coalesce into more formal types of resistance. This study attempts to show the process of how informal resistance coalesces into more formal arrangements, such as the struggle for the Guaranteed Annual Wage, and the "eight week crisis."

On the level of institutional transformation, formal resistance is more like a form of accommodation. The parameters of resistance are arranged in terms of institutionalized rules. Thus formal resistance reproduces social relations to meet system needs, as opposed to the needs of working men. An example of this is collective bargaining by unions. Here bargaining occurs only when a contract runs out, in formal meetings in which the union bargains with management behind closed doors. The only input from the men occurs after the agreement has been reached, when they vote on it. Hence in collective bargaining as a form of formal resistance, it always maintains the hierarchy of the union and of management. It is a form of accommodation. Thus, formal versus informal resistance is in the same vein as the dialectic of accommodation and resistance. In this study, I treat the two dichotomies as roughly equivalent.

It is my contention that the dialectic of accommodation and resistance (or informal versus formal resistance) might best be analyzed by social scientists through an

exhaustive ethnographic study of the everyday activities of working class people. This study, in particular, is an ethnography of Brooklyn longshoremen on the GAI.

Here it becomes necessary to criticize Marxists as well as non-Marxists on their conceptions of work and social change. It is my hope that out of this critique will emerge an alternative theory, a theory of informal resistance, resistance that is grounded in the daily lives of ordinary working people. Specifically, the case of longshoremen is important because their interests have been represented by a conservative, authoritarian and violent union. As a result they have had to struggle periodically for their own self-interest on the informal level.

Social scientists assume that the economic aspects of work are paramount. Based on this assumption, they define work as little more than just "paid employment." As a rule, the central concern of the sociological study of work becomes the "profound personal and social aspects"⁴ of work.

In this prevailing view, work is centrally important to the patterning of human behavior in the modern world:

Working for a living is one of the basic activities in a man's life. By forcing him to come to grips with his environment, with his livelihood at stake, it confronts him with the actuality of his personal capacity to exercise judgement, to achieve concrete and specific results. It gives him a continuous account of his correspondence between outside reality and the inner perception of that reality, as well as an account of the accuracy of his appraisal of himself...in short, a man's work does not satisfy his material needs alone. In a very deep sense, it gives him a measure of his sanity.⁵

In American society, according to this view, the type of work performed confers status upon the worker and the worker's family.

In industrial America, the father's occupation has been the major determinant of status, which in turn has determined the families class standing, where they lived, where the children went to school, and with whom the family associated -- in short, the life styles and life chances of all the family members.⁶

Lastly, the workplace is also seen as an important focus for the individual to estimate his/her own worth.

Since modern man experiences himself both as a seller and as a commodity to be sold in the market, his self-esteem depends on conditions beyond his control. If he is successful he is valuable. If he is not, he is worthless.⁷

For social scientists, then, workers are dependent in two distinct ways. They not only depend upon those who own and control the means of production for economic survival, status and self-esteem but also the worker is dependent on his job for providing order in his daily life.

Social scientists thus assume that workers cannot structure their own lives.

Besides lending vitality to existence work helps establish the regularity of life, its basic rhythms and cyclical patterns of day, week, month and year. Without work, time patterns become confused.⁸

Charles Winick, for instance, has described a pathological condition of atonie as "a feeling of rootlessness, lifelessness and dissociation,"⁹ which develops when work is absent. The worker is unable to structure his world in a desirable way. Atonie makes the worker feel that his world is

unordered, chaotic and meaningless.

The basic assumptions of the social scientists who study work are the following: (1) the community life of workers is tied to the factory or the workplace; (2) if a worker doesn't work, he/she will lose not only his/her job but his/her identity as well; (3) to receive status as well as income a worker must work.

Although a worker's position in the world of work is subordinate to the owners and managers of the means of production and the work is often dangerous, monotonous and emotionally depressing, social scientists who tell us this also tell us the opposite: that the worker is dependent on his work for economic and psychological survival. In this way the job and the workplace are experienced by the worker as externally coercive phenomena which, at the same time, are necessary for his existence. The dependence of workers on the hierarchical relations in the workplace is treated as if it is an inevitable biological reality. By the same token, social scientists treat the management of workers on the job as a necessity which is, in the last result, for their own good.

The argument of social scientists, that a worker is dependent on work for material rewards, status, self-esteem, identity, etc., is valid only if these taken-for-granted assumptions apply to the social reality. Empirically as well as theoretically, this study intends to examine a

situation where these assumptions do not apply.

Social scientists also view the working class in terms of its more qualitative aspects. They have categorized the working class as conservative, authoritarian,¹⁰ and sexist.¹¹ The following statement by Paul Montagna summarizes the views of social scientists.

Working class people are seen as traditional, old fashioned, patriarchal, materialistic and superstitious. They like discipline, structure, strong leadership and they strive for stability and security. They are concerned with strength and ruggedness, espousing an eye for eye philosophy. They are radical on some economic issues and conservative on civil liberty issues. They are not well educated. Consequently, they are poor readers, poorly informed on major issues of the day, and suspicious of new ideas and "too much talk."¹²

Social scientists also view the working class as increasingly insignificant to the economy, politics and culture of the United States. This view has been most clearly put forth by Daniel Bell¹³ in his argument that the United States is a post-industrial society in which productive workers are no longer preeminent. In his view the United States is increasingly a service economy in which professional and technical workers are preeminent. The working class is no longer viewed as an agency of change but as a class in decline whose glory is in the past.

Yet if one takes the industrial worker as the instrument of the future, or...the factory worker as the symbol of the proletariat then this vision is warped. For the paradoxical fact is that as one goes along the trajectory of industrialization -- the increasing replacement of men by machines -- one comes logically to the erosion of the industrial worker himself. In fact, by the end of the

century the proportion of factory workers may be as small as the proportion of farmers today; indeed, the entire area of blue-collar work may have diminished so greatly that the term will lose its sociological meaning as new categories, more appropriate to the divisions of the new labor force, are established. Instead of the industrial worker, we see the dominance of the professional and technical class in the labor force...¹⁴

The working class no longer has the political power that it held in the past. Where it once was politically active, it is now politically passive. It has been integrated into society and it is no longer a radical class "for itself." Instead, it tends to accommodate itself to the society and is better described as a collaborationist class, which is no longer involved in class struggle.

Labor has made its peace, though this peace has been bought at a relatively cheap cost: promises of nominal wage increases if the unions will stop striking and asking for greater concessions than are politically feasible. The policy of recent administrations has been one of managed inflation for the purpose of rewarding both labor and management and avoiding both unpredictable strikes and interference in the smooth operation of the society.¹⁵

These arguments are a reaffirmation of the "end of ideology" thesis of Bell¹⁶ and Lipset¹⁷ which reduces class struggle to contractual fights between union and management. In this view the working class no longer has any dynamic participation in modern industrial society. The working class is depicted as a contented spectator that has been well provided for by modern capitalism. It is my contention that longshoremen on the GAI are not just a contented group of spectators. If they are well provided for it is the

result of both great sacrifices and active struggle against the tendency of management to replace workers by machines.

Left social scientists have felt a need to explain in their analysis of advanced capitalist society why there hasn't been a proletariat revolution. They tend to agree with Gramsci that the objective conditions for revolution have been met and yet still there is no revolution. The blame for this historical situation has fallen upon the working class. Left social scientists still continually emphasize crisis, the contradictions of capital and revolution, unlike liberal social scientists. Left social scientists, like their liberal counterparts, have also written off the working class as a source of societal transformation. The arguments of left social scientists on the elimination of the working class from the revolutionary project take three forms.

The first way that the left eliminates the working class from revolutionary struggle is through an analysis that accepts the logic of Daniel Bell's "post-industrial" argument,¹⁸ a logic that removes the worker from any radical mission.

To the extent to which the machine becomes itself a system of mechanical tool and relations and thus extends far beyond the individual work process, it asserts its larger domination by reducing the personal autonomy of the laborer and integrating him with other professions which suffer and direct the technical ensemble. To be sure, the former professional autonomy of the laborer was rather his professional enslavement. But this specific mode of enslavement was at the same time the

source of his specific, professional power of negation -- the power to stop a process which threatened him with annihilation as a human being. Now the laborer is losing the professional autonomy which made him a member of a class set off from the other occupational groups because it embodied the refutation of the established society.¹⁹

Left social scientists seem to be in agreement with the arguments of mainstream social scientists.²⁰ They share the view that the working class has been integrated into the political system and that the labor movement and party politics have rendered the working class politically passive. This view is typified by Habermas in the following quotation in which he focuses on how the working class takes part in the legitimation process.

The expression "social welfare state-mass democracy"...tells us that the opposition to the system which emerged in the labor movement has been defused by regulated competition between political parties. Among other things, this has institutionalized oppositional roles, formalized and rendered permanent the process of legitimation, periodized variations in legitimation and canalized the withdrawal of legitimation in the form of changes of regime, and finally it has involved everyone²¹ in the legitimation process as voting citizens.

The second argument by left social scientists which eliminates the working class from the revolutionary struggle takes the form of emphasizing the structural contradictions of capitalism.²² The point of view of these social theorists is that there isn't any active historical subject. The working class is presented as politically passive. Its actions are the result of the "structure of the relations of production" and of "the contradictions of capital." This

view is typified in the following statement by Althusser.

And if by chance anyone proposes to reduce these relations of production to relations between men, i.e. human relations, he is violating Marx's thought, for so long as we apply a truly critical reading to some of his rare ambiguous formulations, Marx shows in the greatest depth that the relations of production (and political and ideological social relations) are irreducible to any anthropological inter-subjectivity -- since they only combine agents and objects in a specific structure of the distribution of relations, places and functions, occupied and supported by objects and agents of production.²³

In Althusser's and Balibar's Reading Capital, they explain the working class as subordinate to the structure of capital. This is clearly expressed by Balibar in his explanation of Marx's view of the subjectivity of the working class.

To designate these individuals he systematically used the term "Trager" which is most often translated into English as support. Men do not appear in the theory except in the form of supports for the connexions implied by the structure, and the forms of their individuality as determinate effects of the structure.²⁴

Poulantzas²⁵ and Althusser²⁶ have to some extent admitted that they have ignored the struggles of the working class. They have grudgingly pasted class struggles onto the structural components of their theory. But for all practical purposes, the everyday struggles of the working class remain outside of the "science of history."

The third method by which the working class is removed from the struggle for the transformation of advanced capitalist society is through the picture of the

worker as degraded. This view has been expressed by Braverman in his excellent study, Labor and Monopoly Capital.²⁷ The degradation of work caused the degraded worker. This degraded worker has successfully been controlled in the workplace through technological change and scientific management. The working class as Braverman states is "habituated" to the capitalist mode of production. Working class consciousness existed in a romanticized past but the working class is not capable of liberating itself from its degraded status in the present.

Braverman briefly disavowed this in the Summer 1976 issue of Monthly Review. In the following statement Braverman proclaims his deep faith in the revolutionary potential of the working class.

I have every confidence in the revolutionary potential of the working classes of the so-called developed capitalist countries. Capitalism will not over the long run, leave any choice to these classes but will force upon them the fulfillment of the task which they alone can perform.²⁸

Braverman's degraded workers seem too static, passive and overwhelmed by the dominant class to ever be a historical agency of change. The unsupported faith he avows is that in the future the contradictions of capitalism will dictate action by the working class. Braverman thus falls back on a Marxist structuralism that assumes that outside structures and outside forces will make a passive working class turn active.

A key question for this study is what is the working

class doing now? I disagree with the contention of left and mainstream social scientists that the working class is external to the dynamics of advanced capitalist society. The working class can not be written off nor should it be romanticized. We must realistically assess its strengths and its limitations.

Social scientists have often theorized at a distance from the everyday lives of ordinary working people. It has been my contention in the preceding exemplary survey that social scientists are focusing only on a portion of working class life. They have focused on "half of the picture," that is, on the hegemonic domination of the working class,²⁹ on accommodation. In this study I am attempting to get the "living picture" of the working class by focusing on them in their totality, by analyzing them in terms of their resistance and accommodation to the forces of advanced capitalist society.

In this study I am particularly critical of the left's notion of change. I believe that the left has been wrong in emphasizing a "big bang" theory of revolution. The left has been interested in either what the working class has done in the past or what the contradictions of capital will force them to do in the future, but not what they are doing in the present. It is my contention that there will be no big bang revolution but that there is a continuous revolutionary process and that this picture can be viewed

by social scientists only through an analysis of the everyday lives of ordinary working people, in the informal as well as the formal spheres of their lives. This analysis is only possible in terms of the dialectic of the working class, that is, in terms of its resistance and accommodation to the forces of capitalist society. As a result of this analysis I get a different picture, a picture of continuous resistance at the informal levels of human interaction, that is, outside of the formal organizational structures but always aimed at them.

The involvement of the working class can only be understood in terms of how they live their lives in both the workplace and in the neighborhood. This can only be understood through an analysis of the everyday lives of long-shoremen. I am in agreement with Alfred Schutz's definition of everyday life. Schutz stated:

"World of daily life" shall mean the intersubjective world which existed long before our birth, experienced and interpreted by others, our predecessors, as an organized world. Now it is given to our experience and interpretation. All interpretation of this world is based upon a stock of previous experiences of it, our own experiences and those handed down to us by our parents and teachers, which in the form of "knowledge at hand" function as a scheme of reference.

.
The world of everyday life is the scene and also the object of our actions and interactions. We have to dominate it and we have to change it in order to realize the purposes which we pursue within it among our fellow-men. Thus, we work and operate not only within but upon the world.³⁰

It is in terms of how the working class actually lives the

dialectic of accommodation and resistance that the notion of continuous informal resistance can be explicated. This cannot be accomplished through the fetishization of Marxist theory, which the left has been all too often guilty of. This study is an attempt at studying a particular group of working class men, Brooklyn longshoremen, in terms of how they live the dialectic of accommodation and resistance, of formal versus informal resistance.³¹ Both in terms of specific struggles such as the fight for the GAI, the "eight week crisis" and in their creation of community in the Hiring Hall and in their neighborhood.

II. Specific Theoretical Questions

In the context of the dialectic of accommodation and resistance, the theoretical questions specific to Brooklyn longshoremen on the GAI can be stated as follows: what are the sociological and organizational implications of an occupational situation when job related material issues are eliminated? What happens when the threat of income and job loss are no longer a factor? How is working class community life affected by the opposite situation?

This is a pilot study on the effects of such a reversal. This pilot study rests on the following assumptions: with the separation of income from work, I posit that the dependence of working class community life dissipates. It is with such a separation of income from work that the

potential arises for the worker to become independent from the hierarchical relations of the workplace. And it is with this independence that we can talk of consciousness in a radical sense, that is, that workers might conceivably control their own lives, might create their own institutions and might fulfill their own needs collectively. They might resist the forces of capitalism in the informal and formal world.

Fundamental questions for this study are not only how these workers spend their time, or how they feel about the union. Questions that deal with changes in worker autonomy or, conversely, subordination in the workplace on the one hand and on the other hand in the neighborhood are also important. Most of all, does the worker's relations to work and neighborhood take new forms?

The following shows the specific theoretical questions that I explore in terms of everyday, informal resistance and accommodation: (a) worker autonomy versus subordination, in (b) the workplace as well as the neighborhood.

1. Workplace: Autonomy

- (a) How do these longshoremen redefine their own biographies in relation to their independence from both the hierarchical relations of the workplace and the technical operations of work, that is, outside of the formal institutions of the workplace and of the union?

- (b) Will these workers, freed from the obligations of the workplace, be able to develop their critical sensibilities about worker-union-management relations?
- (c) Will they be willing and able to participate in union politics in innovative ways and be increasingly concerned with the issues of worker self-management?

2. Workplace: Subordination

- (a) Freed from the oppression of the workplace, will these longshoremen become complacent and timid in union politics?
- (b) Will these workers become less concerned with their own economic security and retirement?

3. Neighborhood Participation

- (a) Will these workers become actively concerned with issues relating to the family and to the local residential community?
- (b) Will these workers become actively involved in the development of autonomous worker institutions (e.g., maintenance of neighborhood firehouses, food cooperatives) in which the satisfaction of their own class specific needs are central?

4. Neighborhood Spectators

- (a) Will these workers fall prey to the manipulations of consumerism, mass media, spectator sports and gambling?

Together, of course, these questions point to a recurrent modern issue: alienation.

When I use the term alienation in this study, I do not mean to use it in the social psychological sense of a natural human condition. Instead, I use the term here in Marx's sense, as a historical condition of capitalism in which whole groups of men and women are separated from conscious control over their own productive activity in both the workplace and the neighborhood.

As opposed to social psychologists, alienation to Marx is not human nature but second nature.

What is second nature to the individual is accumulated and sedimented history. It is history so long unliberated -- history so long monotonously oppressive -- that it congeals. Second nature is not simply nature or history, but frozen history that surfaces as nature.³²

It is with this in mind that I intend to study Brooklyn longshoremen with high seniority who are on the Guaranteed Annual Income.

III. Group Studied: Longshoremen with Guaranteed Annual Income

The Guaranteed Annual Income enables longshoremen with high seniority to work rarely and yet to receive a full annual salary. Between 1,000 and 1,200 longshoremen receive income without the obligation to work. It is this group of workers I intend to study.

The GAI came about as a result of technological

changes within the maritime industry. With the containerization of cargo on a wide scale there was subsequent reduction of necessary manpower.³³ The International Longshoremen's Association fought for the GAI on the premise that, "the cost of technological changes shall not rest entirely upon the employees in the industry."³⁴

The GAI has been in effect since 1966. It originally guaranteed all longshoremen pay equivalent to 1,600 hours of work per year. In 1968 that was raised to the present level of 2,080 hours. Thus, as of 1976, all longshoremen have a guaranteed annual income of \$16,440 per year.

Thomas (Teddy) Gleason, the President of the International Longshoremen's Association AFL-CIO, said in his 1975 Report that:

The Guaranteed Annual Income feature of the collective bargaining agreement has again been included as a major contract item. As you know, The International Longshoremen's Association has pioneered this concept in the 1960's and even today it is rarely in labor management contracts. Few workers in any industry enjoy such job security. For Longshoremen it has become a permanent fixture.

What has it meant to longshore labor? Although there are variations from port to port reflecting traditional work patterns. It has meant that eligible longshoremen who report to the hiring hall and conform with local work regulations are guaranteed a living income. In the port of New York and New Jersey the guarantee covers 40 hours a week -- 52 weeks a year.

The employers are on a bed of roses, says Mr. Gleason, paying the same total labor bill with income and benefits up by double. As far as our men are concerned they now have a permanent income and there is no need for them to go on welfare because of automation. It puts the burden where it ought to be -- on the machine not the taxpayer.³⁵

The senior longshoremen are between forty-five and sixty years old. They are married and have grown children. They are proud grandparents. Almost all of them are Italian. Most of them started on the docks at sixteen or seventeen years of age before they could complete high school because their families needed the extra income to survive.

The thirty-five men I am studying all worked together for thirty to forty years. Most of them went on the guarantee at the same time when their pier closed. They all "badge" in and out in the hiring hall at the same IBM machine five days a week.

IV. Main Research Site: Longshoremen at the 60th Street

Hiring Hall

The specific group of men with high seniority that I am studying are able to receive a full day's wage without working. Because of stipulations within the contract, they must "badge" in at the 60th Street hiring hall in Brooklyn and be available for work on every workday. But an advantage of their seniority is that they can have first or last choice for an available job in their category.

Although they must work if there are not enough men with less seniority for the available jobs, this rarely occurs. The group of men that I am studying have only worked a few days in the last three years.

This group of men meet each morning at "Joes," a

luncheonette two blocks away from the hiring hall. They drink coffee and munch on buttered rolls, read the Daily News and talk sports and politics until the windows open at the hiring hall at 7:00 A.M. when they can badge in. They continue socializing until the shape-up is finished at 8:50 to 9:00. Then they badge out and leave, with the rest of the day to be disposed of as they see fit.

These men have been hardworking for thirty to forty years. At one time they would fight each other for jobs at the shape-up stand; now their major concern is to get out of the hiring hall as quickly as possible. Except for the days when the number of gangs needed to work the piers is high and they worry about the possibility of working, they are very sociable. They exchange tips on horses, play the numbers, talk about their grandchildren, compare Jimmy Carter to President Ford and talk about the latest Yankee acquisition.

In this way men meet five days a week at the Waterfront Commission hiring hall for two hours a day. This is the only interaction in the workplace they have. At one time these men worked forty to sixty hour weeks and the workplace was paramount in structuring their lives. The workplace is no longer paramount for this community of workers. This community of longshoremen is unusual in that these workers have an abundance of free time which they then structure themselves.

Specifically, in this study the hiring hall is central because it is in the hiring hall that these longshoremen appear as a community of workers. But the time spent outside of the hiring hall, in which these men freely structure their own activities, is equally critical. Hence my study puts the main stress on new, self-structuring activity as both the remaining link to the workplace and a substitute for wage labor.

V. Research Methods

The proposed research makes use of three well-established research methods. These are

(1) Participant observation: regular attendance at the hiring hall and participation in the activities of longshoremen outside the workplace.

(2) Life History Interviews with the longshoremen who are part of the specific occupational community that I am studying, plus some in-depth interviews with union officials.

(3) Gathering of archival materials: Local 1814 newspapers, recorded speeches of union officials, government studies, etc.

(1) Participant Observation

I have associated with longshoremen all of my life: besides my father, I have three uncles and a grandfather who were longshoremen in Brooklyn.

My first participation in longshoremen affairs

occurred in the 1954 wildcat strike. Both my father and uncle worked as longshoremen at the time. With them and my older brother and a cousin, I participated in my first strike and picketed management at the age of seven. At that age it was a great adventure and the complications of union politics eluded me.

Now, during my regular visits to the Local 1814 union hall and hiring hall I am accepted by the men as one of their own. I feel the same way, at least in terms of blood ties.

Since I have participated in the daily lives of longshoremen outside of the workplace in terms of family ties, this creates a possible methodological problem: being so close to the subject matter, I have often taken these interactions for granted. I am now continually involved in critically analyzing this one taken-for-granted activity, which is so crucial to this study.

(2) Life History Interviews

The group of thirty-five workers has been very willing to participate in these life history interviews. This type of interview is important because it is my only source for the workers to report their history of working on the Brooklyn docks as it exists for them both as part of and separate from the institutional history of the union.

Maud Russell's comprehensive history of the ILA, Men Along the Shore,³⁶ is a history of union leadership in which

the men themselves, the dockworkers, are extraneous. It is hoped that this study will be, in part, a corrective to Russell's work and provide a history of dockworkers from the bottom up instead of from the top down.

With union officials, in-depth interviews are important mainly in terms of being able to compare the union's (the official) version of "what's good for the men," with the men's version of "what's good for us." The union officials with whom I have had interaction have been very willing subjects for in-depth interviews.

(3) Archival Materials

Local 1814 has given me access to its files. It supplied me with a complete set of the union newspaper, The Brooklyn Longshoremen, press releases, statements, memorandums, etc. Some union officials have also supplied me with personal copies of materials from their own files. In sum, Local 1814 has been very helpful and cooperative in providing me with archival materials.

In summation, this is a study of a closeknit group of thirty-five senior Brooklyn longshoremen who receive income without the obligation to work. Empirically, I am studying how this unusual situation affects the daily lives of these men in the workplace and in their neighborhood. Theoretically, this constitutes a study of the dialectic, the reciprocal interaction, between everyday informal resistance and accommodation in both workplace and neighborhood.

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Chapter Two

THE HISTORY OF THE GUARANTEED ANNUAL INCOME AS CONTRADICTION: FORMAL HISTORY VERSUS INFORMAL RESISTANCE

We face no less than three quite distinct conceptions of the past of the GAI, its roots and its implications. The first comes from academic historians plus the union. The second and third conceptions, both much less well known, come from rank and file union members.

This chapter presents these three contrasting conceptions of the GAI. I have put most of my emphasis on the less well known conceptions from the rank and file. Most of all, I am concerned with the general contradiction that these three conceptions of the GAI's history bring out. In the terms I use here, this contradiction is between formal and informal resistance. The first two conceptions dwell on the formal, established kind of labor opposition to management. Only the third conception shifts the emphasis to the informal institutionalized opposition by rank and file workers themselves.¹

The history of longshoremen written by professional historians is the history of the International Longshoreman's Association.² In this account, written by academic historians, the struggle between workers and management occurs in the institutional framework of union versus

management in collective bargaining negotiations and in strikes. It is an account in which the longshoremen themselves play an insignificant part and almost always accommodate to the union that watches out for their welfare.

The history of the GAI is portrayed by these labor historians as the struggle of an often corrupt and disorganized union against a relatively organized shipping industry who, in their increasing attempts to maximize the efficiency of capital, have introduced automation through the containerization of cargo. The union along with a governmental agency designed the GAI to overcome the negative effects of containerization on the work of longshoremen. The GAI is portrayed as a protective strategy of the union to preserve the workforce in the face of rapid technological development.

Basically, the union agrees with the academic history of the GAI. The only contention about this history is on the topic of who within the union hierarchy should get the credit for designing and pushing through the GAI. Should it be "Teddy" Gleason? Should it be Anthony Scotto?

Although many of the longshoremen themselves agree with this conception, two other conceptions of this history of the GAI exist. These two other histories rely neither on the "factual" accounts of labor historians nor on the accounts of union leaders but on the longshoremen's own knowledge of the history of the GAI and on their actual

participation in its development. These two rank and file versions display most fully a contradiction - the dialectic of accommodation and resistance - which historians almost totally ignore.

The longshoremen's first (of formal versus informal resistance) common sense version of the development of the GAI is that the shipping companies formulated the guarantee as a peaceful method for introducing automation into the industry. These men believe that if automation was introduced and the surplus workers (workers displaced by automation) were fired, a violent rank and file struggle would occur that would severely damage both the union and the shipping companies. The GAI is a tactic by which the shipping industry can protect itself as management (owners) introduce "labor saving" technology to the waterfront.

In opposition to the labor historians' version of the GAI, here the longshoremen are not irrelevant. On the contrary, the threatened power of the men is seen to force the development of the GAI.

The men who believe that the GAI is a peaceful method for the introduction of automation also believe that this method has "backfired." The GAI has become too expensive to the industry and they believe that the shippers want to eliminate or severely curtail the Guarantee. These men believe that the GAI is doomed and hope that they will be retired before it is eliminated.

The longshoremen's other common sense version of the creation of the GAI is that it was formulated by the men: they were the driving force in its development and the union has taken credit for it. These men tend to be rank and file radicals who have continually and unsuccessfully mounted an opposition to the normal policies of the union.

In this version the longshoremen themselves have been the most active force in the design and implementation of the Guarantee. These men claim that they have been calling for a Guarantee since the late 1950's. Indeed, GAI was part of rank and file demands in their continuing opposition to the union. They claim that rank and filers "saw the writing on the wall" about what the threat of containerization would mean to the longshore workforce.

To examine these three conceptions, it is necessary to view the differences in content as formal versus informal common sense history, that is, the formal, official union's history in contradiction to the informal (common sense) unofficial men's history. From this point of view, for the majority of rank and file longshoremen, the formal history is an ideology in the classic Marxist sense. The formal account of the origins of the GAI is a mythic, biased history that represents the institutional needs of the union. It functions to legitimate the union as the formal authority, which represents the needs of the rank and file in all collective bargaining negotiations. The men distrust

the union's view and subscribe to the two common sense conceptions of the genesis of the GAI. To the men, the union is more concerned with its own needs, over and above the needs of the rank and file that it represents.

The formal version of the GAI relies on the gathering and organization of facts by academic historians and union officials. These experts argue that the facts "speak for themselves." The formal history presents the truth. The informal common sense version also relies on the facts, but facts mediated through the life experience of longshoremen in the workplace, the hiring hall and the union hall. The common sense versions are critiques of the facts, of the official knowledge. In the common sense versions the men are making sense for themselves. They are understanding their own truth, a truth in which a more complete picture of union representation and union misrepresentation emerges. Here the men's resistance as well as their accommodation is documented.

These three conceptions of the GAI are then part and parcel methods for seeing life as a whole. They are ways for making sense out of a diverse and complicated social reality. Specifically, for these longshoremen, the formal as well as informal histories are ways to make sense of technological change in the shipping industry and how these men themselves react to these significant changes.

Thus the task of the remainder of this chapter will

be to weigh these three conceptions of the GAI as both formal and informal history. The formal type of history, the reader will see, fits in well with formal resistance. By the same token, the informal, common sense history, furthest away from established institutions, comes closest to informal resistance.

I. The Union and the GAI

In the 1950's the New York-New Jersey docks were being worked by 48,000 men who worked a total of 46,000,000 manhours and moved a total 22,000,000 tons of general cargo.³

At the time, the work was concentrated on the Manhattan and Brooklyn docks. Italians and Blacks moved cargo on the Brooklyn docks while Irishmen, Yugoslavs and Austrians worked on the Manhattan docks.

All this has changed since then. Work has now almost completely disappeared from the west side (Manhattan) piers and 9,000 less workers man the Brooklyn docks. Business still uses the Brooklyn piers heavily but, with the increasing automation of the industry, the work is moving to the modern container facilities on Staten Island and New Jersey. Today, this leaves 12,000 longshoremen working 22,000,000 manhours and moving 27,000,000 tons of general cargo.⁴ In short, one-fourth the men now move more cargo tonnage. Thus, the past two decades saw a continuous

decline in longshore job opportunities. This decline culminated in the container explosion of the mid-1960s.

The ILA reacted to the containerization of the industry and the loss of their jobs to automation by demanding a new kind of job security. In the face of all of the jobs lost due to containerized cargo, the ILA fought for the shipping companies to provide either work or guarantees of income. Out of this struggle came a new kind of job security: the Guaranteed Annual Income.

Containerization

Although automation has taken many forms in the shipping industry, nothing has revolutionized cargo moving the way containerization has. Containerized cargo is freight that is prepacked in metal containers. It was now no longer necessary to maintain a large casual (intermittent and unskilled) workforce on a day to day basis. Twenty-man gangs were no longer necessary to work each hold of a ship. The containerization of cargo quickly transformed the industry in a decade from labor intensive to capital intensive. Men gave way to the large dinosaur-like container cranes that now dominate the piers.

It is in the context of this labor-eliminating form of automation that the union wages its fight against technological unemployment. The ILA wages this struggle, in the words of Anthony Scotto (in an interview), on the

premise that "the cost of technological change shall not rest entirely upon the employees in the industry."

The union, continually on the defensive, attempts to counter the effects of increasing automation in the industry through various job security programs such as seniority, closing the register and GAI. Thus, Anthony Scotto, President of the Brooklyn Local, said in 1963 about the recently approved seniority agreement:

On the economic level this seniority agreement came not a day too soon. Technological change is sweeping through every industry, in every country and it would be unrealistic to suppose that our industry would be exempt forever. As trade unionists, we have a clear mandate to control the machine for the benefit of the workers. This agreement is designed to help do just that.⁵

The seniority agreement was the first attempt at dealing with the problem of technological unemployment. Automation eliminated jobs not only because the new technologies required less men to load and unload ships but because it also facilitated a geographic relocation for many shipping companies: (1) to better equipped, modern, automated piers like Port Elizabeth in New Jersey, and (2) to piers that could do the work more cheaply because the unions had been less successful in negotiating contracts and because the ports charged lower berth fees.

The problem manifests itself in terms of a movement of work and jobs away from Brooklyn (and New York in general), coexisting with a large casual workforce.

Seniority is the first step in reducing that casual

workforce by guaranteeing work for the men who work steady on the piers in opposition to other men. Those other men moonlight to make a few extra dollars whenever they need it or they work regularly as "weekend longshoremen" to augment their paycheck.

Anthony Scotto and Local 1814 were militant on this issue. The union contended that a chronic surplus of dockworkers had been necessary in the past in the shipping industry. Then, it made sense, both to keep the union weak and to have a sufficient supply of workers in periods of emergency need when there was a lot of break bulk (loose cargo, neither pre-palletized, pre-slung, nor containerized) work which was labor intensive. Now, however, the Brooklyn local and its head understand that if the ILA is to survive it is necessary to have a strong membership of the men who depended totally for their livelihood on dock work. Casual workers were not attached to work nor to the union; their very existence hindered the creation of a strong union, especially in the context of automation.

Scotto had been consistent on the need for a seniority agreement as a method for the elimination of a chronic excess of casual labor.

...we set the stage for genuine job security...we don't want the weekend scrounger whose loyalties lie elsewhere. Longshoring is a good trade essential to the welfare of the world. It must be manned by self-respecting full-time workers who need not shudder when the word automation is mentioned. Local 1814 works to achieve the final goal of dignified work lives, free from the fear of sudden

joblessness for its members. We plan to exchange the old phrase 'a good days pay for a good days job' for a modern version a good year's pay for a good year's work.⁶

Seniority was the basis for the union's continual fight for job security for its membership. The ILA realized that seniority alone was not sufficient as a mechanism for job security; union survival depended as well on an increase in the amount of work that existed on the piers. But, if more work and thus more jobs were not in the offing for longshoremen, it was then necessary to maintain a close ratio between the number of workers and the amount of work available. This could be accomplished by closing the register. To close the register meant to eliminate new longshoremen by making it impossible to enter the trade. It turn, that meant that the sons of longshoremen cannot follow their fathers to the docks. As Scotto has stated:

But seniority hiring rights and improvements crucial though they are, can never do the whole job. Seniority is but the foundation for our most needed gain: lifetime job security for the bonafide longshoremen. Seniority is the base on which we will build our next two improvements: closing the longshore register and gaining a guaranteed annual wage. These are not Utopian demands but the practical necessities that flow from the needs of the men who load the ships of the industry: the longshoremen.⁷

The quickness with which containerization spread did take the union by surprise. After all, containerization requires a total transformation of the industry. New automated piers would have to be built. The huge expense of this transformation seemed to preclude massive containerization. But massive containerization did occur and with it

a revolution in the maritime industry.

A historian of the union tells us that in 1966 the percentage of general cargo moved by containers in New York, the largest port in the country, was under three percent. Two years later it reached twelve percent and it is estimated that seventy-three percent of all cargo will be containerized by 1975. The historian adds: "Containerization is said to constitute the single most important innovation in ocean transportation since the steamship replaced the schooner." ⁸

That containerization meant revolutionary changes in the work that longshoremen did was not clearly understood by the union leadership. Automation had been a slow continuous process that did not pose an overwhelming threat to the men. When asked in an interview about the early days of containerization, Anthony Scotto said,

We must all remember that containerization really came about as an intercoastal operation. At the time no one conceived of the notion that there would be a containerized trade in the north Atlantic or any other place. It was really used as a means ...to move flat cars or rail cars from New York to Puerto Rico or the mainland to Puerto Rico.

For Scotto it was the closing of the Bull Lines in Brooklyn in 1977 that made him understand what containerization meant to the industry. As a result of this realization he became very active in the struggle for increasing the amount of work in Brooklyn and guaranteeing that the men would not lose out because of these new labor eliminating

technologies. A 1962 strike was ended by a Department of Labor agreement to study manpower utilization and job security on the waterfront and to make its findings known to the interested parties in 1964. On these issues Scotto states in the same interview:

I think that it's important to know that during the original stages of contract negotiations when we did talk about a guarantee that there was a panel sent in by President Kennedy that did a study. The Department of Labor conducted it. It went into various work practices and work conditions which showed some of the differences not only in the port of New York but as it related to the ports of Philadelphia, Baltimore and some of the other ports that we were competitive with...I remember.. Professor Healy, Ted Kheel and Senator Wayne Morse...agreed that automation presented such a problem that there should be some kind of guarantee in order to let automation take place...the employers had to address themselves to a steady workforce and not just a complete decimation of the workforce and have nothing for the guys to look forward to.

Scotto explains his strenuous lobbying effort on behalf of the guarantee as a result of the closing of the Brooklyn Army Terminal because of changing government priorities and of the Bull Lines as a result of automation.

The Bull Lines was a complete casualty of the Sea Land or the Puerto Rican trades that became containerized...The Bull Lines which operated in Brooklyn had some twenty gangs that practically worked day and night steady. In fact the only difficulty we had with that operation was the constant bickering with some of the guys who did not want to work all the hours they had to work and that was not casual work. It was maybe twenty hours a week overtime as a steady diet. In fact the practice was one night six o' clock one night nine o' clock on and off six, nine plus steady night gangs. Well they were completely wiped out when Sea Land and Sea Train went into the Puerto Rican trades. Real evidence of what containerization could do.

The checkers (workers who check the cargo that is loaded and unloaded) were pushing for a percentage of the prior year's earnings as the basis for a guarantee. The checkers were influential with the Department of Labor panel and seemingly had been successful in getting the majority of the panel to support seventy-five percent of the prior year's earnings as a guaranteed annual income.

In an interview with me, Scotto stated:

I with just one other guy lobbed, very, very strenuously and somewhat effectively. We couldn't get the committee to come up with the majority report...but we convinced Ted Kheel and he came through with a minority report and that minority report indicated that rather than a percentage of the previous year's earnings it should be a fixed number. The number that we argued for was 1,600 hours a year...

Scotto added in the same interview:

It was just my feeling that 75% of the previous year's earnings could be 75% of nothing. That 75% of the previous year's earnings may not be indicative of what a guy really made or should have made. It could have been a really bad year or it could have been a really good year. The internal struggling that went on as a result of that was that they wanted to come up with a five year period. I and another Vice President John Bowers sort of stuck to it and figured that a number was easier to relate to. In terms of it also as a base, it was 1,600 hours. If we won that that was something we could work on and we were fortunate to get it adopted.

The GAI was not a giveaway for the men. The union was not the only beneficiary of the new contractual agreement. A panel made up of Reynolds (a replacement for Wayne Morse), Kheel and Healy made recommendations on gang size in September 1963, which became a reality as part of the

1965 contract.

A. Effective April 1, 1966, the present minimum gang size of twenty for general cargo shall be decreased to 18. Reduction from the gang should be on the basis of gang seniority.

B. Effective October 1, 1967 the minimum gang size of 18 for general cargo shall be decreased to 17.⁹

The 1964 agreement included the GAI, the closing of the register and the reduction of gang size. The agreement gained approval only in Scotto's Brooklyn local and Bowers Manhattan local and even there many of the men had grave doubts about the guarantee. Anthony Scotto tells of the meeting of January 1965 when the men voted on the GAI in the Grand Ballroom of the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn. At that time the men were not clear on the benefits of the GAI. As Scotto recalled to me,

I got one of the hardest times in my life at the union membership meeting. Because they felt that the Guaranteed Annual Income was a giveaway, a sellout, it meant nothing, it wouldn't mean a damn thing... Guys had a hard time relating to it. I've got to be honest about it, to some of the guys who are supposed to be sophisticated negotiators, we were having a hard time with them zeroing in on it. ...yesterday I was stopped down the hiring hall by one of the chaps who was at the meeting and he reminded me that it's been twelve years since the meeting. Some of these guys haven't worked. Some have worked a lot and some have worked a little but those who were very suspicious about the guaranteed annual income now find in retrospect that it was the right thing to do.

I'm sure as a union it was the right thing to do. I'm sure that to protect the membership it was the right thing to do and I'd do it all over again.

Waterfront Commission

The Waterfront Commission was created in 1953 as a

result of a Bi-State compact. Its two chief operating units were "Licensing and Information Centers" and "Investigation and Enforcement." A historian notes that the N.Y.S.A. (New York Shipping Association) was "required to finance the Waterfront Commission -- eventually it cost about \$2 million a year."¹⁰

The Waterfront Commission assumed control over the shape-up which was now moved from the piers into indoor hiring halls. All longshoremen were required to register with the commission who screened the men for criminal records. A man could not work on the waterfront without his Waterfront Commission card.

From the very creation of the Commission the ILA did not like it. The union viewed it as the political and legal arm of management, encroaching on the normal relations of labor and management under the guise of a regulatory agency. The reduction of corruption on the waterfront was not the real function of the Commission the union felt: the Commission's real task was to expand the control of management over labor relations on the waterfront.

An act of Congress had legitimated the activities of the Commission and thus its control over the longshoremen that work the New York-New Jersey port. Since 1953 the Waterfront Commission has assumed still more power.

The New York city locals of the ILA have tried to stem that power. The following statement, made by Anthony

Scotto in 1967, is typical of the union's outlook on this continuous struggle.

The Waterfront Commission exhibits a lust for power, which if not checked will do great harm to both the harbor workers and the harbor itself...longshore workers in the Port of New York must not lose by default what is theirs by right -- namely the same constitutional privileges enjoyed by all Americans. While Brooklyn longshoremen recognize the administrative skills of the Waterfront Commission, we believe its drive for power must be halted in its tracks; otherwise its irresponsible legislative demands could endanger the peace and prosperity of the nation's greatest seaport.¹¹

The Waterfront Commission is committed to undermining any and all progressive elements in the union. Through its attempts to expand its own power or by continually attempting to destroy the GAI, the Commission functions to subvert any and all gains the union has won through effective collective bargaining. Anthony Scotto conveys this message along with the message that the union has been relatively weak in its dealings with the Commission:

Behind a false front of platitudes lurks a negative force committed to the juggling of figures and the blurring of reality. Most Brooklyn Longshoremen are aware of the negative effect of the Waterfront Commission; we waited in vain for the International Union to appraise the Commission's annual report, and can only conclude that silence equals assent.

Scotto goes on:

It fell to Brooklyn to fill a legislative vacuum as well: Local 1814 members can be proud that their unit led the successful battle in Albany against two dangerous bills sponsored by the commission to appoint police officers with full powers to stop and frisk. The second would have transferred to the commission the present contractual obligation of the Union and management to administer

pre-employment physical examinations to men seeking to work on the docks. Happily both bills died in Committee, permitting longshore workers throughout the port to sleep more soundly...12

The union claims that the Waterfront Commission has used the issue of pilferage and corruption to continually increase its control over the waterfront. This control has been beneficial to the shipping companies who also finance the Commission. A statement of Bendetto Terranova (a union official) sums up the sentiments of the Local: "We don't deserve this, the Waterfront Commission they treat us like racketeers, we're not racketeers, do you think Anthony is a racketeer?"

II. The Men's First Common Sense Version: GAI and the Shipping Companies

The men agree with the union that the quickness with which containerization came to dominate the industry was unimaginable to the average longshoreman. Although social scientists and businessmen have continually assumed that automation creates more jobs, the working man views automation as eliminating labor.

When I asked the men in the hiring hall about containerization, Angelo, a longshoreman with the build and strength of a bull expressed his sentiments:

I feel that it's morally wrong. I work thirty to forty years and then I have my job taken away from me because they containerize the port. No one ever thought there would be even 40% to 50% of the cargo in containers. But these foreign countries

invested a lot of money in containers. I never thought it could be done.

The men are aware of what the costs of containerization have been in terms of the elimination of manhours and of men. Lippy makes this observation on containerization in an interview in his house:

The container took an awful lot of manhours away from Longshoremen. I think it happened faster than I thought it would. Look how many men we have in the industry. Look at how many men they eliminated in twelve years. They must have eliminated twenty or thirty thousand men, they eliminated.

These men are continually clear on how the GAI came about. The GAI was part of the long term strategy of the shipping companies for the peaceful introduction of automation into the industry. When these men were asked about the history of the GAI, they typically answered,

As far as I know it started in a contract meeting. At that time we had a lot of men, there was a lot of men, there was a lot of work and the shippers figured they would be better off...for them to pay the guarantee, they come up with the idea.

In this view, the shipping companies came up with the idea because the large casual workforce that had existed had become both inefficient and unnecessary to the loading and unloading of cargo. Automation required a steady and an efficient workforce. This statement by Nick explicitly makes this point, and also expresses dissatisfaction with the union.

The shipping companies wanted the GAI. They wanted to get rid of the stiffs. They knew that on Saturday and Sunday all the stiffs came down. Instead of using stiffs they'd rather do the work on Monday

they'd have all the working men and those men knew how to work. With the GAI they got rid of all the stiffes. The union all they cared about is their lousy 2% [the money the union gets from the GAI]. Nah, the union hasn't gotten us anything.

The men are painfully aware that they gave up a lot for the GAI. Three men were cut from each gang in return for the Guarantee, three men that will never be replaced. In return, the shipping companies peacefully automated and stability was guaranteed.

If the shipping companies had just automated and cut men and closed down piers without giving the men anything in return, the men would never have stood for it. They would have struck. "They never would have been able to automate because we would have never worked their ships."

When asked about this, Babalu answered:

The shipowners wanted a stable workforce...they needed that because they wanted to introduce automation and the GAI was one way to buy off the men so that they could introduce these automation advances into the industry. There was no way they were going to cut down the workforce the way they did with automation and have a stable workforce. There would have been tremendous upheavals amongst the men and that would have meant not working at all.

The men who held this version also believe that,

Cause they [the shipping companies] figured that they had so many men that they probably didn't have to pay them. That the jobs would always be taken. What happened as soon as that started it seemed like everything fell in...There started to be less gangs, less work and that's how it started that they had to pay all these men on the Guarantee. It got worse and worse. For now they are against it and now they want to get rid of it, but they can't, because the union won't go for it.

The longshoremen, who hold the view that the shipping

companies designed the GAI are split on the very important issue of the ability of the shipping companies to pay the container royalties that make the GAI possible. Some men hold that the GAI has become too expensive for the shipping companies and it is inevitable that it will be phased out in a few years. However, the majority of the men hold that the shipping companies are doing a booming business and want to phase out the GAI because they are greedy. Bowly (because he is bow-legged) holds the latter view.

They're making more money now. It used to take us seven to ten days to load a ship or unload it. They come in with a ship take the containers off it and load it in the same day. Twenty-four hours and the ship pulls away.

Bowly goes on to say:

Why do you think we get the GAI? Because they're making so much more money than they ever did before. And people think we got a big break with the Guarantee they don't know how much money the shipping companies are making. Would they give us money if they weren't making millions? It's common sense. They couldn't do it. You got 2,000 guys collecting the Guarantee on and off you know.

The men who hold that the GAI is not too expensive to the shipping companies also hold that there is an inevitability to its being phased out. But the GAI will end not because it is too expensive but because of attrition. As Lippy observes:

So many men are retiring and deceasing. They have enough workforce to work the ships that they want them to. They'll only pay the GAI when its slow... eventually the GAI will be written on paper. That's all the GAI will be. Between now and two or three years I think nobody will be getting the GAI.

A critique of the union is implicit in their common sense view that the shipping companies were the moving force in the decasualization (the process of creating a permanent workforce) of the industry and the creation of the GAI.

Although most of the men feel that Local 1814 and Anthony Scotto has been supportive the men, they feel that the International has been continually lacking in support. They feel that the International has been concerned with its own survival and not with the needs of the members. The men feel that they need the union to represent them in contract negotiations with management but at the same time the union has become too large and unresponsive to members in general. The ambivalence of the men is succinctly stated by a longshoreman on the line. "The union is good and the union is no good. When the union has too much power they're as bad as the company."

The union is viewed by these men as somewhat impotent. The GAI came about as the result of the shipping companies realizing that they needed something to trade off for the men who would retaliate by closing down the port if they were just cut off from the industry. The GAI came about not as the result of the ingenuity of the union but as a result of the potential threat of violence by the men. In this view, in opposition to the view of labor historians and union officials, it is the union and not the men who are irrelevant. As Babalu states,

The shipping industry pushed for all these various things...that the casual workforce was hurting them ...as a result they pushed for the GAI, they pushed for the closing of the Register, they pushed for all these things to get a good steady workforce and to introduce automation.

These men are not only ambivalent about the union but they are equally ambivalent in their attitudes about the Waterfront Commission. On the one hand these men feel that the Commission has been most instrumental in controlling the amount of corruption on the Waterfront. On the other hand the men also view the Commission as an important arm of the shipping companies for reducing the effectiveness of the GAI.

The men who hold the former view remember the corruption that existed in "the old days" when the hiring was done at the piers. The Waterfront Commission, by moving hiring indoors to Commission-regulated hiring halls, is credited with removing nepotism and intimidation from hiring. Typical of this view is the following statement by Bowly:

We'd be in some shape without the Waterfront Commission. You forget how it was. Who do you think cleaned up the Waterfront? If not them, then who? They've been good for us...

The ambivalence of the men towards the Commission is expressed in the following statement by Big Tom. He claims that the Waterfront Commission is screwing the men. In a recent dispute he claimed that the Commission is in collusion with the shipping industry to reduce the hiring

of checkers (the checker is the worker who counts the cargo. The checker tallies it in and out of trucks and records the container numbers. In general, he is the worker who performs record keeping clerical functions on the pier.

There's a blatant contradiction. They say that they want more checkers to do more stripping and stuffing [loading and unloading of containers] and on the other hand the shipping companies don't want the stripping and stuffing done by longshoremen because it is too expensive. They take their case to court and they win it. It's a blatant contradiction. All they care about is reducing costs and they'll try to do it any way they can. This whole thing with the checkers is just an attempt to reduce the GAI but they'll never be successful. We'll never let them reduce the GAI. It's a blatant contradiction, 10,000,000 manhours, they have to pay us for 10,000,000 manhours. Where do you think they get that much to pay for that much GAI...Surplus profits it all comes out of the profits. Who do you think made them their profit? Who do you think?

III. The Men's Second Common Sense Version: The Radicals

The radicals hold that GAI benefits are the result of the rank and file struggle of the men against the shipping companies, the Waterfront Commission and the union.

The radicals make the same argument that we saw already made in the other two conceptions on the revolutionary effect containerization had upon the longshore industry. However, in this version it is the men and not the union or the shipping companies that are the prime movers in the struggle for the GAI.

Peter Bel, an activist longshoreman, testified before a New York State Senate Committee on June 22, 1964.

His statement represents this whole conception which warrants reproducing it here in full:

Further technological advances and better utilization of existing machinery are already causing drops in hours worked by the longshoremen. All benefits longshoremen receive are based on hours worked. 400 hours yearly for pensions, 700 hours yearly for welfare benefits, 700, 1,100 and 1,300 hours for 1st, 2nd and 3rd week vacations. The entry of new workers into the industry, all competing for jobs, results in many of us being deprived of these benefits despite our long years in the industry, and despite our collective bargaining agreements.

We need the register closed because automation has already made its presence known in our industry. We are losing jobs daily. Why do we need new men competing with us for jobs that are disappearing? The Waterfront Commission states that there are 27,194 men registered as of May, 1963 (Waterfront Commission Annual Report, p. 17). It also says that 18,000 men work on peak days, usually Thursday or Friday. We do not need a diploma from a business college to deduct 18,000 from 27,194 and arrive at a surplus of 9,000 men!

Suppose, gentlemen, we set up a table with food for 18,000 men all invited to dinner on the basis of their seniority. They stand behind their dinner chairs, a door opens and in walk 9,000 men, not invited by the longshoremen, but recommended by the Waterfront Commission and steamship operators, and hungry as hell! To be sure, there are thousands more standing in line waiting to be recommended.

We say one job -- one man! Not 3 men for 2 jobs!¹³

The rank and file radicals consist of men of different races and ethnic origins that work the Brooklyn docks. They have continually been at the forefront of the struggles to protect longshoremen from the technological unemployment caused by the containerization of cargo. It is the contention of these men that the union was "caught with their pants down," on what containerization meant for the future of the longshore industry.

These men waged a battle with the union leadership on this issue in two main ways: by continuously raising the specter of automation on the floor at union meetings and through the creation of an opposition party within the union. The opposition party tried to force the issue of automation into the consciousness of union leaders and rank and file workers.

A radical longshoreman expresses these sentiments.

One of the problems we had, the rank and file group that I was associated with felt that the union was not addressing the issue of automation. This was the very early sixties. We raised these questions in the subsequent election in 1961. We felt at that time that the only way to raise the question of automation and get some publicity about it was in the election campaign because we felt that an election campaign would dramatize it...and wake up the union leadership to the problem.

It is the claim of these men that they were the force that pushed the union into being concerned with the crisis of containerization. As early as 1961, they called for a Guarantee during a union election campaign.

The activist just quoted also told me in an interview:

In 1961 we raised the question of direct benefits to the men from automation and containerization and new methods of work...in 1961 we raised this question.

Other candidates in that struggle was a man named Freddy Small and we helped devise a program an individual program that he ran on...he's now one of the delegates of 1814. This program that we helped him write...called for a minimum guarantee of weekly wages for high seniority men and what we were talking about...is either "pay or work."

The party of rank and file men was called the

"Rank and File Committee for the Election of Alfred Freddie Small," on the first leaflet of June 26, 1961, and the Unity Ticket on a second leaflet of June 25, 1962. These leaflets tend to support the contention of radicals that they were pushing for a closing of the register, guaranteed wages and other progressive benefits. (Photocopies of these two leaflets follow on the next two pages.)

The rank and file radicals feel the union is basically unresponsive to the needs of the men. They feel its major concern is with the maintenance and survival of the union and that in pursuit of these ends, the union continually stifled the men's participation in union affairs.

For these men the reality of union corruption is not to be found in the embezzlement of union funds but in the lack of participatory democracy for ordinary longshoremen when it comes to union affairs. A longshoreman describes an illustrative incident.

Since I work down there the manifestation of the Union that I see is the shop steward on my pier. And I know that shop steward is corrupt and I've seen him walk up to a guy who was complaining about something. A guy with seven kids. A respected guy on the pier, who was complaining about how the gang was being handled. And then the shop steward told him, "you know if you open your mouth I'll split your head open."

Now from the other shop stewards I've seen I wouldn't say, that, that guy is typical. But I would say there is a lot like him, alright.

So Scotto's liberalism is transformed at the point of production at the pier into fascism, plain and outright muscle. If you don't do what you're told there is going to be a situation.

AUTOMATION MEANS JOBS LOSS

PROTECT YOUR JOB!

VOTE #11

ALFRED "FREDDIE" SMALL
FOR DELEGATE

ELECT A MAN WHO
KNOWS THE SCORE!

FIGHT FOR: Strict contract enforcement

A Special Fund to be set up to increase security benefits
when you are unemployed.

This fund to be financed from the increased income ac-
quired from automation changes.

- * A minimum guarantee of weekly wages for all
seniority men.
- * Job advancement on an equal basis in keeping with
seniority.
- * Union supervised safety regulations for maximum pro-
tection of all men.
- * Shorter work week.
- * Earlier retirement age.
- * Increased pension fund.

----- WANT ACTION? -----

GET ON THE BALL - VOTE FOR "FREDDIE" SMALL

----- VOTE NO. 11 -----

Rank and File Committee
For the election of
Alfred "Freddie" Small - No. 11

VOTE UNITY TICKET

.....
A vote for the Unity Ticket is a
vote for the following program.
.....

- Strict seniority enforcement to guarantee the rights of every seniority man. We believe that every seniority man is entitled to five days work per week.
- An up to date Automation Program that will protect our jobs
- Guarantee higher pension benefits and lower retirement age.
- Better hiring halls and a better system of hiring the men to end favoritism, discrimination and give everyone an equal chance.
- Full pension after twenty years in industry regardless of age.
- Better delegate representation at the piers.
- Close Waterfront Commission's register to stop new men from coming in the waterfront.
- Continuation of Show -Up Cards fight.

.....
LOCAL 1814 ELECTION OF OFFICERS
Monday, June 25, from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Union Hall
Voting will be supervised by the Honest Ballot Assoc.
.....

Dockers News

In the continuing struggle of rank and file long-shoremen against technological unemployment and for greater participation in the affairs of the union, the Dockers News has played an important role. The Dockers News has been distributed on the docks and in the hiring halls for more than thirty years. It has continually kept ordinary long-shoremen in touch with the more covert dealings of union and management.

The reaction of the union to the Dockers News has been to claim that it is a Communist newspaper that the great majority of workers have ignored. The attitude of the union has been to view the Dockers News as subversive to the best interests of the men and the union.

The Worker is the newspaper of the Communist Party, U.S.A. It parrots the Moscow party line.

The Dockers News is the newspaper of the dissidents within the I.L.A. It parrots the parrot.

There has never been any mystery about the true purposes of the real loyalty of the Dockers News. Since the very first issue its only interest has been to stir dissension, to manufacture grievances, to attack the I.L.A. leadership. No one was fooled -- the made-in-Moscow label was too transparent.¹⁴

The radical rank and file longshoremen's view of the Dockers News is in direct opposition to the I.L.A.'s. It appears sporadically but always when the union and the shippers are in agreement on a specific issues and the men's needs are being ignored. The Dockers News has continually been concerned with the needs of the men as they have changed over the last few decades.

Although I could not find out who writes, prints or distributes the Dockers News, the majority of longshoremen I approached on the subject felt that it was printed by longshoremen. "The Dockers News always prints the truth," answered one longshoreman when I asked him about the leaflet. He continued that, "The Dockers News has been concerned with the issues that we have been concerned with."

A longshoreman recalled the part that the Dockers News played in 1968.

In the 1968 strike Gleason attempted to take monies that was an arbitration award for the men. And he attempted to give these monies which was for the longshoremen to the breakbulk operators. The Dockers News called this a steal

On November 1 another anonymous rank-and-file handout called for a "container bonus holiday." The men pulled a five day wildcat as a result and on December 1968, the union distributed \$6 million to the men as a Christmas bonus. There has been an annual distribution of the fund each year. The last one amounted to approximately \$666 per longshoreman. The container bonus resulting in a direct benefit to the men from the increase in containerization was the fruition of rank and file efforts in defiance of their leadership.¹⁵

The 1968 agreement was won because of the Dockers News and rank and file efforts to expose a union sellout. Once it was exposed, the union was forced to be more concerned with the needs of the men than with the affairs of the break-bulk operators who are members of the New York Shipping Association (NYSA).

The Dockers News continues to be printed during periods of crisis as it was during the last two strikes in

1977. It has not only criticized the shipping companies and the union but it has criticized the Waterfront Commission as well.

Waterfront Commission

In the Dockers News of October 8, 1968, the Waterfront Commission was accused of collusion with the shipping companies and with the stevedores.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE WATERFRONT COMMISSION. In spite of being denied all these benefits that the longshoremen on the West Coast have been receiving all along, we have been for the last 11 years, stuck with a Waterfront Commission whose purpose was supposed to be also, to straighten out the industry. Today 11 years and 30 million dollars later their score of achievement is zero! Their only role has been to harass and deprive of a livelihood those longshoremen who have had the guts to challenge them and the shipowners on the problems facing the men, especially closing the register. ...There is no question on any longshoreman's mind that the present unstable situation existing on the Waterfront was brought about by an alliance between the Commission & shipowners & stevedores & some stooges within our union who flooded the industry with new men.16

The radicals have felt in their struggle for union democracy that they have had to continually "goose the union" to get it to respond to their needs. The Waterfront Commission offers a different problem: while the union can be forced to respond to the needs of the men through wild-cat strikes and union election campaigns, the men have had no redress against the power of the Waterfront Commission. The Commission can continually threaten to take away a longshoreman's Waterfront Commission pass and thus make it impossible for a dissident longshoreman to work on the

waterfront. Peter Bel, a longshoreman, talks about these issues and his own personal experience with the Waterfront Commission.

...the problems with the Waterfront Commission the only way you could deal with that was to go public. Because we could try to influence public opinion. And the Waterfront Commission was preventing in a lot of instances from beefs being settled on the piers. If there was a wildcat strike, if there was a disruption the Waterfront Commission would be the first ones down and they always threatened to lift your pass. So in essence they were the ship-owners' enforcer. They were doing the job better than the union officials. Our proposals really cut at the quick of the Waterfront Commission's power, we were out to limit their power. I guess when you hit the establishment that way they react in different ways...

-I'll tell you, I testified in June of 1964 at a State Senate Sub-Committee against them and in July they took my pass. It took me \$3,600 and 2½ years of court fights to get my pass back.

The radicals do not believe that they can become the major force in the politics of the local but see themselves functioning in a watchdog role. They continually hope to dramatize issues that are important to longshoremen through election campaigns and wildcat strikes. They function as a check on the excesses of the union, the shipping companies, and the Waterfront Commission.

Formal versus Common Sense History

In this chapter I have presented the formal and informal common sense constructions of the development of the GAI. The formal history of the GAI has many of the characteristics singled out by a strict interpretation of ideology. In this sense ideology is knowledge that serves

a system's needs, here, specifically, the needs of the union. The formal history of the GAI is the union's account of how it originated the idea and valiantly struggled for the contractual change.

The common sense histories are the men's accounts of the origins and struggle for the GAI. These accounts attribute importance to the shipping companies and the rank and file as well as to the union in the development of the GAI. The common sense histories treat the formal knowledge in a problematic way. The men do not treat it as truth. Thus, these accounts of rank and file longshoremen are not ideological in the strict sense.

The common sense accounts are in opposition to the formal history. It helps the men understand complicated transformations in the workplace and the union. Armed with these common sense accounts, longshoremen can make sense out of their world and act upon it. It gives order to their world. These accounts are techniques for ordering the world and for justifying action as well as inaction for members.

In relation to the men, the formal history is externally generated by a powerful union hierarchy. It is generated to meet the institutional needs of the union. Since, from this point of view, the institutional needs of the union are more important than the needs of the rank and file, it has little potential for increasing union democracy. In this sense, too, the formal history is an

ideology. To the extent that this ideology is successful it creates false consciousness in its members; that is, members identify their own interests with the interests of those outside and above themselves who run their lives. The men accommodate to the union. Conversely, the common sense accounts allow ordinary people to actively meet their own human needs in opposition to system needs. Here, there is the basis for informal resistance; the collective needs of men and women must be met through their active opposition to formal institutions. Specifically, in terms of long-shoremen, they resist.

How do these three conceptions of the GAI justify action or inaction? And to what extent might each of them be viewed as encouraging accommodation or resistance?

The union makes the claim that only they had the foresight necessary to deal with the "container revolution" transforming the industry: they were the prime movers in developing programs to protect the men from imminent technological unemployment. The union's claim takes for granted the value and the irreplaceability of its own paternalism.

Typical of an ideology, the union version thus treats the men as not being capable of dealing with this impending doom; thus rank and file "incapability" forces the union to act in their behalf. Many of the men agree with this version and view of the union, specifically, of Anthony

Scotto as their benefactor.

I, myself, see the union's version as an ideology that encourages the accommodation of the men because only in that version is the union the legitimate source of action. The union version demands hierarchy and denies union democracy. It reinforces passivity among the rank and file by reducing the men to a subordinate position within the union. All important union decisions are made by the established hierarchy. The action of the men always reflects the union's decision.

To the extent that the men believe this version to be the truth, this ideology has successfully generated false consciousness. There is no need for the men to participate in union affairs because the union takes care of them. They have accepted the union's version of reality as their own and the needs of the system as their own needs.

When we turn from the union's version to the first of the rank and file conceptions, the key word is ambivalence. The union is necessary but it is more concerned with its own survival than with the needs of the men. In this version, both the men and the union were shortsighted about what automation would mean to the future of the industry.

The shipping company was the prime mover in the transformation of the industry. The GAI was a technique for

"buying off" those men who would be displaced by the container revolution. These men do not see themselves as involved in a continuous struggle for their rights, or as active participants in a dynamic union movement. In this version rank and file resistance is only possible when their backs are to the wall.

These men have a "mafia model" of power. All those men who occupy positions of power, whether they are in the shipping company, the union, or the government, are corrupt. Alternatives to the present system are seen as limited. More than that, all change within the industry is potentially dangerous to life and limb; change brings with it a naked, felt fear of violence. This first rank and file version, I see as basically encouraging the men's accommodation because it reinforces the men's subordination to the union and to the shipping industry. It does this by legitimating inaction in union affairs, except in extreme cases. It treats union democracy as an unlikely alternative to the present corrupt system.

Lastly, the second rank and file conception of the history of the GAI holds that the men, through continuous struggle within the union, have forced the union to be concerned with the needs of the men. They claim that they had the foresight to understand that automation was a threat to the rank and file. They claim that it was they who raised the specter of automation at union meetings and

that they were the prime movers in the struggle in fighting for the "work or a guaranteed wage."

They have attempted to transform the union by increasing the participation of the rank and file in all union affairs. They have generated alternatives to union business as usual.

This, as I see it, encourages informal, rank and file resistance. The men in this version have not been spectators in their union affairs but have continuously participated in a struggle for union democracy. Thus, this account helps the men fight for controlling and shaping their own lives.

In all three of these conceptions, there is a consensus on one issue. They all see the GAI as a rearguard action, the cost of which was the elimination of longshoring as a trade for new workers. The GAI protects senior workers from automation and technological unemployment, but at the expense of closing the industry to their sons. In New York, it is an industry without new workers.

In a wide range of industries, such rearguard actions or protectionism pays little or no attention to working people as a whole. The GAI is typical of strategies developed at the expense of younger workers. In these terms it can be seen as accommodation by these longshoremen.

Throughout the country young workers are finding occupational entry increasingly difficult. Since the young workers who have the most difficulty entering the labor

force are Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans and Asians as well as women, this form of protectionism actually is a classic form of institutionalized racism and sexism, be they intended or not. That holds, we should note, for the historical account grounded in informal resistance no less than for the accounts that back the formal kind of resistance in part or in full.

Notes

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16. Dockers News, October 8, 1964.

Chapter Three

WORKPLACE COMMUNITY: OLD WORK GANG

The aim of this chapter is to explore the men's informal resistance to work in terms of their past work experience. In the workplace, informal resistance develops in relation to automation and the break-up of the old work gang. I will begin to analyze this transformation in terms of a contradiction that stands out for some of the men on the GAI: the central contradiction between their claim to want to work (to accommodate to institutional requirements) and their refusal to work and their active, informal resistance to working.

A key premise of this study is that these men have kept up earlier working class cultural and political forms even though their work and non-work situation has been totally transformed by the GAI. In the face of this transformation, these men have maintained working class community at the informal level.¹ That is, the struggle along class lines is continuously maintained but often not formally expressed. The informal level of dissent and resistance is the social and cultural base that actions of political intention are maintained when there is not a formal institutionalized struggle or political movement. It is at the informal level that the continuing underlife of

resistance to work can be understood. Outside of a formally articulated movement or world view, these longshoremen have maintained a constant struggle in their daily lives to solve their own problems and to create their own history as working people. It is to the central contradiction in the old workplace itself that this study now moves.

Longshoremen Against the GAI

The majority of the men on the GAI will typically make the claim that the GAI is the best thing that ever happened to them. Other men on the GAI disagree. They take advantage of its benefits, yet they resist working and still have reservations about the GAI. In the last chapter we noted Rudy's arguments on the GAI. To his reservations I now add two statements critical of the GAI by Whitey and Babalu. Whitey states in an interview:

...the GAI ruined the manpower on the waterfront. You see years ago a man took a lot of pride in his work. He made sure he produced. They were more, you can say friendly. Today I'd say they're happy in a way but they're just getting paid for doing nothing. Years ago they'd go out and work, like now they won't go to work. They don't take no pride...it took the pride away from a lot of the men.

This country was brought up on producing... where this is not making a man produce anymore. He's not doing anything anymore. If they go home from here and just sit in the house. They've got no meaning to life.

Babalu's critique is clearly illustrated in his own interview. Babalu works three days a week and is on the GAI two days a week.

The guys are losing their work skills...they don't lose the knowledge but after so many years

of not working, you wonder how much a deckman up on a winch retains after not working for so many years. When they have to work, you wonder, the holdman how much can he retain? How much can he stand on his back? Is he going up and down the ladder right? They're really out of shape. How can they work anymore when they have to. They know the work and what I really mean when I say that they're losing their skills is, I mean can they still do what has to be done? They're not used to the weather. They're not exposed to the weather for four and five hours at a time...the guys don't want to work on the waterfront anymore...the rhythm is gone. We spend our time two hours a day in a smoked filled hiring hall. What's to talk about? They have no common work experiences to share, what happened the day before. There's less and less to share amongst the workers. Working was talking, was sharing. It was eight hours of enrichment. There was the satisfaction of storing the cargo the right way or talking about bad weather or good weather...that this happened or that happened. Now there is less to share amongst the workers...and no matter how hard the work was we always had time to fuck around and have a good time. Guys could really say we worked hard. We had a good time and there was no animosity with one another because we all had to work. Now the situation is where you got guys who got to go someplace, or with white shoes on and a comb in their pocket. They're not on the pier anymore, they don't put in the hours...Some of the guys said that when we all worked we had more fun, everybody had to pitch in and do their share. It was the camaraderie that enabled us to surmount the difficult work...

The men's critique of the GAI can be summarized in terms of the following four points:

(1) The GAI undermines the work skill and pride of work that was once part of the job. This is especially important as Pete mentions in terms of the possibility that they will be able to perform their work on those days when there are shortages of workers and will be required to work.

(2) The GAI ends the comradeship of longshoremen on the piers.

(3) Men on the GAI have "too much time on their hands." They have failed at finding meaningful ways to use their non-work time.

(4) On a more global level is Dom's contention that the GAI has undermined the work ethic and thus the productivity of workers as a whole. This claim is continually made by New York daily newspapers,² and functions to reinforce this position.

To restate the premise of this chapter in terms of Whitey's and Babalu's critique of the GAI, it was the shipping companies' decision to replace labor intensive technologies with capital intensive technologies (automation) and not the GAI that led to the dissolution of workers' community on the waterfront. Workers were not passive, and resisted these technologies and demanded either "work or a guaranteed wage." The GAI was a result of this struggle. (This was discussed in Chapter Two.)

In the two chapters that follow the present one, I show just how workers have informally resisted the dissolution of workplace community through their conscious recreation of community in the hiring hall and their use of their own non-work time. It is in terms of this latter experience that I will now examine the nature and transformation of an earlier workplace community, the old work gang. Most of this chapter follows the four points of Dom's and Pete's critique.

(1) The Men's Experience of Work

The first two points of Whitey's and Babalu's critique of the GAI will be analyzed in terms of the men's own experience of work on the piers. The men recount their own history of work and the effect of capital intensive technologies on the waterfront. For these men it is the introduction of these technologies by shipping and stevedore companies which resulted in the dissolution of workplace community on the piers.

This section gives reports by the men themselves. In excerpts from the intensive interviews that they granted me, they express their own informal, unofficial work history.

Lippy

I was seventeen when I started down the waterfront. I hadn't graduated high school. I started to shape-up and I started to work. The war made it very easy to get a job at the time. After a while I got assigned to a gang. I started working on the dock. Manual labor, we were loading ships most of the time for the war. I was working nights and we used to make drafts up. A draft is like making up the pallets. They used to put the cargo in nets and things. Everything had to be done by hand, it wasn't like now. There was actually a lot of lifting involved and we lifted everything. You had to be pretty strong. Physically you had to be strong. A man like Little Anthony, he was small but he

was some worker. I used to work the state pier. We moved cargo by hand. I was a dockworker, there were holdmen, deckmen and drivers. There weren't too many drivers at that time. There were very few machines, everything was manual labor at the time.

Then I went into the service and they put me into school to become a deckman. I operated cranes in the service. I was out on the West Coast and I went to school for winches. I operated the cranes that were on the ship and the land cranes too. I've never operated container cranes but I could. It would be very simple for me. I could catch on very easily on anything like that. I learned how to do everything in the service. I was like a stevedore in the service. A stevedore is like a longshoreman. We used to go on invasions and I would load ships with ammunition and everything.

When I came back I was still a dockman. Cause at the time I was too young, they didn't think...Then they only had oldtimers on the deck...Even though I could operate the cranes better than them. I was just too young. They used to put only the older people on deck. For instance on the winch they could only operate one winch at a time and I could operate two winches at a time. I went to school out on the West Coast and they used to work two winches. At the time in New York there were no deckmen who ran two winches. There were a lot of soldiers who came back from the war that were

in the stevedore batallion. And they started running two winches by one man. Then eventually it became that one man ran two winches. As they started getting younger men. I became a deckman, steady about 1948 or 1949. The Breakwater was started about 1950. When I came back from the service I wasn't at the state pier anymore. I worked for a Danish outfit that was called J. Lartizen. I worked for them for a while. Then I worked for down pier seventeen. From pier seventeen I went to work at the Breakwater. From the time I came back from the war I worked with two companies...

I would work on deck, the booms, operate the winches. I'd put the cargo in the hold. I'd rig booms by hand. It's all mechanical. The older conventional ships you still have to rig by hand but the new modern ships all have electrical. It's very easy to operate the newer equipment, you don't need any skill. I haven't done deckman work in a long time. Five years ago maybe more but I wouldn't have trouble doing it. It's easier now. A couple of drafts and I'd have it. I don't like it no more. I can't take the cold up there no more. I'd rather drive a high-low than work on deck. It's interesting. It would be interesting, it's interesting to work the electrical mahcines. It takes less skill definitely.

There is skill in picking up different cargo. You have the big jumbo booms you pick up lifts maybe twenty-five ton, thirty ton pieces. You have to use a jumbo boom on

that. You need an awful lot of skilled men to do that. You unload containers with the jumbo boom. That was no problem. There was rubber. If you worked rubber you went home really tired. If you worked rubber as a laborer you were tired but if you're a deckman you never get tired. The only thing is that in the winter time you're cold and in the summer time you're hot up there. We had three or four deckmen. There was me, Vinnie and Jimmy and Willie and Frankie did it occasionally. Frankie never did it much. There were deckmen that were very destructful. That were never careful. There were some that you always had to run for your life.

The hard cargoes were when you had to hook up a heavy lift. The big pieces. You had to be careful not to damage things. Picking up automobiles and put them in the hold, unboxed cars when you put them in the hold and not damage them or nothing...I would be working the crane and I would tell the men how to hook them up. I'd tell them how to hook them up the way I wanted them. They would listen to me, no problem. What size wires and everything. The stringpiecemen would hook them up. They were the steady four men who hooked things up that went into the ship or coming out of the ship. The stringpiece is the part of the pier that's exposed towards the water. They call it a stringpiece, they call it an apron too. It's where the ship docks alongside of it. They're the men who do the hooking and unhooking. They do manual labor too. If they dump cargo

out of the nets they have to palletize it. They don't load the trucks. Loading the trucks is done by extra labor. At the time I started there were only two stringpiecemen. The extra labor men are not part of the gang. The gang consisted of, let me see, it used to consist of sixteen and four deck that's twenty and two drivers. There were twenty-three men with the hatch boss. The hatch boss directs the loading and unloading of the hatch. He commands all the particular work at one hatch...the most skilled jobs are the deck, the hatch boss, driving the machines. The hold men too, the headers, they stow the big pieces.

I hated the night work. That was the worse and we did a lot of it. I couldn't stand nights. I didn't like them.

It wasn't all work. We worked hard but we fooled around. We had fun all day long. It made the work enjoyable. I definitely miss that...

Lippy's description of how he began to work as a longshoreman explains the organization of work on the piers into work gangs. He tells of the difficulty and danger of the work. He also shows that the creation of community on the pier based on the work gang made even the most arduous of labor enjoyable. He expresses the sense of loss that almost all of the men feel from no longer being a part of the work gang community.

In the following interview Bill talks about how he

first became a longshoreman. In Bill's account, the men worked in a shared, meaningful community, where the ties of friendship and family were primary. It is these ties which continue to be the basis for community for these men. His statement also illustrates the men's belief in the "work ethic," and their dedication to their work.

Bill

Yeah, I started in '36 and my father didn't want me to go down to the pier. He said go and get a job. I was working as a clerk. I left high school in the seventh term and I was working as a clerk in a Miles shoe store, I was shipping clerk in a winery. I was making about eighteen dollars a week, that was no money. And I seen some of these guys, I had a cousin whose father was a hatch boss and he was making \$90, \$85 a week. Look at this here's a fella just off the boat from Italy and he's making \$90 a week and I'm making \$18. I asked my uncle, he said you can come down, does your father say it's all right. I said yeah, my father didn't know nothing about it. That morning I got up and went down with my cousin. The deckmen at that time used to start at 7:00 in the morning, the gangs used to start at 8:00. They had to get there an hour before us to rig-up because they had a different system of working at that time years back. They got paid an extra hour, they were in, my father was in and they shaped the men. And he'd call Tony's gang and the hold men and the dock gang and I walk in with the

dock gang. And I had no working clothes and I was dressed with two-tone shoes on, plaid pants. So this Irish stevedore was looking at me and he yells "who's that kid." So my uncle says that's John's kid. Well he says "if he going to work here you'd better get him some working clothes because he can't work here tomorrow looking like that." "Tell him to get a pair of overalls, a cap and a pair of working shoes." So my uncle says, "Hear what he said." That night I went to get a pair of overalls, I got a P-cap, I got a pair of working shoes I never had working shoes before. Oh, before that they sent us off to work. I'm going down the ladder trying to duck my father. He sees me down in the scow, you know what the scow is? At that time they had most of the cargo come in from freights with the lighters, freight cars, very few were trucking at the time everything came from offshore. So they used to tie up a lighter alongside the boat, my uncle threw down a bunch of slings down there. He said, "O.K. give me a draft." I didn't even know what a draft was. I asked by cousin, he said "don'ta worry you come-a with me, I'll show you what to do." I start working with him and we made a draft...a draft is a cargo, cases of cargo with a sling underneath it and you pile them up and you take it and tighten it up and the hook takes the draft. And that was blood money...My father he looks at me and says, "Wow, let me tell you something, you're not going to come back tomorrow." I said, "We'll

see." Well when I went home that night, I laid in bed. I didn't go out with the boys that night. I didn't go out the next night either. I heard my father tell my mother, "Oh he won't get up tomorrow morning." Next morning I surprised him, I got up and I couldn't even straighten my back up.

Oh boy, it isn't like that today, now everything is palletized. There was a big scow and the stuff was piled up on it and you had to dig it out and make a draft and load it into the hold. And I got the swing of it and I worked. I'm from the old school see what they have today, these fellows that come in with their dancing shoes and a wristwatch on their hands and diamonds on their pinkies. At that time if you wore a watch the foremen could tell you, "What are you doing with a watch." No coffee breaks. We would send somebody out when we had an opportunity but then we had to hide it. When we brought it down we had to hide it. Today they call for a break, they need this they need that. When I was in charge of a gang, "already, it's almost 9:30 its coffee time." "Send Tommy down the hold to get coffee." They'll have a coffee break in the morning. In the afternoon they get another coffee break. So someone will say "How much time do we have for coffee"...The hold job by no means is as difficult as it used to be. Now everything is strapped up they even have bags strapped up coffee bags are strapped, rubber is strapped. The rubber used to be loose. It makes a

difference. They produce more and they work less and the work is easier. Everything is strapped. Now they put sixteen bags all strapped up in a sling and all they put them on the dock and the machines take them away and stacks them away. It goes in and out like that. Jap cargo, all the Jap cargo used to be loose now it's all strapped up. You get forty to seventy cartons in a draft, that's a tremendous saving. With loose stuff you dump it on the dock and then you sort it on the dock it's time consuming. With seventy-five cartons in a draft all one mark they pick it up. You would need three machines to keep that hook going. Now they're not making money. They're making all kinds of money.

Sabu

Right after the second world war, I worked down the hold. I worked bags nothing but bags, cement bags and flour bags. That's hard work a flour bag is two hundred pounds you'd lift them up and stack them with your partner. That's why you had to have a good partner. This is where teamwork came in. The two men had to depend on one another otherwise you'd have your back broken. It was all manual labor. And you felt good at the end of the day. But it wasn't eight hours work, when I worked down the Bull Line it was from eight in the morning until eleven at night. I did that for about three days and on the fourth day we'd work until three in the afternoon, if there was bad weather conditions we'd finish up on a Thursday late at night or the following

morning. But we made a good pay and I feel this way and I felt I could have gone into many other categories and worked elsewhere but I enjoyed it. I was outdoors, it didn't require much mentality but it was healthy. It was invigorating, you ate hearty and worked hearty, don't think I could have been happy in any other occupation. I met the best people, there were some rats along the line but we overcame that. But that's in any field.

In Sabu's account the importance of having a good partner is made apparent. In any work gang the men must depend on each other. It is crucial if the job is going to get done efficiently, without anyone getting hurt. The importance of the interdependence of the men in the work gang is expressed by Bill. He tells of how the higher skilled categories were integrated.

Bill

My gang was the best gang. We were the best because we had the best men. The best deckmen. We had Lippy and Freddy. They were the best in all of Brooklyn. If you want to get the job done safely and quickly, you have to have good deckmen. And we had the best, not like you know, Paul. He'd drop cargo all the time. Working with him was taking your life in your hands. Paul's dangerous. When Freddy retired I wanted the best winchman. I wanted someone as good as Freddy or Lippy. I didn't want someone like Paul. In those days there were all black gangs. Blacks could only

work in the higher categories in the all black gangs. Sure I had blacks in the hold and on the piers but no winchmen. So I asked Hank if he wanted to be my winchman, he said sure. A lot of the men from other gangs said that I couldn't do this, that I couldn't have a black winchman. I told them I wanted the best and Hank was best. Besides Lippy he was the best. I didn't care about integration or the N.A.A.C.P. All I cared about was having the two best deckmen in Brooklyn. In getting the job done, with having the highest productivity, without anyone getting hurt. We were always the best gang. With Hank we stayed the best gang. The men all got along. You ask any of them, how they felt about Hank. They'll tell you.

Billy, Hank was having family trouble. He came in drunk a few times. One day he dropped a cargo, right into the water. I knew he was drunk. I covered for him, just like Paul's hatch boss always covered for Paul. I didn't want to lose Hank. He straightened himself out, just like I knew he would. From that day on the Moulies respected me, not only Hank. From that day on I was always a brother. I was brother Bill.

Bill's account illustrates how the men within the work gangs could facilitate change at the informal level, on their own. Racial integration of the higher categories required a formal union mandate, but that was not the whole story: integration, we see, could be initiated by the men in

the workplace to meet the men's own needs. Bill took it upon himself to integrate the gang not because the union or the Waterfront Commission required it but because he wanted to have the best deckman. The men in Bill's gang did not object because they agreed that Hank could work more safely and efficiently than anyone else. The other gangs eventually saw the logic of Bill's position. Other gangs integrated as well.

The following two accounts by Tom and Babalu illustrate the men's understanding of how automation occurred on the waterfront and how it transformed their lives.

Tom

No, I never thought it would be like this. I mean, I don't think the shipping companies knew themselves, that it was going to come this fast. I mean we went from small containers maybe a ten foot container to a forty foot container. Now you got these here LASH ships, a whole barge, 150 ton they put the whole thing inside the ship. They pick it right out of the water and put it right on the ship. You can see that right down at pier seven. You can go down to pier seven and see these here ships there's the LASH Robert E. Lee, Houston, the LAS Italia, Maine. These big barges, they're huge. You see this ship take it put it right in the water, they fill it up, put it back in place. They go back and forth...

The old longshoreman, the one that worked hard,

picking up coffee bags, pulling drafts, trucking rubber, he knew what it was to work. He didn't want his kids to go down there. Now a longshoreman will say, "gee I wish I could get my son a job on the waterfront." Turned out to be a good job. But years ago it was a horrible job. You shaped 8:00 in the morning. There was no such thing as you get paid. You went back there 1:00 in the afternoon. You didn't get hired, you didn't get nothing. I shaped at 8:00, at 7:00 in the morning. You had to be outside the pier at 7:30 and then you hear at 1:00 they might be making men outside another pier. You come in at one o' clock and go there and shape. 1:00 and you don't get hired, then you hear that they have night gangs. You go down the pier and try to get on the night gangs being that you didn't work the day.

Babalu

What was amazing was in 1951 I was a seaman shipping out of the West Coast. I was shipping out on a passenger steamship called the S.S. Aleutia. At that time it was the flagship of the Alaska Line...While we were taking passengers on board we had time to see other ships that were loading. There was a class of ship that was loading that was called a notch ship. One of the features of this ship was that it had a concrete bottom. The inside of the ship was floored off with concrete so that the high-lows could operate in the bottom of the hatch. So what they were doing was taking the pallets and stacking them one on top of

another. They were using the high-low in the hatch. I had never seen that on the East Coast until I started working when I was longshoring and I saw it happening it was 1955, 1956, when they started putting the high-low in the hatch. It was apparent to me that they were really starting to move cargo in a faster way. This was in 1951 when they were using these notch ships.

The notch ships were the top of ship that would pull into Alaska ports and the tide would move out the notch ship would settle on its bottom. It had a flat bottom so the tide wouldn't affect it in any way. When the tide moved out it would just sit in the mud. So that feature having concrete on the floor for the high-low was a pretty new thing. That was the first instance of automation as far as the longshore industry goes. Before I shipped out I was a tugboat fireman. I used to shovel coal into a boiler. Automation beat me out of that job. They automated the tugboats they changed the coal fire tugs to oil fire tugs. They dropped the crew from seven to three. They had a captain, three deckhands, a oiler, a fireman, and an engineer. They reduced it down to an engineer, a captain and one deckhand. Automation kicked me out of that job also. But as far as it, or what you could say was the genesis of it was small containers that were 8 by 8 by it could have been by 8 or by 10. In other words they were eight feet wide, eight feet high and eight feet long or ten feet long.

These containers came in, I remember one instance, came from South Africa loaded with a corned beef and there was no way to know what was loaded inside them. Y'know you couldn't tell the weight until you tried to pick them up. I remember one instance, we were working number five hatch. This was about 1957, somewhere around that time. We tried to get one of the containers out of the hatch and onto the side of the pier. But, it was so full that the regular deckman, that the deckman, we had two men on a winch at that time...when the up and down winch was picking up the container, he couldn't get it over the...side of the ship, it was just too heavy. And the hatch boss got exasperated and he made the...the winchman get off the winch and he took the winch and as a consequence they lifted it up and tried to swing it over the side of the ship and it caught the rail of the ship and the boom bent and a block hit the up and down deckman across the side of his head and it's just a miracle that he wasn't killed. That was just an instance to show that this container which was an 8'x8'x10' was way overfilled, way overloaded, but nobody knew it. That was kind of the forerunner of the larger container, the 8'x8'x20' and the 8'x8'x40'. So actually I think the use of the high-low in the hatch and the small containers that were first introduced in the early fifties and then y'know the introduction of the new type ships. First the ships came in with a great many containers and the conventional

type booms and it was very difficult to load those containers. We had to use drag wires and drag them into place. At that time the hatches were not made for high-lows in the hatch. And it was very difficult if you did try to move containers with high-lows in the hatch. You had to sort of swing the high-low over the coman of the shelter deck of the lower hold because they were still using hatch covers. We had to put a large metal plate down the hatch so that the high-low would land on the metal plate. Then it would be able to be driven into the side of the ship. As time went on the ships became better constructed in that they started to use steel pontoons instead of wooden hatch covers. So now the high-lows could operate much better and in this respect the containers could be moved much more easily, even though the ship was not designed to handle containers, y'know it was designed for general cargo. The introduction of more and more containers finally the more feasible for the ships to be designed let say for 40%, exclusively for containers. So that you might find the hatches designed, they had tracks in them to accept containers only let's say in its number four and number five hatches. Or that these cells which were large enclosures in which the containers, had notches on each corner and they rode into a down, let's say a railway or notches that ran all the way up the hold of a ship but on four corners of the container so that all that the winchman had to do was put the

container into the notches and gradually lower it down into the cell. At times if the hatch, if they didn't have enough containers to fill a cell or they didn't have any containers at all, they could always use general cargo in the cells of those ships. The other hatches of the ship would generally hold general cargo. They always had room for containers on the deck of the ship. This is sort of the beginning of a container ship. The beginning of the type of ship that was gradually designed.

Then it started the development of a versatile container itself. The original ones were all enclosed. They had new types of containers where the top of the container was opened. So that you could put different types of machinery in it. Usually they tried to keep this at the top. If they put it on the bottom the subsequent containers, the open containers were built structurally so that they could support containers put on top of them but there were other containers that were opened completely that had stanchions all around their base in which they'd load the drums. So that the diversity started in the type of containers that were being handled and by the type of service being offered by the shipping companies. Eventually this led to the introduction to the LASH ship which is the loading of complete barges through the after end of the ship. And then they run on trollies and are deposited in the ship itself. And in these barges they can hold, I think, four, five or six

containers. So that eventually the outcome is going to be that there'll be no longshoremen at all involved in different operations. And the LASH operation is almost one of them. They hire a gang for the whole ship but very few, but I don't know what the hold men do on this ship. The winchmen don't do anything but maybe give a signal or something. Some places use half a gang on these LASH ships, some places use a full gang. But in reality when you talk about automation's impact on the waterfront the ultimate goal of the shipowners is to eliminate the longshoremen altogether.

The accounts by the men of their own work experience can be summarized as follows:

(1) The work was hard. There were few machines and almost all the cargo had to be handled. Physical strength was required. The men worked long hours, often in terrible weather conditions. The casual nature of the work often meant that the men would not find work even though they would spend a whole day shaping-up at various piers. But the traditional structure of the work gang, as a work community, did give meaning to work.

(2) The shipping companies developed capital intensive technologies to increase their profits and stabilize the nature of the work in the industry. This resulted in work that wasn't as physically hard. It also displaced thousands of workers and led to a degradation of skill.³ These technologies displaced workers. Many piers were shut

down. As a result of the degradation of skill: new technologies required workers with less skill. On the piers that shut down, the gangs were broken up and the workplace community dissolved.

It is the dissolution of workplace community that explains the informal resistance to work of even those men who claim they want to work. Outside of the traditional gang structure, work is no longer meaningful. The traditional social bonds that governed work for these men no longer exist. These men, if they are to work, will be assigned a gang in the hiring hall. They are no longer part of the face to face, primary group relations of the old work gang.

The arbitrary assignment of gangs in the hiring hall precludes meaningful work. It is meaningful work that these men seek. They want to work within a clearly defined gang structure with a community of workers with whom they share a common history. In the process of the shape-up in the hiring hall they work in a gang as a stranger. As Sabu says, "You are low man on the totem pole."

The men in the hiring hall are not resisting work in general. They do resist work that is no longer meaningful in the context of a community of workers. It is the absence of community that determines their resistance to work at the informal level. If the community could be reconstituted, as Sally says, "They'd go back to work tomorrow." Since the community of work is not likely to be reconstituted,

because of the shipping companies commitment to capital intensive technologies, workers create community elsewhere. It is thus that these longshoremen have attempted to recreate class community in the hiring hall and in their non-work time, as I will demonstrate in the following chapters.

In a job that was physically difficult and practically dangerous, it was necessary for the workers to cooperate. In the actual work it was necessary to work with a partner. Without the partnership system it would have been impossible for men to stack 200 pound bags of flour four high. The cooperative work of the partnership system was a structural necessity of the work itself. The importance of the cooperative nature of work led the men to value each other as good workers. In Bill's account, being a good worker is more important than a worker's racial identity. It is not that the men are racist or not racist, but that the structural necessity of the job encouraged the priority of work over individual prejudice. In the value system of the waterfront gang, the highest praise one worker can give another is to call him "a working stiff." The worker acknowledges that a good worker makes it easier for all the men in the gang. The sharing of labor in situations where everyone is equal meant that they all shared the burden of the work. The shared nature of the work enabled them to share also in the culture of work (the comradeship, the

joking, etc.). It enabled sharing all the ways of work. This sharing included the physical aspects of work as well as the positive aspects of getting a job done, of doing it well, of enjoying the comradeship of the work.

Although it is greatly transformed, this community of work still exists in the hiring hall and often in non-work time. Although the gang has been dissolved, the community still exists at the informal level. This explains how men seemingly separated and degraded by automation can still maintain a strong political position in the ongoing struggle between the shipping companies, the union and the rank and file. Because the community of workers still exists in the hiring hall, the men's needs must be met and they are able to resist major alterations in the GAI.

To repeat, it is at the informal level of their daily lives in relation to the transformation of work that we see expressed the dialectic of resistance and accommodation (or of informal and formal resistance). More than that, in relation to these transformations they become reluctant theorists and practical Marxists. In the way they treat their work, I want to bring out in closing this chapter, the men are not only involved in informal resistance to work. Here we see them understanding the nature of these transformations in a critical way of their own. That process of their own understanding makes them what I call here reluctant theorists and practical Marxists.

Longshoremen as Reluctant Theorists and Practical Marxists

For getting paid while not working, the longshoremen on the GAI have been criticized by other longshoremen (Whitey and Babalu), their friends and neighbors, and the daily newspapers.⁴ The longshoremen display a practical sense of Marx's labor theory of value when answering these charges. Although reluctant to theorize in general, they do it when they are criticized. The men believe that they won the GAI through union struggle and that they earned it with years of hard work on the piers of New York.

On the informal level, and reluctantly, they theorize that they have produced the profits for the shipping companies and the stevedore companies far and above the wages they were paid. Sabu displays this practical Marxism. When interviewed and asked to explain the GAI, he stated:

"They've made more profits than you could possible think of. Has to be, and I and many people in my category made them the profit over the year.s"

Sabu and other longshoremen like him would not like to be called Marxists. They do not see themselves as such. Nor do they see themselves as social theorists. However, in terms of their practical experience as workers, they have developed a common sense notion of the labor theory of value and of exploitation. That is, they understand that they have been paid less than their worth and that without their labor there would be no profits. This is clear in Big Tom's

statement on the checker's problem which is excerpted from my field notes.

They say they want checkers to do more stripping and stuffing. On the other hand, the shipping companies don't want the stripping and stuffing done by longshoremen because it's too expensive. And then they take their case to court and win. It's a blatant contradiction.

All they really care about is reducing costs. And they'll try and do it in any way that they can. This whole thing to do with the checkers is just an attempt to reduce the GAI. They'll never be successful. We'll never let them reduce the GAI. It's a blatant contradiction.

...10,000,000 manhours. Where do you think they get that much money to pay us for that much GAI? Surplus profits. It all comes out of surplus profits. Who do you think made them their profits? Who do you think?

The men are in no sense formal Marxists. Marx for these men means Stalinism and totalitarianism. Yet Marx was not a Stalinist, and the reluctant theorizing on the origin of profit of these longshoremen seems true to the spirit of Marx himself at the informal level. The concerns of the men are the same as Marx, in that they clearly view their own collective labor as value producing. For Marx, the labor theory of value is the social form that value production takes in capitalist society. I. I. Rubin expresses that theory in these terms in his Essays on Marx's Theory of Value.

...value does not characterize things but human relations in which things are produced. It is not a property of things but a social form acquired by things due to the fact that people enter into determined production relations with each other through things. Value is a social relation taken as a thing, a production relation among people which takes the form of a property of things. Work relations

among commodity producers or social labor are materialized or crystalized in the value of a product of labor. This means that a determined social form of organization of labor is consistent with a particular social form of product of labor. 'Labor which creates...exchange value is a specific social form of labor. It creates a determined social form of wealth exchange value.'⁵

The labor theory of value socially links human productive activity, or work, to the marketplace where commodities are exchanged. The labor theory of value links the world of work and workers to the world of capital and capitalists. Marx's theory of value is not only an economic theory but a social theory in which the productive activity of workers takes a social form. It is the social production of workers that creates value and thus surplus value. Marx explains this in Volume One of Capital as follows:

Capitalist production is not merely the production of commodities, it is essentially the production of surplus-value. The laborer produces, not for himself but for capital. It no longer suffices, therefore that he should simply produce. He must produce surplus-value. That laborer alone is productive, who produces surplus-value for the capitalist, and thus works for the self expansion of capital. If we may take an example from outside the sphere of production of material objects, a schoolmaster is a productive laborer when in addition to belaboring the heads of his scholars, he works like a horse to enrich the school proprietor. That the latter has laid out his capital in a teaching factory, instead of in a sausage factory does not alter the relation. Hence the notion of productive laborer implies not only a relation between work and useful effect, between laborer and product of labor, but also a specific social relation of production, a relation that has sprung up historically and stamps the laborer as the direct means of creating surplus value.⁶

In the same way that Sabu and Big Tom have reluctantly

theorized as practical Marxists, so does Bowly in this long excerpt from an interview with him.

Bowly

Well eventually they are going to get rid of us, there's a lot less of us now you know.

They're making more now than years ago. They quadrupled their profits because of containerization. It used to take us ten to twelve days to unload a ship. Now a ship comes in they discharge it and load it in twenty-four hours its out of port again. Which makes up a lot of time. Travel, they get all that travel time the ships are back and forth more times.

Even with containerization you still need men. Who's going to do the work? You've got to have men, how would you make profits without the men. The men work the machines now. The containers don't move by themselves. Even if they moved by themselves off the ship, once they get on the dock you have to have a driver with a truck to take it to a spot where a guy with a fork-lift will take it off and stack them up. Then the trucks from the outside that come to pick it up. You need a guy to put that container on the truck. On the ship they have an overhead crane, on a containership, run by just one man, an engineer. Now just one guy can unload a ship. He has to put them on top of a truck. The trucks line up along the stringpiece as he comes out with the container there's a truck there drops it on the flatbed and

and the guy pulls away. The crane is overhead takes the container slides it out and puts it on the truck, automatically he unhooks it all by themselves. Sometimes it doesn't hook up on the truck right so they have some kind of gadget that goes into these four spikes and you see they fit right into the four ends of the container. In other words, the truck is a rectangle and they got a hook here and they fit into an iron bar the guy sets it right in and it locks. Sometimes they don't lock so the guy on the dock will lock it and make sure it won't bounce off.

The GAI is fair I worked forty-one years for it. What about all the money that I lost going down the docks and not getting paid. Working half days if it rained. They'd knock you off now they can't do it anymore. I feel that I'm getting even.

Look at the ships that are coming in. They have ships that carry 200 containers do you realize how much cargo that is and it can now be loaded and unloaded in a day. Do you know how much money that is? They're making hundreds of millions of dollars. The GAI is like a drop in the bucket for them and the newspapers make such a stink about it. The shippers make millions, the stevedores make millions, the companies that make containers make millions. How much profit would they have made without us. We worked like animals all these years. We made millions for them and they make a stink about it what do they know?

As practical Marxists, longshoremen of the GAI are not revolutionaries. Nor could they explain in detail the labor theory of value. What I show here is that they have common sense notions of exploitation and of surplus value. It is in terms of these common sense notions that they understand the GAI as earned. Or, as Bowly said, "It's getting even."

Although not revolutionaries in the Marxist sense, at the informal level it is clear that they are willing to resist any attempts at reducing the GAI. The GAI for these men is "getting even" with the class of shipowners and stevedores who have profited from the labor of longshoremen. As practical Marxists the longshoremen understand the GAI as class struggle. In that class struggle, the GAI is evidence of a partial victory for them, as workers. This holds true for them even though this victory is being continually threatened.

The GAI as victory for these longshoremen over the shipowners and stevedores functions to reinforce the community of these men as workers. They not only have a similar cultural and work experience, they also have the experience of struggling together for GAI and the common experience of living from the benefits of the GAI.

The men on the GAI, as reluctant theorists, have formulated their life history as informal resistance, a form of opposing conditions which often brutalized them on the

waterfront. But it was a continuous struggle at the informal level. By that struggle, the longshoremen on the GAI, as a specific working class community, have won back a portion of the profits that they produced.

I conclude this chapter with a militant statement from my field notes by Baldo, the carpenter. The statement is made in response to critics of the GAI. His words clearly illustrate my sense of these men as practical Marxists.

I'm a carpenter we're the first to badge out. I go home and then to the handball courts. Neighbors ask me if I'm working, or "why I'm home so early." I tell them I worked nights or late afternoons. It's none of their fucking business. If I told them they'd make a big thing about it. "How unfair it is," how easy I have it, how lazy I am. I say fuck them. They didn't give a shit about me, when I was working my balls off. About that they didn't care, they never said it was unfair when we worked day and night for seven days a week, that was all right. Let them all fuck themselves.

I remember we had to show up with our hooks, if we didn't have our hooks on our shoulder they wouldn't hire us. We broke our backs. We worked before they had machines. No one worked as hard as we did.

They don't know. I would call my brother and we would shape-up on Sunday afternoons, sometimes we wouldn't get work and sometimes we would work to twelve at night, and then be at the hall at 6:30 Monday morning. Those fucks don't know what hard work is. We've earned this.

In their understanding of the world around them, the senior longshoremen clearly ground the present in a workplace community out of their past, the old work gang.

Notes

1. E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, New York: Vintage Books, 1963.
2. Gene Ruffini, "The 70G a Year Dock Worker," New York Post, February 1, 1979, 1. Joseph Martin and Brian Kates, "500 longshoremen got 20G for no work in '78," Daily News, February 2, 1979.
3. Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974.
4. New York Post, February 1, 1979.
5. I. I. Rubin, Essays on Marx's Theory of Value, Detroit: Black & Red, 1972, 69.
6. Karl Marx, Capital: Volume I, New York: International Publishers, 1968, 509.

Chapter Three

WORKPLACE COMMUNITY: OLD WORK GANG

This study is concerned with the changes that occur in the daily life of workers when they are separated from the workplace. The key question for this chapter is whether occupational community is possible when workers are isolated from the workplace. This chapter explores the potentialities that exist within the hiring hall for the maintenance of working class community life for longshoremen on the GAI. This chapter displays the dialectic of resistance and accommodation in the everyday lives of longshoremen in the hiring hall.

There exist contradictory tendencies in the workplace for the maintenance of working class community and for the potential of workers increasing control of their daily lives. On one hand, the workplace has reinforced the hierarchical relations of production which maintain the workers in a subordinated position to the owners and managers of production. In short, the workers accommodate to the forces of the workplace. Thus the interaction in the hiring hall can reproduce the hierarchical relations of the workplace, hence the workers conform. On the other hand a liberatory potential exists in the workplace because of the collective and social nature of production in the modern

mass setting.¹ It can provide the social cohesion necessary for workers to produce a worker community in which they are consciously concerned with controlling their own lives, creating their own institutions and collectively fulfilling their own needs. The workplace creates a potential for worker resistance.

This is why the hiring hall displays the dialectic of accommodation and resistance, or of informal versus formal resistance.

I agree with E. P. Thompson when he stated that "... class consciousness is the way in which these (class) experiences are handled in cultural terms, embodied in traditions, value systems, ideas and institutional forms."²

For longshoremen, central to their collective life in the workplace has been the institution which has regulated their hiring, from old shape-up to the newer hiring halls regulated by government agencies. For men on the Guarantee, the government regulated hiring halls are important because it is there that they meet for three hours each day as a group and that the potential for informal workplace community exists.

Transformation in Hiring: Shape-up to Computer Hiring of Longshoremen

Dock work in the New York-New Jersey port has been transformed greatly in recent decades. It changed from the

shape-up of casual workers at the various piers under the arbitrary despotism of the hiring boss, to the rationalized computer hiring of a stable workforce of longshoremen. A short history of this institutional transformation is necessary for the understanding of the culture of the hiring hall.

The power of the hiring foreman under the shape-up was almost absolute. The hiring foreman's power was based on his assignment of jobs in a workforce in which the number of workers always outnumbered the number of jobs. The power of the hiring foreman was based on his control of the livelihoods of longshoremen. It was a power that was frequently abused and often based on nepotism, kickbacks, fear and corruption. In the following statement Malcolm Johnson in Crime on the Labor Front expresses the arbitrary nature of the control of the hiring foremen over the lives of the workers.

In the 1930's during the depression 500 men lined up at a New York pier hoping for work. A ship was in, the first in weeks. A new hiring boss came out on the pier. In his hand were 100 brass checks, each token of employment for use in collecting pay. The hiring boss took one look at the gaunt, desperate faces of those 500 men and lost his nerve. With a gesture of resignation he tossed the 100 checks into the air, turned and walked away. Five hundred men fought like animals for a hundred brass checks and a half a days work. More recently in 1949, when a pier long idle reopened, 2,000 men were in the first shape-up, of which only 140 were hired.³

The men were not protected from the corruption of the shape-up by the union; the union itself substantially

benefited from the system.⁴ The men have not forgotten the brutality and corruption of the shape-up. They have not forgotten the nepotism of the hiring boss, who gave preference to relatives, or to those who shopped at his uncle's fruit store, or to those who did him personal favors. Often they had to bribe the hiring boss to get a job, or play his games (numbers), or succumb to his "loan-sharking."

Though hiring is no longer under the arbitrary control of the hiring boss, the men's hate for the system is not dead. The following discussion between Bowly and Freddy in the hiring hall expresses their remembrances of the corruption of the shape-up.

Freddy, "Look, there's Pat, that's a bastard."

I ask Freddy who Pat is?

Freddy: Pat was a hiring boss and a real bitch. If there were ten jobs he would hire nine coloreds.

Bowly: He would lend money to the moulies [short for mouligons, eggplants, the Italian longshoremen's nickname for blacks.] And then he would be sure that they would work so he could make his money back. He had to hire the moulies if he was going to make a profit.

Freddy: That bastard would hire the worst workers to make sure he'd make a profit. One time he sends me a worker, he shows up late and there really is no work. I have him load twenty-five cases he works slow but when he is finished he sits down. All the other men are working and this nigger is sitting. A big truck comes in and I tell him to unload it. He refuses. He tells me that he has worked already and now he's last on line for work. I tell him there's no fucking line, that he's the only guy that's not working and that he must do it. He refuses and I tell him to go home.

A half hour later he comes back with Pat. He tells me that I got to put him back on, I tell him I won't. Pat tells me that if I don't that he'll have trouble with the N.A.A.C.P. I tell him that I sent him home not you. If the N.A.A.C.P. comes to him send them to me and I'll tell them what this guy did and they'll have to agree with me. I refused to put the guy back on and Pat left angry.

I knew full well the N.A.A.C.P. wasn't going to come down. Pat couldn't give a fuck about the N.A.A.C.P. All he cared about was that this guy was hired for the day so that he could get his money back.

Bowly: A lot of colored would borrow money from the hiring bosses even though they didn't need the money because they knew that as long as they owed the hiring boss money they would always work. So they'd lose the interest on the loan but they always knew they would work.

The men no longer shape-up at the piers, they are no longer at the arbitrary disposal of the arrival and departure of ships. As a result of rank and file actions and the New York Crime Commission hearings:

The legislatures of the states of New York and New Jersey by overwhelming vote enacted the "Bi-State Compact" in 1953 to rectify practices on the Waterfront. The legislation provided for the establishment of a Waterfront Commission, which was given broad powers to bring about reforms on the docks. Included in the legislative directives were compulsory registration of longshoremen and hiring agents, surveillance of the hiring process, and decasualization of the labor force.⁵

With the implementation of the GAI, the closing of the register, and the computerization of hiring (all discussed in the last chapter), work within the industry has been stabilized. The "dog eat dog" competition for work among the men has been transformed into relatively friendly relations within the hiring hall. Men who at one time fought

with each other for jobs are now discussing in a leisurely way the upcoming elections or yesterday's football game over coffee and a buttered roll.

Where the shape-up maintained control over the men through force and corruption, the Waterfront Commission regulated hiring hall maintains the worker's subordination to the shipping companies in a rational and non-arbitrary manner. They have cleaned up the nepotism and the "racket ridden" nature of the shape-up. The despotism of the hiring boss has been undermined. With the guarantee of income independent of work, the ferocious competition for jobs of the casual laborer has disappeared and has resulted in the potential for informal worker community in the hiring hall. At the same time the worker has been made subordinate to rational, computer regulated control under which he has few options. He no longer has the freedom of the casual laborer to refuse work.

The Contradiction

Every workday longshoremen who have not received orders to work a pier report to the 60th Street hiring hall in Brooklyn to badge-in and make themselves available for work for the day. Depending on how busy the New York-New Jersey port is, the men may find work for the day. Because of the GAI, those who do not find work that day will still receive a day's wage.

The men that I am studying rarely work because of their high seniority and the closing of the pier due to automation. These men had been hardworking for thirty to forty years. In the past they would work with their gang when their pier was busy and would "shape" other piers when it wasn't. They worked seven days a week and averaged twenty hours in overtime a week. They started working before automation and before containerization. The work was hard and a longshoreman had to be tough and strong to do the work. They understood this and they took pride in their work.

In the past when they shaped-up at the piers or in the hiring halls they would often fight with each other for jobs. Now they worry about working and will "gamble on debits," on losing a day's pay rather than work.

Work offered them an identity and a shared occupational experience with a community of workers. This community was not only defined instrumentally, for the money, but culturally as well. The time they spent together often continued into the hours after work. They all tended to be Italians, they lived in the same neighborhood, attended the same churches, and their children attended the same schools. For the most part they all share a similar biography.

Eventually most of them moved out of the old neighborhood and the community depended almost totally on their

shared work experience. For many of the men the GAI shut off this community. This sense of a loss of workers' community is lamented by Rudy.

My opinion on the guarantee is that I would have felt better if the pier had never closed down. It would've been better for us, we were in stride. We'd meet at the pier at 6:00. We'd argue, say "Hello, how are you," by 9:00 we'd be working, we were in stride.

How long, and how many times, how many days can you wash the car. I hang out but when I was working I had a place to go and things to do. We'd work, we'd argue, we'd play cards. I was with the boys all day. We knew what we were doing, now there is no steadyness.

There is a crucial contradiction here. It is the contradiction that exists between the men's claim that they miss working and their actual behavior in the hiring hall that is tantamount to a refusal to work. The contradiction between their claim of wanting to work and the refusal to work is expressed in the following hiring hall situation.

The situation is typical during the summer and during the Christmas vacation periods. It is the result of a busy port, with lots of work during a time when many men are on vacation. This results in the possibility that the senior men will have to go to work.

The men are nervous in the hall; they know that they might have to go to work. Lenny shouts, "This is a working day, men."

Earl, the manager of the hiring hall for the Water-front Commission, begins the inverse order of hiring. He starts with A and goes down to G men (from those with

the highest seniority to those with the lowest seniority) and then begins again backwards. If the men now refuse to take a job, they will be debited (penalized a day's pay). If they accumulate three debits because they have not made themselves available for work, they will be suspended from the GAI for one year.

Earl calls the B men and finally reaches the A men. "Last call for A men."

There is a rush of men towards Earl. The men offer their cards to the dispatchers, the last jobs are taken, saving the rest of the men from being debited. The men are happy, they begin to joke with each other, expecting to badge-out, when Earl's voice is heard again.

The badge-out will be delayed. We are awaiting orders from Port Newark.

The orders from Port Newark come in. There's a lot of work and the war of nerves begins again for the A men. The inverse order of hiring begins from where it left off.

"Third call for A men."

No one moves. Earl is angry.

"This is not a game. Don't give me this nip and tuck shit."

The men are gambling that someone else will take a job and no one moves.

Earl begins to count,

1 - 2 - 3. This is not a game. You guys seem to think this is a game. O.K. you've all got debits. That's it.

Some men rush up to take jobs. But Earl will have none of it. Earl walks away fuming as a crowd of men rush around him. Some of the men are arguing with each other, two men begin to shove each other, one hundred and fifty men have been debited.

The men are no longer fighting for work, they are now gambling with debits not to work. It is this contradiction between the claim to want to work with their refusal to work when it is available that I will attempt to explain as I describe the culture of the hiring hall.

The Hiring Hall Today

The hiring hall is the major source of my research. It is here that I could meet with the men in groups and on their own terms. The hiring hall is an important element in the working class community life of all Brooklyn longshoremen. For the men on the Guarantee who rarely work, it is the crucial element in their working class way of life. It is here that they meet face to face and recount their daily experiences and their understandings of the world around them.

It is in the hiring hall that the affiliations that were the result of shared work and neighborhood experience are maintained now that work is part of their past history and they live in different neighborhoods.

On a typical workday the hiring hall is crowded with

men who belong to steady work gangs who did not receive "prior day orders" (there was no ship and thus no work on the pier that day), men with C to G cards who do not belong to any gang and men with B and A cards (senior longshoremen) who no longer belong to a work gang. All of these men are making themselves available for work for the day. The Guarantee and the closing of the register have decasualized the industry and have eliminated the competition and corruption of the industry that exciting novels and movies were based on (On the Waterfront and Slaughter on 10th Avenue).⁶

The hiring hall is an enclave of working class cultural life where the men now freely associate with each other. Now there is a minimum of worker antagonisms, which were once the result of fierce competition for jobs.

When the weather is good the men will congregate both inside and outside of the hiring hall. Outside on the street there are longshoremen hawking merchandise out of the trunks of their cars. Guido and Bill (the longshoremen named in this description of the hiring hall are all members of the sample) are selling hairbrushes, aftershave lotion, baby shampoo and other toiletries. Other longshoremen merchandise work clothing, toys and automotive items.

Sally and Pete are discussing union politics. Sally is very critical of Anthony Scotto. Pete counters with, "the union has been very good to us...Anthony has given us

dignity."

When all the doors are open to the hall the men sit around in front of the hall. If it is winter or it is raining the men are jammed into the hall. They often argue about smoking, the smokers versus the non-smokers. They talk about sports and gambling. They read the Daily News and collectively discuss the important stories.

On Fridays Tony Clean-head, who takes numbers, comes to distribute the men's checks, a service for his customers. Gambling is an important activity and there is much talk of numbers and horse playing throughout the hall.

Big Jim works steady on 39th Street (Brooklyn's one container operation). When he's in the hall he will talk of how the modernization of container operations has changed the trade. Men like Sally and Charlie work two or three days a week and are talking about problems in the Canadian maritime industry that are effecting the work on their pier. The men on the GAI are concerned with the amount of shipping in the port because it has a vital effect on the maintenance of their status.

Red and Bowly are discussing their grandchildren. A thick wad of paper bounces off Bowly's head as they turn in the direction from which the paper was thrown. Jerry pokes Red in the back. Red turns toward Lippy and points a finger at him as a mock threat. Whatever the topic of conversation, there is a continuous stream of fooling around, both verbal

and physical. It lasts until the badge-out and the hours of waiting to work are over and the men leave the hiring hall. The rest of this chapter will explore the hiring hall in its specific elements which are organized around the informal conversations of the men. What is the potential of these informal shared ways of life, we ask, to sustain working class community and hence an autonomous culture of resistance.

Sports Talk

It's late September 1977. The hall is crowded with men who are concerned about the pennant race in the American League. Baltimore is $1\frac{1}{2}$ games out of first place.

Tom: Baltimore's got it in the bag [and he smiles at Frankie].

Frankie Moustache: Nah, the Yankees are going to win. Cause if they don't win, I won't badge-in here anymore. I won't be able to face you guys anymore. You won't let me live that down.

Tom: You won't show up here anymore?

Frankie Moustache: I'll have to badge-in in the other hall. You'd never let me live that down.

Sally: They'd better not blow it.

Frankie Moustache: The only way the Yankees will lose is if they beat themselves.

Paul: The Yanks, the Yanks will win and they'll win the World Series.

Tom: Yeah, what do you know.

Bowly: A year ago he didn't know where first base was.

Sport is a central topic for the men in the hall.

Major sports events such as the Tom Seaver trade, the Super Bowl or tomorrow's Knick game are treated with the same importance as Presidential elections and the S.A.L.T. talks. Thus, it should not be surprising that if the Yankees lose the pennant, Frankie Moustache will be ridiculed as if he had made the big error that lost the game. Frankie is identified by the men as being a Yankee fan, and his identity is intertwined with the success of the team. When the Yankees eventually win the 1977 World Series, Bowly feels impelled to admit that the Yankees are the best team, a major act of "eating crow" for a Met fan.

Through sports talk the men produce and sustain a meaningful world for themselves. They define themselves in terms of the teams they root for. This vicarious participation in sports becomes real within the context of the competitive interaction that comprises sports talk in the hiring hall. Yankee fans are now at the top of the pecking order and Met fans are reduced to the status of rooting against the Yankees, since the Mets are in last place. In terms of the culture of the hiring hall, when Red says, "they'd better win," he is also saying, "if they win, I win."

The men are given status within the hall to the extent that they are knowledgeable about sports. If a worker can continually make good predictions on the outcome of sports events or be able to explain why an outcome occurred, his position within the work group is solidified. This is

especially true in terms of gambling. Leo's picks at the racetrack are sought after by the other men because they have paid off in the past. Sports knowledge is seen by the men as symbolic of their competence in life generally. The ridicule of one's sports sense, then, is the ridicule of one's common sense.

At the same time sporting events enable them to participate in history as it happens. Their participation may be relatively passive but at least they can observe the "epic spectacle" of the super bowl. They have no access to the major political events of the time. Present history is impersonal and outside of their daily lives. The history of sports is knowable. It allows us to participate in the exciting immediacy of the outcome of an event because it is observable and doesn't go on "behind closed doors."

There is also a practical, economic aspect to sports talk: gambling.

"Oh fuck, I missed the number."

The men will collectively discuss the best picks at the tracks in the hope of making extra money. They, like fishermen, will discuss the "ones that got away," the close misses and the bets not made. They talk of historic past killings and runs of bad luck. Yesterday's card games are discussed in detail and with great relish.

Gambling offers actual participation in the sporting life and makes spectator sports even more enjoyable.

Although some of the men jog and play tennis when they leave the hiring hall, for most of them gambling is their sport. Gambling, then, is an activity in which they can more directly participate and display their competence. Being a good worker once served this same function; now, for many of the men gambling, especially card playing, becomes the activity in which they can demonstrate their value in a meaningful way to the other men.

Sports talk and gambling give the men an identity, give them vicarious participation in "sports history" and the "sporting life" and, at the same time, it is ideology in the strict sense. Harry Edwards goes even further:

The circus of sport offers not only social stability but balm for individual stresses and anxieties. The sport fan, for example, finds that the success of his favorite team or athlete reinforces his faith in those values that define established and legitimate means of achievement. He returns from the game to his job or community reassured that his efforts will eventually be successful. So when he is cheering for his team, he is actually cheering for himself. When he shouts "kill the umpire!" he is calling for the destruction of all the impersonal forces that have so often hindered his own achievement.⁸

Although I agree with the above statement, that spectator sports act as a social balm and reinforce the passivity of people, yet there is a less authoritarian aspect to the meaning of sports talk for longshoremen. In the hiring hall sports talk not only reinforces the competitiveness between workers, thus displaying worker accommodation, it also displays resistance. It maintains lines of

communication between men needed for any potential development of worker's community or class consciousness. A most important aspect of sports talk is a shared activity -- the shared fun of discussing yesterday's Met loss and another adventure in the life of Billy Martin. Sports talk reinforces the crucial elements of a shared outlook on the world. That is why it can act as a prerequisite for the development of class consciousness. Sports talk provides a basically sociable way for the men to maintain and continually reestablish contact with each other. Thus, it nourishes tendencies toward resistance.

News Talk

Every morning in the hiring hall the men read the Daily News and The New York Times. They collectively discuss the most important news items. All the men get in their "two cents" whether they are discussing another rate hike by Con Edison, crime in the streets or an editorial on the fiscal crisis.

Bill: Those judges are too lenient, they let out killers and rapers too easy, much too easy.

Charlie: Did you see Moynihan's letter in The New York Times?

Bowly: Yeah, the one on aid. The one that said we should get billions of dollars in aid more than California and don't.

Charlie: Thirty-two billion dollars. What do our congressmen do in Washington? Everybody takes advantage of New York, everybody. We get screwed. They cut police, schools. We get screwed.

The claim has been made on the one hand that workers are authoritarian⁹ and on the other hand that they are apathetic and basically unconcerned about politics.¹⁰ I have found myself guilty of this bias even though all my evidence demonstrates that the men are certainly both concerned and aware of the political events of the time. Just as they were concerned about Moynihan's letter, they were concerned about the Bert Lance hearings.

The hearings occurred during a tight American League pennant race and I expected the conversation to be about the Yankee loss to Boston the night before. As I entered the hiring hall and took my place on line, the major topic of conversation was Bert Lance. Red, Tom, Lippy and Charlie had watched the entire hearing as it was televised on WNET, New York City's Public Broadcasting Channel. George, Bowly, Bill and Jerry had watched part of it. The men's concern about the Bert Lance hearings demonstrates the men's concern for political events. When they were working they had less time for that.

All of the men believed that Lance was guilty but the hearings reinforced the men's beliefs about the political system. It solidified their belief that politicians are not only corrupt but basically incompetent. It also supplied evidence for them of their belief that corruption is the major source of wealth.

Red: They caught the bastard dead to right and he had them shitting in their pants. He's a smart fuck, that

Lance. He turned every question back on them. He made them look bad.

Bowly: Well he went from a \$90 a week teller to a millionaire. He had to be smart...But to do that you have to be a crook...

Charlie: Sure he was a crook, c'mon, how can you do that honestly?

Red: He really made them look bad. Javits is the only one who pinned him down. Javits was good. He's the only one who did his homework...

Lippy: ...what would the banks do to me if I was \$22,000 overdrawn on my account. The bastard gets away with it and I, if I'm a few dollars overdrawn, they make a big stink over it.

Tom: They're all crooks, the liberals, the Democrats, the Republicans, they're all crooks.

The claim of authoritarianism and apathy by social scientists may misperceive the way workers understand the political system of the United States. Many of the men have adopted a "Mafia model" of power. In terms of this model, it is not that workers are politically apathetic but that they are politically powerless. They question their political relevance and ask themselves, "Why should I vote when the system is structured against me?" It is not that workers are cynical¹¹ but that they perceive political corruption as the inevitable governing principle of all the political organizations they know of. For the men the difference between the Mafia and "respectable" politics, whether it's union, big business or government, is that the Mafia never claims honesty. In all else the same holds for the system as for the Mafia: A few rule by force, the rest keep silent.

Corruption and authoritarianism have been a daily circumstance in their lives whether it was in the shape-up or at the workplace, or even in the "old neighborhood." It should not be surprising then, if the corruption and authoritarianism of their daily lives is transformed into their perception of "how the world works." The Mafia model of power transforms all forms of political action into a form of corruption, and thus into the fact that "they are all crooks." The men believe then, that all the attempts at social change inevitably fail. The Mafia model of power cripples social change and maintains the men's perception of their own powerlessness. The men's sense that political corruption filters into all the formal institutions of their daily lives is expressed in the following hiring hall exchange on the Richard Nixon-David Frost interviews.

Lippy: Yeah I saw that fuckin liar, he says he didn't do anything. He has the nerve to say, to compare himself to Truman. You know, Billy, you know I'm a Republican and I never liked Truman. But Truman never did anything like Nixon and that fuck has the nerve to compare himself with Truman.

Guido interrupts Lippy. (Guido, like the great majority of men in the hiring hall is a Democrat.)

I told you not to vote for that bum.

Lippy, as the result of his loyalty to the Republican cause, is a political outsider and his views are treated with skepticism by the other men.

Guido: They're all corrupt, Truman was too. They didn't get caught. It's the way people are. In the Knights of Columbus when I became President they wanted me to

take a percentage of the dues. I wouldn't, they thought I was crazy. I was doing the right thing and they said I was crazy. I quit, I had to.

All of the men on the line agreed with Guido's sense of the inevitability of political corruption. Tom, shaking his head, summed it up.

Tom: All the politicians are same. They're all bums.

Television Talk

The talk in the hall is often about yesterday's television programs. The sport and news events, the series and the specials are regularly watched and then analyzed collectively in the hall. Much of the talk revolves around accounts of the most enjoyable segments of a show. They retell jokes that they found particularly funny. But they are also concerned with the social meaning of programs. The men display their attitudes in ways other than answering specific questions that I ask them: their views on particular issues are expressed in relation to the events that they observe and experience in their daily lives. Often these big events are television programs and the men display their attitudes in terms of these concrete events. The importance of television talk is that it reveals the more liberatory elements of the men's attitudes. The longshoremen are not simply authoritarian or apathetic. In TV talk they often display their other side.

The showing of The Godfather on TV is just such an

event. It is especially significant because almost all of the men on the line are Sicilian and the movie is uniquely meaningful to them.

Bowly: Did ya see the Godfather, a great movie...I don't know what all this crap about the movie being against Italians is. It's not, they had this disclaimer before the movie and I don't think Capola, after all he's Italian, would he make a movie against Italian Americans?

Jerry: How could you say that? Of course it discriminates against Italians.

Red: It shows all Italians as killers and pasta-benders. We're not, we're hardworking men.

Bill: Sure they never should have showed that on television. It shows Italians as murderers and thieves who are only into killing each other and they shouldn't show all the violence on TV. It's terrible, children are watching. It's bad for them to see it and then they'll all think that Italians are violent. It's a terrible movie and shouldn't be shown on TV.

Tom: How many Italians are criminals? How many?

Augie: Less than one percent.

Bill: It was in the papers.

Augie: Italians are hardworking...people, we always worked hard. We built New York City...Do we have it easy? No.

Bill: Sure, they show you that Italians had it rough when they came here, but what did we do? We worked. We worked from morning till night. In the movie it shows not that we were hard workers but that we killed our way out of the slums, that we were murderers and killers.

Augie: It's a very good movie, good acting, exciting and they didn't mean the movie to be discriminatory. But the people who watch it they don't understand that, they don't know that all Italians are hardworking men. They watch the movie and they think all Italians are Mafia. You visit out of town or you try to open a business out of town and they think you're Mafia. They think all Italians are Mafia. That's why they

shouldn't have shown the movie on TV. It makes it hard on Italians.

But we Italians we can't get together. Blacks, Jews, even homosexuals if they think something on TV discriminates against them they get it off TV. But Italians they can't organize themselves so they show the "Godfather" on TV.

The men seem to understand that the problem is not just prejudice against Italians but more specifically it is also the result of a lack of solidarity among Italians. The men agreed with Augie's assertion and seemed to envy the organizational abilities of other minorities. The lesson worth learning for them is that they are helpless before the oppressive conditions of their lives if they are unable to organize. Earlier some of the men had claimed that all union benefits had really been won because of the efforts of the rank and file. The potential for solidarity exists in the men's realization that they can only overcome their powerlessness through community. They are informally constructing that community through their collective participation within the hiring hall.

The men all watched Roots and it was the talk of the hiring hall for the week that it was on.

John: Did you see what they did to their family.

Red: I didn't know that they abused the black women the way they did. I couldn't get over the way Chuck Connors was in the program.

John: What a choice, his balls or his foot. That's not a choice.

Of all the men only one believed that the program would have a bad effect on those who watched it.

Jerry: Sure, I enjoyed it but I don't think they should have put it on TV. It gives them a good reason to riot. It's going to cause trouble.

One of the major indicators of worker authoritarianism has been their purported racism. Hamilton¹² has made an impressive argument against this claim. The Roots discussion demonstrates that the longshoremen on the line are not simply racist and anti-democratic.

The picture that emerges from the men's discussion of Roots complicates the claim of working class prejudice. I am not arguing against the notion that workers are racist, but that the uncomplicated, blanket designation of them as racist is an oversimplification. In their informal talk the men demonstrate the realization that the history of Blacks is different from their own immigrant history. They realize that they are ignorant of Black history and voice a real compassion for the plight of Blacks. White working class racism is a problem, but a complicated problem in which the contradiction between resistance and accommodation is sustained. This contradiction is expressed in their informal conversations. It is the same longshoremen who say, "I wouldn't want the moulies to live in my neighborhood." who have the ability to work and joke together both on the piers and in the hiring halls.

A part of the evidence for the charge of authoritarianism has been the attitudes of workers toward college students. This also is a complicated issue, as the men's

discussion of Washington Behind Closed Doors shows.

Guido: Did you see Washington Behind Closed Doors? I watched it every night. That Nixon the rat fuck, he really fucked up this country. You should of seen some of the things they did. They fucked over 15,000 student demonstrators, they framed them. Nixon wanted to kill some of them. What fuckers.

Guido, like many of the men, turns out to have identified not with the authorities but with the demonstrators. They have sons the same age who were in college during the 70's. Some of their sons even participated in similar demonstrations.

The men have a strong sense of the structure of inequality. They understand intimately that "the system" is often structured not only against them but against their children. Another longshoreman on the adjacent line says, "It's the same only story, the rich have power and the poor don't have any."

Whitey: I know. Those bastards wanted to send my kid to jail for fifteen years for one Qualude, for one Qualude because he wouldn't rat on his friends. But Howard Samuels' son gets arrested for heroin possession and nothing happent to him, nothing. The rich can get away with anything.

This whole ethnographic investigation puts in doubt any simple yes or no on working class racism or authoritarianism. Once more, an ever changing reciprocal interaction between resistance and accommodation (or informal versus formal resistance) seems to make all the difference. Here we see the same workers open to attitudes and actions that run counter to any single scheme now available in social science

-- or to the men themselves.

Joking

Joking is a critique of the formal institutional structure. This critique is facilitated through the violation of the formal order by treating its rule and procedures as problematic. It is thus that the subversive aspects of humor are expressed in the work of Lilienfeld and Bensman.

...an underlying principle of humor is that one violates the tone by a manner that destroys a previous, carefully built-up expectancy and quite often reverses it. Humor destroys the expected mood of the previously defined situation, and with it even the image of the competence of the character portrayed by the performer. 13

Joking is a form of transcendence. This holds true whether it is joking about union politics, high taxes or about prejudice against Italians. It reduces a hard, vicious world to proportions that these men can manage. It enables them to see through it and thus reverse the situation. It transforms the formal, impersonal, institutional world into an informal, personal world which they helped to produce. The following anti-Italian joke is an example of this.

Charlie is telling a joke,

Dominic and Luigi are learning how to fly a helicopter. Dominic goes up and comes down and everything is all right. Luigi goes up and everything seems all right and then all of a sudden he crashes. Dominic runs over and seeing that Luigi is all right asks him what happened. Luigi says, "I went a up 1,000-a feet everything was all-a-right. I went up 3,000-a feet and it-a started to get-a cold so I turned off-a the fan.

The men laugh and pat Charlie on the back. Grippo keeps knocking off everybody's hat. Red threatens to knock his head off. While Red is facing Grippo, Guido raps Red on the head. Red yells, "A fa Napoli, Bowly when are you going to quit." Bowly smiles and looks away. The men are fooling around.

Joking behavior consists of paper throwing, hair messing, head rapping, insults, joke telling, etc. To an observer outside of the work group, the behavior would be interpreted as hostile and overtly aggressive behavior. Instead, I saw it as behavior that "...serves as an important boundary and symbol of group solidarity for the longshoring group and probably contributes to some unknown degree to the maintenance of this solidarity."¹⁴

The unique aspect of hiring hall joking behavior for men on the GAI is that it has been removed from the workplace and the competition for work by casual laborers. It is no longer the result of monotony in the workplace¹⁵ or is it the result of antipathy of competitive and hostile groups,¹⁶ nor of the "...irritation of performing arduous labor and/or working in a hazardous place."¹⁷ In the case of longshoremen on the GAI, the joking behavior is closer to what Aronowitz calls play.

Play as here defined is one human activity within Capitalist society that is non-instrumental -- that is produced for its own sake. At the same time its rules are not constructed in order to repress freedom, but to repress arbitrary power and thus assure its fairness. The paradoxical character of

rules of the game within a non-instrumental and non-hierarchical framework distinguishes play from other human activity. The structure of play is constantly evolving according to the modes of interaction produced by the players, as long as that interaction presupposes their equality.¹⁸

Joking behavior in the hiring hall can be perceived as play only because the joking activity now occurs outside of the instrumental function of relieving the tensions and hostility of the workplace. To the extent that joking activity is like play, there is the potential for the development of a community of workers in which hierarchy and the abuse of arbitrary power is suspended. Joking behavior now has the more liberatory potential for enabling workers to freely associate with each other in terms of the meaningful experience of their collective interaction in the hiring hall; which can now be perceived by them as community.

Hiring Hall as Community

Guido: Bill, you make me come in here to hear this crap. I'm better off sitting in my car and reading my paper than listening to this bullshit and watching these animals push each other around.

Bill: You've got the wrong attitude. You're better off in here. You learn things in here, what horse to play, how to fix your house, your car, you learn politics. It's better in here than in the car.

The men agree with Bill as Guido leaves the line to watch over his "car trunk" business. The talk in the hall covers a wide range of topics, Grippo's death from cancer, a grandchild's first steps, a son's flunking out of school,

last night's Knick game, or union politics (a much discussed topic in the hall which will be dealt with in the concluding chapter).

The hiring hall offers an informal occasion to the men to restructure their lives in a meaningful way. In the hiring hall they can hold forum on the world that they participate in. The break-up of the the "old work gang" and the closing of the "old pier" due to automation formally sabotaged the meaningful community that working together had offered them. The guarantee of income along with the dissipation of work community explains the men's resistance to work.

When the men hear Earl's voice, "All men who wish to work hold up their A cards," they stand back in the crowd gambling on taking a debit and hoping that someone will take a job. Work no longer offers an informal community and hence they refuse to work.

The men now collectively fear for John (a B man) when he gets a debit. Bowly philosophically says, "He gambled and lost, he got a debit."

Lippy: You'd think we were in front of a firing squad, the way we worry.

Big Tom: John took a debit. He should go to see Tommy C. (a friendly dispatcher). Tommy will fix it for him.

John: I'll take an afternoon job.

John, worried that there wouldn't be any afternoon jobs, goes to see Tommy C. He gets a job on pier 39 cancelling

the debit.

The A men are happy that they didn't have to gamble on work today. Earl's voice comes over the loudspeaker, "You may now badge-out." The men very orderly badge-out and rush out of the hall. Most of them are on their way Home.

Work no longer has the meaning to these men that it once had. Removed from their workgang, community, for them, has moved into the hiring hall. Their resistance to work is based on this transformation of its meaning to them. To put it simply, "no work without community." For the first time work itself lacks meaning. At the informal level, what has now become meaningful is avoiding it -- and doing so together, as a community at the fringes of work.

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Chapter Five

COMMUNITY IN NEIGHBORHOOD: BEYOND WORK

At the level of the individual worker, this study seeks to determine how the men use their newly achieved non-work time. How do they experience the negative consequences of the loss of work that were reported in Chapter One?

My findings indicate no overall negative consequence of life on the Guarantee. The men do not experience the kind of atonie or normlessness which some researchers and popular writers have found among the retired and the unemployed.¹ Intensive observations over the study period have not revealed any pattern of psychological stress, anxiety, depression, or similar symptoms which could be attributed to the men's use of their own time (in opposition to their labor time) now that they are on the GAI.

While it is true that some of these men may exhibit these symptoms, there is no reason to attribute this to loss of work rather than to other factors not related to work. At the same time, however, there are quite apparent differences in how the men organize their lives now that they are no longer subject to the difficult work process. Although the worker may miss the work as activity and as community, he realizes, at the same time, the inherent

oppressive nature of the work and takes advantage of his ability now to choose alternatives and to create community elsewhere. He cherishes his options not to work, or to work on the sly.

I will now explore the differences in how these men organize their lives beyond work. We find here an active involvement in community, albeit a community altogether outside the workplace.

The informal resistance of longshoremen in the workplace has enabled the senior men to work rarely and still receive full income. Hence they are removed from the necessity of work. They are free to manage their own time much more than when they worked for a shipping company.

With the break-up of the old work gang, community for these men has moved outside the workplace. Community, as shown in the preceding chapter, moved to the fringes of work in the hiring hall. Community moved as well, the present chapter shows, to the neighborhood. The men display the dialectic of resistance and accommodation (or informal versus formal resistance) in their continual quest for community, by way of reorganizing their own time.

Family Activists

Now that these senior longshoremen are removed from the necessity of work, they can participate in family life in ways that they couldn't in the past. Now they are not

only "breadwinners." They can redefine their roles in their families. Some men, who I refer to as family activists, turn out to consciously become proponents of the egalitarian family. They see themselves as equal partners and take a more active role in family life. At this informal level they are no longer passive. They are no longer letting their family life happen to them but are actively restructuring it.

Although not all longshoremen on the GAI manage their free time by becoming increasingly active in their family lives, the majority of the men have become family activists. It is in terms of their informal resistance to a "family life as it's always been" that working class life in general can be portrayed not only as a "world of pain" but also as a world of strength.

Family activists manage their newfound free time by reestablishing strong family ties. They become family activists not only in the sense that they spend more time in family activities but also in the sense that they actively take on family roles and obligations which would have been impossible when they were full-time longshoremen. A good example is the following account by Big Tom.

For so many years my wife had to devote almost her whole life to taking care of Theresa...You know that she is severely retarded but we'd never think of having her put away. Sometimes she'd have convulsions and so she needs continual medication. You have to wash her and all that. My wife took care of her for twenty-two years. Now at least with me home taking care of Tessie by wife can go out

and shop, maybe see her friends, and go out and sell the jewelry she makes. I'm with Theresa every day now.

Big Tom is somewhat extreme in his devotion to the family circle due to the tragedy he and his wife have experienced. But he is by no means unique. This group of family-active men have developed an intense devotion to their family lives, which they can act upon because of the time they now have. This section will deal in detail with the family activism of the men on the GAI.

For many of the men there is a real sense that they are "making up for time lost" during the years when they were working sixty hours a week. Labor which sent them directly to bed at workday's end. They now spend time with their children and their grandchildren. Typical of this is Dom in an excerpt from an interview.

My family enjoys me being home because more or less they have a chauffer, servant...because that's all I am with them right now. I take my daughter, my grandchildren, I take this one here and that one there, to school or I do something for them ...I spend a lot more time with them than I ever had. When they were growing up my wife brought them up. Let's see we're married twenty-eight years, I'd say for twenty-three of those years she brought them up. I was working most of the time when they were little. In fact that's why I'm enjoying the grandchildren more than my own because my grandchildren I'm with them now. When my kids were little I was down on the docks. When I got up in the morning they were asleep, when I left the house, and when I got back at night from work they were asleep. My wife brought them all up.

Bowly, in an interview, expresses the same situation.

I drop over my son's house about 2:00 or 3:00 every day and I play with my grandchild. I watch

her when my son and daughter-in-law have to work. I take her to the park and put her on the swings... we watch Sesame Street together while we eat milk and cookies.

It is not that these men have been reduced to this situation but that they can now freely take part in activities from which work excluded them in the past. It must be remembered that they are not working by choice. If they chose to, they could be the first hired at the hall each day. This sense of joy is expressed by Bill, a man with a reputation as a tough, efficient hatch boss.

I go to science fairs, basketball games in Staten Island. Boy Scout meetings in Long Island...I'm there so often even the dogs get excited when I come over.

Jerry explains his typical day after badging-out in an excerpt from my field notes.

I go home, I don't watch TV it bores me. I watch it a little until my daughter comes over and drops off my grandchildren. She works for Avon and goes from house to house selling cosmetics. So I spend the day keeping my grandchildren occupied.

Now while I'm home I do everything for my wife, everything in the house...I do almost all of the cooking. I've always liked to cook...and I make everything, mostly Italian style because Italian cooking is best. My grandchildren like my Hawaiian chicken. After they finish it they like to lick their fingers it's so good.

These men have free time to enjoy a family life that they always valued but which they had to fit in between working and sleeping. They have become actively involved in raising children or grandchildren as the case may be. They have become actively involved in various household chores. Lippy, Pete and Babalu have spent much of their spare time

fixing up the house, painting, wiring and building furniture. They also echo Jerry's earlier statement, "I do everything for my wife." It is typical for these men on the GAI to help their wives. Charley worked two days a week on Newsprint ships (until that operation recently closed down. He is now on the Guarantee five days a week.). He cooks for his wife and six children when he's not working Newsprint. Chick, in the following quote from an interview, describes how he manages his time after he badges-out of the hiring hall.

How do I use that time? I come home, I go shopping...I don't play horses, I don't gamble, I read. My six kids keep me so busy now that I've this time off. I have no trouble with the time...Being that my wife works I do all the shopping, I do all the cooking...When I come home if I didn't work even before the GAI I'd cook. I like to cook. So even when there wasn't a GAI on those days I didn't work I'd cook. Now with the GAI I cook most of the time. And she don't like cooking that much my wife so she don't care. I cook everything. My kids love what I cook. They love my gravy more than hers cause they tell me. She doesn't have the time to put in like I have. Like this afternoon, I make the soup and everything. I've got the time to do that.

Charley and Jerry are by no means atypical. Then I went to interview Bowly at his home, "a middle income cooperative apartment," in Brooklyn, I went shopping with him at a neighborhood supermarket and then had to wait until he vacuumed his very nicely furnished four room apartment. He, like Charley and Jerry, was willing to help his wife who also worked.

These men seem very different from Pilcher's³

though Portland longshoremen and Bell's⁴ "racket-ridden" longshoremen. These men do value toughness which was essential in the "old days" when the corruption of the hiring process and the difficulty of the physical work required great strength. For these men there isn't a contradiction or "threat" to their masculinity in this redefinition of their work role, that is, tough men doing housework. This lack of contradiction is seen in the following excerpt from an interview with Whitey.

I do everything for my wife. Laundry, I wash the clothes for my wife. I mop floors, I clean the rugs, I do everything.

[Is that manly?]

No I say that's being manly. Anybody who ain't man enough to say that he takes care of his wife and children is not a man to me. To me that's something you love...I'd do anything for my wife and children as far as that goes. A lot of guys are ashamed to push a baby carriage, me I'm proud that's mine. Italian people have always been close to their family, they would help their wives, their children.

[Wasn't being a longshoreman a masculine job in which only the strongest men could do the work?]

Right, right but the strongest person in my eyes would also take care of his family and love his family. Including pushing a baby carriage, mopping a floor or going to the store, carrying the groceries for your wife. That's what I call a man, in my eyes anyway. I see these guys who won't do nothing. They think being a man is making your wife an animal or treating your family like that. I mean I enjoy my family. Doing things for them. I'm not ashamed when I mop the floor for my wife. I would tell anybody that I mopped the floor for my wife. Anybody who says they're ashamed to say it. I tell anybody that I wash clothes for her, I mop the floor, I vacuum. My wife is sick this week. I do everything. I do everything for her even when she

isn't sick.

A point of interest to be noted here is the fact that these Italian longshoremen have had little trouble in adapting to a redefinition of their roles within the family structure. They have become active participants in child care, housework and cooking. The transition from working outside of the house to inside the house has been accomplished with relative ease and with the conscious purpose of sharing the burden of housework with their wives. Longshoremen, such as Whitey, Bowly and Charley, are doing at least as much if not more housework than their wives. These men have thus become proponents of egalitarian family structure and are informally resisting the typical social roles in a sexist society.

The literature on the egalitarian family⁵ demonstrates that, although husbands are doing more housework than in the past, women are still performing almost all housework. Blood and Hamblin⁶ estimate that the non-working wife did 85% of the housework and that working wives did 75% of the housework. Similar findings⁷ have shown that there has been relatively little change in the relation of men to child care and housework.

That longshoremen have more actively participated in child care and housework provides an instance in which working men have actively participated in a change in the definition of traditional sex roles within their households.

It is important to remember Whitey's powerful statement that "I'm not ashamed." Whitey, who doesn't identify himself as a "woman's libber" has made the decision at the informal level: being a man in opposition to tradition can mean not only being a "good provider" but also can mean mopping floors. The fact of his mopping floors is less important than his own ability to do what has been traditionally women's work.

As important as their redefinition of their family role, which in itself justifies my classification of these longshoremen as family activists, is the amount of time they can now freely spend in dealing with family crises. They are in a unique position for this type of family activity because they no longer feel the anxiety of being forced to lose a day's work and they are no longer subject to the absolute discipline of the working day. Thus, it is also with their participation in family crises that they display family activism.

In an age of family disruption and disorganization⁸ the active participation of these men in family life has given them a renewed sense of meaning. In crisis situations they are no longer just fulfilling the normal obligations of family life but they are extending themselves beyond expected obligations.

Augie's Story

...tell me if I'm wrong my kid didn't graduate from high school because he didn't pass English. He passes the regent exam but they didn't pass him. The English teacher at New Utrecht High School didn't like my son. He did something bad, he was drunk in school. His friends dared him and he threw a chair out of a third floor window of the school. The English teacher failed him as a result. He had good marks so he transferred to Madison High he passed the regents there. They have to pass him they didn't. I talked to the principal he said he was to pass. He went to graduation. They said they'd send him his diploma.

This week he comes home and tells they aren't going to send it home, that he hasn't graduated. What do they want to do to that boy drive him crazy...make him do something crazy. I tell him to go down to the principal. He tells me he's afraid to go down. If he does he might lose his temper.

That fuckin teacher he had it in for my son. If he doesn't pass him, I don't know what I'll do ...He failed him because he was absent too much, but that was just an excuse. The bastard won't budge even though my son had the grades.

I'm going to the superintendent of schools with this. I'm not going to let that bastard get the best of my son. I'm not going to let that bastard get away with this.

Augie did, in fact, go to the superintendent of schools with this and, at this point in time, it is still unresolved. What is important here is the fact that Augie could get involved with this family crisis and follow it through to conclusion. An ability that was once severely limited by the requirements of work.

Red's Story

Another illustration of the men's increasing involvement with their families is the case of Red. Red and his wife have become inextricably involved in their daughter's

marital break-up. Red talks of his and his wife's involvement in these two excerpts from my field notes.

...he's a bum. I don't know what to do. He doesn't want to work. He's such a bright boy, he seemed to be nice but he just won't go to work. He has a beautiful wife and daughter. He's not a man he's a bum.

Do you know what he wants to do he wants me to lend him money so he can buy a hot dog wagon. He's a college graduate and he wants me to buy a hot dog wagon. He's out all day and night. He's almost never home at night...he's always with his friends. He's a bum.

I won't give him money anymore. I told her to leave him and come live with us for a while and we'll help you out...I mean he doesn't work, he's not a husband to her, he's always fooling around. I help her out but not him she doesn't get another penny for him.

Her old boss called her up and asked her to come back. She worked for an advertising company. She's thinking about taking it. She should...Over my dead body he won't get another penny...he's a bum.

I told her to come to Florida with us on vacation for two weeks. Take the baby and we'll go on vacation together and when she moves back she'll live with us and let him take the apartment.

Red's daughter doesn't have to make any decision because her husband moved out of the house. She took her job back and Red became a full-time baby-sitter. Before the GAI Red could not have become as totally involved in child rearing. In the following quote from my field notes Red expresses both his family involvement and his ambivalence about being on the GAI. It is clear in this quote that growing family involvement is necessary for Rudy's own adjustment to his recently achieved free time.

...I would have felt better if the pier had never closed down. It would have been better for us. We were in stride. We'd meet at the pier at 6:00.

We'd argue, say hello, how are you...by 9:00 we were working we were in stride.

How long and how many times can you wash the car. I hang out but when I was working, I had a place to go and things to do. We'd argue, we'd work, we'd play cards. I was with the boys all day. We know what we were doing now there is no steadiness.

I don't know what I'd do without my granddaughter...the Guarantee is good. I pick her up after school. She goes to Montessori school, she reads, she writes, she dances...she says to me, papa, I'm going to do ballet. [Red begins to imitate her in the hiring hall. He puts his hands over his head and stands on his toes.] You do ballet with me. I'm doing ballet with her in the apartment, I put my hands over her head, she says, no not like that papa. Sasha (her teacher) says on the points of the toes. You don't know papa.

I'm going to her graduation tomorrow, I enjoy her...but I'm still young, I shouldn't be doing this. I'm only fifty-eight, I should still be working.

A year later, Red is acclimated to his role of surrogate father for his granddaughter. This is expressed in the following excerpt from my field notes.

We went to Miami for three weeks, it was beautiful...we called up my daughter and my granddaughter had a virus...she had a fever. I started to pack. My wife comes over to me later in the evening and she tells me that she wants to go back home. I told her I've already packed. So we were in Miami for three weeks, it was beautiful...but we missed our granddaughter. If her father was a man we would have enjoyed ourselves...he gives them nothing. My daughter told me he beat my granddaughter, and the judge reduced his child support from \$25 to \$15 a month. What good is \$25 a month, even that is nothing. He's a bum and the judge reduces his child support.

I asked Red what his daughter would have done if he wasn't on the GAI.

I don't know, I don't know. It would have been a lot harder on her...It would have been a lot harder on my granddaughter. I don't know.

Lippy's Story

Lippy's son suffered a detached retina a few months after buying a house. He has had three operations on his eye, all of which have been unsuccessful. Because of the possibility of injuring his good eye he isn't allowed any physical exertion. Lippy and his wife, Maria, have responded to this by doing the remodeling the house requires themselves. Lippy is able to help his son Bill because he has the time, time that wouldn't be available to him without the GAI.

After I badge-out, I'll shoot home pick up Maria and Theresa [his retarded daughter, mentioned earlier] and we'll go over to Skipper's [his son] house and we'll begin to prepare the wall for wallpaper. It's not bad except by the steps where its eighteen feet high, but I have the scaffold all set up...The house looks nice, I've painted all the rooms. I've done all the floors...I've done the back yard...I've done everything from helping him move to the remodeling. After the wallpaper is finished only the kitchen will be left...My son's wife hasn't picked out the broadloom or wallpaper for the kitchen.

The commitment of Lippy to help his son is also a commitment to meaningful work, i.e. work with meaningful others. Within the family context the work is meaningful. Meaningful work as a longshoreman was no longer possible for Lippy with the closing of the pier and the dissolution of the gang. Lippy's commitment to help his son, as a commitment to meaningful work, is expressed by his wife in an excerpt from an interview.

...I worry that he works too hard. But I really think this is good for him. It gives him something

to do and he always loved to do repair work in the house...he's a perfectionist and it keeps him busy. It's not only good for Bill, it's good for Lippy.

Lippy's, Red's, and Augie's accounts of their family activism are not atypical. I could have easily illustrated the family activism of these men on the GAI with Bowly's account of his finding a nursing home for his mother-in-law, or Whitey's account of his son's drug problem, or Ernie's difficulty with his wife's emotional problem. For these men family activism is not only a technique for managing time. It is within the context of family activism that they have redefined their roles within the family structure in a meaningful way. For these men the family is not in danger of disintegration. The family has been revitalized by their participation in it and, as a result, the men themselves have been revitalized.

The role of the father and husband is no longer the fragmented role of "the provider."⁹ The GAI allows the father/husband to still be provider. At the same time there is a new totality to this role. He has made an investment in becoming a more complete father/husband and "the way things have always been," has been transformed. They are increasingly involved in child rearing (often for these men, grandchild rearing), housework and various other household activities. They have a sense that they have "finally made up for lost time," that is, the time they couldn't invest in family life because of the demands of casual work.

Bowly expresses this attitude in an excerpt from an interview.

I now have more time to do things I couldn't do before. When I used to work I didn't see my kids for weeks sometimes. I worked, I left the house at 6:00 in the morning. I worked, came home at 11:00 at night they were sleeping and then I would leave at 6:00 in the morning. I didn't see them for weeks. I feel that I missed a lot of time with my kids and now I'm making it up...that's one of the best things about the GAI.

Second Job

The second way in which men on the GAI manage their time is a form of accommodation to the necessity of the formal institutional world. They take a second job. Only an insignificant proportion actually take advantage of the system by taking full time jobs. There are men who do supplemental work such as helping friends and relatives in small stores and bars, driving cabs, landscaping, painting and general repairs (to name only the most common). Most of these men have always augmented their income with supplementary work. For most of these men it has been a necessity because of the traditionally casual nature of the industry. This pattern of work has continued even though the industry has been decasualized. The GAI allows these men to increase the number of hours that they work at secondary jobs. A typical example of this is Pete who explains the situation as follows, in an excerpt from an interview.

I've always helped out in my nephew's store ever since we were kids on President Street. The

store is in Manhattan, not near the pier. You know we'd always go there when we couldn't shape-up. So now after I badge-in and out, I go home and watch the granddaughter while the wife cleans house...Later in the afternoon maybe I go over to the store and earn a few extra bucks.

As these remarks indicate, for men like Pete the sociable aspect of work, which they often talk about missing now that they're on the Guarantee, is somewhat recreated in their supplemental work. For others, who may feel greater financial need, the supplemental work is a necessity. In the past, supplemental work was a necessity because of the casual nature of the industry. To the extent that "felt need" for additional income exists, it produces varying styles of supplemental work. This varies from the majority of men who no longer feel a need for supplemental income and who thus do not have a second job, to those men who view the GAI as potentially producing a hardship because of the loss of overtime. These men have never fully taken advantage of the Guarantee and thus they continue to "shape-up" at the hiring hall. These men work daily in order to add an additional \$4,000 to \$5,000 in annual income. Here it appears that extremely stressful conditions, such as divorce or habitual gambling comes into play. The rest of this section will deal with the varying forms that the men's supplemental work takes.

Full-time supplemental employment is difficult for this group to maintain because they must report to the hiring hall every morning. They rarely badge-out before

9:00 A.M. and there always is the possibility that they will have to go to work. This situation made it impossible for Guido to maintain his new job and he was fired because he was late too often. Although full time employment is rare, there are men who now work full time because they are on the GAI. This group consists of men who augmented their income before they went on the GAI and who have continued to do so after they went on the GAI. The GAI has enabled these men to work full time at supplementnal jobs. A case in point is Paul.

After I badge-out I go and get my bus, unless I have an early call. If I have an early call I bring the bus with me so I can leave from the hiring hall. I'll go and make my pick-up usually senior citizens and I'll take them to museums on Wednesdays to Broadway shows, short trips into Long Island or upstate for sightseeing, shopping, whatever and then when we're finished I'll drive them back...before the GAI I worked nights. Then it was mostly the theatre crowd. Before the GAI I would finish work, go home and eat, change and go and get the bus. The GAI made it easier on me. I could work the days and when they needed me, or when I felt like it I could still work nights. The GAI was the best thing that ever happened.

Supplemental work takes three forms for these longshoremens on the GAI. The first form of supplemental work is the "trunk stores." They sell various products out of the trunks of their cars outside the hiring hall. On every workday there are between ten to twenty stores selling work clothes, tools, hats, toiletries, novelty items, and any other item that can be easily displayed in the trunk of a car and that longshoremens might purchase. Guido's store is

open every workday morning. Typical of trunk store entrepreneurs, Guido sells mainly toiletries, pipes, pens and cigarette lighters. Guido spend most of his time waiting to badge-out at his store. For two hours a day Guido supplements his GAI from his store. The hiring hall is the perfect situation for the setting up of these trunk stores because it gives entrepreneurs like Guido access to a large group of men who must wait until the day's hiring is completed. Most of the men who are trunk store entrepreneurs had stores before the GAI and peddled their wholesale goods on the piers. This pattern holds for all forms of supplemental work. That is, it is typical for these longshoremen who have second jobs that the jobs are not the result of the GAI. Supplemental jobs predate the GAI. The GAI has enabled the men to increase the amount of hours that they work at their second jobs.

The second form of supplemental work is numbers running. Numbers runners no longer must depend on the men on their pier but, due to the GAI, now have access to the 1,000 to 2,000 men in the hiring hall every morning. They also can and do take numbers after they badge-out in their non-work activities.

In my sample there are three men who take numbers, Moe, Sabu and Whitie. Numbers are played on a regular basis with the same men playing daily with the same runners. Money will be exchanged with little talk. The men will mention a

number, and possibly a period of time for which they want the number to be played. Although the playing of numbers is done openly in the hall, there is a covert nature to the transactions. All transactions occur quickly with a minimum of conversation. All of the numbers runners refused to talk in detail about their secondary work. Although all the longshoremen are willing to talk in detail about their hunches, numbers that they dreamed of last night, past successes and near misses, they all refuse to talk about the business aspects of the racket. Continually in the hiring hall, strips of paper with instructions for the runner and money are passed. Although every one in the hiring hall may know who "hit the number" when the winnings are passed out to that man, it will be done quickly and quietly with as little commotion as possible.

This illegal form of secondary work does not interfere with the work of longshoremen in any way. The GAI has enabled runners to have access to a wider sample of men who may now place bets with them.

Because Sabu and Moe have not paid off on certain winners, they are no longer taking numbers in the hiring hall. That is the major consequence of cheating, of not paying off on a bet. As a result, Whitie is taking numbers from all the men in my sample. Numbers running is perfectly adaptable to any work situation because the transactions take minutes to complete and thus in no way interfere with

the tasks of workers or with their availability for work.

The third and most common method for men on the GAI to augment their income as longshoremen is the part-time job. The case of Red, cited earlier, is typical of these men, that is, "It's a few hours a day off the books." The off the book nature of most part-time work is necessary. Otherwise, as Red says, "The tax bite from Uncle Sam reduces the income to the point where it's not worth it." Running numbers or working part-time in a neighborhood store are perfect examples of the off the books job. It must be noted again that almost all the men working second jobs were working second jobs before they went on the GAI. Inflation has been the most important variable, and not boredom, in the men's decision to work a second job. Nor do these men feel that they are cheating the government by taking an off the books job. They believe that they have been forced to accept off the books jobs because of the unjust tax bite that working people in general are subject to.

Pete's situation is representative of the men who work second jobs.

...I worked as a Fuller Brush man but they gave me an area that was far away from my home. I made a lot of sales in my own area but they assigned districts and I got in trouble for selling in this woman's district...I quit. Now I'm not doing anything but tending bar at night. I've been doing that on and off for years. This summer I'm going to do some landscaping with a landscaper from my neighborhood. It'll be nice outside, only in the summer and spring. It'll be good.

So I'm seeking another job now. I've tried so

hard to get another job off the books. For the simple reason if I'm going to get a job four, five days a week and pay taxes on that and pay taxes on the GAI, I'll be working for practically nothing. So it wouldn't pay for me to work...It's hard. I worked Fuller Brush as I've already mentioned. I drove a cab for a few weeks but I'm too old for that. It belongs to the youth. And of course I tend bars a couple of days a week, at night in Long Island.

There are three features to the secondary and supplemental jobs that these men on the GAI work: (1) Almost all of the men whether they are driving cabs or running numbers were working second jobs before they went on the GAI. (2) The GAI has made it easier on these men to work second jobs. It has also enabled these men to increase the amount of hours that they work. (3) These men seek second jobs in which the employers will keep them off the books. If they fail to find off the books jobs, their second jobs will put them into a higher tax bracket and thus they feel that they'll be working more for "Uncle Sam" than for themselves.

There is a fourth feature to longshoremen working second jobs and that is that the majority of men on the GAI never seek out secondary employment. Most of the men feel that their income from GAI is sufficient. It is typical for these men to tell me that if they felt the need to augment their income on the GAI they would have "stayed down the docks" where overtime work is available and where they already possess the required skills for the work. Bill, in his interview, expressed the conventional wisdom.

...I don't need the money. All of my daughters are out of the house. I wouldn't even think of it. I

figure that I would have went to work as a long-shoreman, instead of getting another job if I had needed the money.

The Sporting Life

The third way that senior men on the GAI deal with their life "beyond work" is also a form of accommodation. It takes the form of the sporting life. These men tend to spend much of their new leisure time in the pursuit of physical pleasures and the thrills of chance. They work out in local gyms, they jog, they play cards, they go to the racetrack, they attend dances, they go to the theatre and to the movies, and two of the men have girlfriends. In general, this group is also composed of family activists who spend their time both through an active involvement in family life and in the pursuit of health and fun in the sporting life. About five or six of these men, who are not family activists carry their pleasure to an extreme and engage in heavy gambling and drinking. In terms of gambling and drinking these patterns of excess were established before they went on the GAI.

In terms of gambling, most of these men have been playing cards regularly during the workday. It was typical for these men to play cards on the piers while waiting for the shape-up to begin, or during interruptions in the workday, such as periods of rain, during blows (periods of time when workers rest), and during lunch breaks. The men have

told me that the only reason that they don't play cards in the hiring hall is because the waterfront commission doesn't permit it.

For most of the men, playing the numbers, or the horses is an activity that takes a short period of time. It is an activity that occurs both in the hiring hall and at the piers and has not been changed in any significant way by the GAI. For that small number of men who perceive of themselves as gamblers the GAI has made a significant change because it has enabled them to increase the amount of time they spend in playing cards and horses. Men like Angie and John spend almost all of their free time gambling, studying the charts, and carefully calculating the best bets. It is not atypical for these men to organize their time after the badge-out in terms of going to the track and playing cards. In the hiring hall they spend almost all of their time talking about last night's action or suggesting "best bets" to the men. As mentioned earlier, John's tips have often paid off and the men respect his selections, and often play the horses that he suggests. The "gamblers" find that the GAI provides them with both the time and money needed for gambling. In the following excerpt from my field note, Angie talks about what he does after he badges-out.

The GAI is the best thing that ever happened to me...I mean I've always liked to play the horses but now I can go every day. After I badge-out I go home, I read the racing forms, I have a bite to eat and then I shoot down to Aqueduct. I have friends there. I joke with the guys and fool around

a little with the girls. They're all Jewish, nobody likes the horses as much as the Jews. I'm the only Italian they love me. We have a good time, we talk about the horses, the jockeys and we bet. I bet every race, I win, I lose. If I win I buy groceries with the money or things for the house. When I lose, I lose but I can afford it because I have money coming in...

I'm sixty-two. I can retire now but I can't. The pension and the social security forces you to stick to a budget. I wouldn't be able to go to the track more than two, three days a week and even then I couldn't afford to lose. The GAI gives me the money and the time. It's expensive to go to the track every day, if I retired I couldn't afford it...So I can't retire now unless I find a part-time job and then I still couldn't go to the track every day. If I retired I couldn't afford it. So I can't retire now unless I find a part-time job and then I still couldn't go to the track every day like I do now. I love the horses. I have friends at the track I always have something to do, I'm never bored.

Although "gamblers" like John may play cards for high stakes and Angie may spend almost all of his free time at the racetrack, this is not typical of the gambling the men participate in. Most horseplaying occurs as a quick bet with a bookie or at the OTB. These men rarely go to the racetrack. On the other hand, cardplaying does often take up hours of their free time. Lippy plays cards twice a week with his neighbors, Pete participates in a friendly game of poker with stakes of a nickel, dime and a quarter. An illustration of this aspect of time management is the case of Bowly, a family activist who talks about cardplaying at the Y.M.H.A. that he belongs to in an excerpt from my field notes.

I gamble a little more now, almost every day. I play cards every day. When we were working we used to play every day. But we played for higher stakes

when we worked. Now its a more friendly game. But now I do spend more time playing cards, about two or three hours a day. We used to play every day before starting work and in between lunch time. We had tables in the lunchroom. If we had tables and chairs at the hiring hall there'd be games all over the place but we're not allowed...We used to go to the union hall and play but the wives complained that their husbands were losing their wages ...but I never played with anybody but the guys I knew.

Gambling is an interesting and sociable way for these men to pass time. Sociability is as important to the men on the GAI as is the money. Thus there is a friendly nature to the card games which are played for small stakes. Sociability is an important factor in another activity that the men participate in. These longshoremen who rarely work have always valued "keeping in shape." When they were working regularly, the physical nature of the work enabled them to keep in shape. Now that they work rarely, "keeping in shape" must be a conscious activity. Thus Bowly is involved in other activities at the W.M.H.A. than gambling. He works out with Bill and Santo who are also on the GAI. Many of the men on the GAI spend their time in athletic pursuits now that they rarely work. Ernie, a carpenter on the waterfront, plays handball. Ernie and his seventy year old partner have been playing handball together for fifteen years. Now that Ernie is on the GAI, handball has become a full time pursuit. In this way Ernie manages his time in a meaningful way, with meaningful others and in a sociable game. For Ernie it is also a game of skill and of chance and thus it

is possible for Ernie to earn a little extra money in his free time. In an excerpt from my field notes, Ernie explains how he manages his time playing handball.

We love to play the young kids they look at us and they think two old men and then we run them ragged...I'm in great shape I play handball almost every day, almost all year long...we pick up a little money playing handball. Charlie is seventy-four, he jumps rope every day. We play handball for an afternoon and then we jog around the boardwalk.

I'm a carpenter we're the first to go badge-out. I go home and then right to the handball courts in Brighton Beach.

These men on the GAI for the most part have had little trouble in managing their newfound free time. The few men that have had trouble in adjusting to the benefits of the GAI, have quickly learned to manage their time and this newfound ability has transformed their lifestyle. Whitey, in an excerpt from an interview, tells of his period of adjustment and its effects on his life.

I'm happy with what I'm doing, to be frank with you. I'd be lying if I told you I want to go to work, when I can get paid without it. I miss it in a way ...you figure the action, I had work to do and I had plenty of time to do it. We had the trucks, the gangs were always busy, the time went. I occupy my mind a lot now in sports. The docks were good we had a good bunch of boys. Now I meet them in the hall. They belong to the GAI like myself...Now instead of going to work I leave the hall and by the time I get home it's about 10:00 A.M. I pick up my sporting gear, my paddle stick, my tennis racket. I go up to the "Y." I jog first, three to five miles every day then come back and do some exercises. Then I play paddle ball and tennis. I play with the people at the Y. Some are from my neighborhood. They are mostly firemen or cops that work nights and they're in the Y during the day. Cops, firemen, teachers that's who you catch up there at that time.

Years ago I never knew what this was, to tell you the truth this was the best thing that ever

happened to me. Well I probably would have been dead now. First of all I was overweight and I didn't take care of myself too good because it was just work. Thank god I used to work twelve to fourteen hours a day and I was at the pier all of the time. I was working night and day there. As long as there was activity I had to be there and I did nothing but being in charge of the pier that was 2,000 foot long. All day I was running. I'd be running after one guy, running up and down making sure that the ships were working. It was a grind on me...then maybe you're responsible for 100 men. I stayed home and eat. You burn up energy when you work but not that much. I got up to 240 I'm 5'6", 5'7"... now that I'm stable I'm about 175 now. I can eat cake. I can eat but I can't overeat. As long as I exercise I'm burning it up. I average maybe 25, 30 miles of running a week plus I'd say three to four hours six days a week, maybe 20, 24 hours a week exercising.

I know what life is now. To tell the truth I've learnt a lot I'm very active my days are very full from when I get up in the morning to at night when I go to bed. The GAI taught me how to live, if we wouldn't have the GAI I wouldn't know how to live. They showed me how to live. I didn't know anything about this life up until three years ago. I mean, I lost my father when I was seven years old and I've been taking care of myself since I was thirteen years old and I started down the docks when I was 15½ years old.

Whitey's positive adjustment to his GAI related free time is characteristic of the men in this group. They started working down at the docks as teenagers. Their work experience was interrupted only by World War II and the Korean War. They have never had the leisure of not working. Their lives have been structured by the hardships of manual work on the piers of Manhattan and Brooklyn. These men are now in the process of restructuring their lives. The men on the GAI have made a choice that they will make themselves available for work but that they will work only when the

port requires it. They have now chosen, in Whitey's words, "to learn how to live," to structure their own time outside of the requirements of labor time and that choice requires holding back from work as much as possible. As the result of the GAI, a contract stipulation that they struggled for, and have sacrificed both jobs and income for, they can now take advantage of a life where they can freely structure their own time. Their resistance to work makes sense in this context. They can now spend their time as they see fit. Their time is their own, it no longer totally belongs to the stevedore companies and the shipping companies. Now men like Charlie, Bowly, Bill, Big Tom can spend an increasing amount of time reading and all of them state that they are now reading more than they ever have before. For these men reading books, magazines, newspapers, is no longer a luxury but is now an activity that occupies a normal part of their lives. They can go to the theatre at night because they are no longer exhausted from a hard day's work. Their labor is no longer casual labor, nor are their lives at the arbitrary disposal of the shipping industry. It is not that they are involved in frivolous use of their time but that for the first time in their lives their time is their own. The new-found ability to structure their own time is their own silent rebellion against labor time, that is, the companies' time. The value of their own time can be seen in their willingness to sacrifice the \$4,000 to \$5,000 extra a year that

they would be making if they were working full time. Their informal resistance to labor time is marked by their willingness to forgo this income. They value their ability to structure their own time and participate in a life of their own choosing, a life as Whitey has already mentioned, that they "knew nothing about."

Community Activists

The final way that these men deal with their experience beyond work is by becoming community activists. These men actively participate in community affairs, local and union politics. Most of the them have been involved in these activities before they went on the GAI at the formal or informal levels. Their newfound free time has allowed them to increase these activities. Hence men like Sal get involved in union activities. In this sense his participation takes the form of accommodation to the formal requirements of the union. While the participation of men like Sally takes the form of informal resistance to union affairs.

Men like Sal can now spend a great deal of time at the union hall. He helps set up the hall for union meetings with the distribution of checks, or he may spend the day in conversation with union officials about the current issues. Sal also fulfills the important function of being an informant for both the rank and file and the union officials. He functions in the informal transmission of information from

the delegates to the men and from the men to the delegates. Sal is often sought out by the men to explain new developments in union politics, such as, "What's new about the strike settlement?" or, "Does the F.B.I. have Scotto this time?" He is sought out by the delegates who can get a sense of the men's attitudes about the recent strike settlement, or their feelings about women on the waterfront.

The function of being an informant has been important to Sal in his quest for a more formal position in union affairs. His union ambitions have been enhanced by his ability to spend time at the hall. It has made him visible to the union hierarchy who, Sal hopes, will perceive him as a hardworking and dedicated union man.

At the opposite pole from Sal, who accommodates the union, is Sally, who is a well known union radical. Sally can now dedicate more time freely and with less personal sacrifice than he had been able to in the past. Sally averages two to three days a week of work and the same amount of time not working because he doesn't have the A seniority rating that Sal has. The two or three days that he doesn't work enable him to continually caucus and raise union issues at the informal level in the hiring hall. It also allows him to attend various Waterfront Commission hearings on the continually changing political atmosphere in the longshore industry. He can also participate more freely in union affairs because he is no longer as restricted by the

discipline of the workday. The GAI has provided time for these men to participate more freely in union affairs.

Typical of this small group of community activists is Pete, who expresses his expanded community activism at the formal level, and some of the problems that have resulted from it.

...I'm involved in everything. I'm involved in the American Legion, with the civics, with the school board. I do it more now because I have more time. I would say that I spend sixteen hours more a week with the American legion since I'm on the GAI. We're involved with whatever we can possible do for the veterans. We do fundraising. We go to St. Albans and do bingo parties and whatnot for the veterans, the disabled veterans. We go to East Northport and wherever we can possibly help the veteran...many people now call me in the course of the day and they never did before because they know I'm available...which often is very discouraging because it takes too much of my time. I find there aren't too many hours in the day for me. I'm more active now.

The school board doesn't take that much time. Like tomorrow night we have a meeting and they disclose about the budget about the conditions of the school, the vandalism though there is not much of it, but there is some of it going on in certain areas.

I'm one of the sightseers in the neighborhood. If I see something wrong I bring it up. Like this woman complained to me she has a laundromat and whenever it rained the area would flood up terribly and the water would gradually creep into the store. So I call up our councilman and report it and he sends one of his delegates over and we confer on it, what has to be done. Like businessmen where a bus stop is involved it covers an area of six or seven businesses there's no reason for it being there. Why can't we put it somewhere else where there aren't any stores. Usually the councilman and myself will get together and thrash it out. If its the state we get after the state, if it's county which are the side streets we get after the county. We make these adjustments. People call me up three, four times a week and we get in touch with our councilman to make adjustments.

Pete, in the following excerpt, brings up an interesting aspect of the GAI that makes it more difficult for him to participate in state politics. The GAI creates a routine for the men which requires them to report to the hiring hall each morning. Although they rarely work they're still required to be available for work each day. The GAI enforces a type of regulation which is more regimented than in the past when the work was casual. Under the casual labor system the men always had the option not to work. Now under the GAI they must report to the hiring hall every morning.

I used to go to the mid-winter Republican conference before the GAI. I could get away with it. I would ask my superintendent for three days off, he'd say sure and it was all right. It was no problem. Now with the GAI I'd just get debited. Now I can only go to conventions on my vacations. It's fun you go to Albany and you meet everybody, the Democrats and Republicans...

Sally, Pete and Sal are the only men in the sample who are full-time community activists. Although men like Bill, Lippy and Charley will often campaign at the formal level for their chosen candidates, this activity is limited to a few times a year. On the whole, the men on the GAI have not increased their participation in community and union politics. The men's political concerns remain at the informal level. In terms of union politics, the majority of men are neither radical nor status quo and thus, as far as they are concerned, there is seemingly no place for them in the dialectic of union politics. Only the men who define

themselves as outwardly political can actively participate in a continuous way beyond work.

I have argued in this chapter that longshoremen are continuously involved in redefining their own lives and consciously participating in community beyond work. As family activists they are actively involved in the redefinition of sex roles in their daily lives. At the same time, the GAI gives to some longshoremen the opportunity to have time for a second job. I have shown that, although few of them work at full-time jobs, many of them work part-time to supplement their incomes. For the men, the second job is not a form of informal resistance but a form of accommodation. The men do both. The everyday lives of these men are involved in the informal resistance of redefining their family structures, of not playing the game by the formal rules. And, at the same time, they are also involved in the accommodation to the necessity of financial obligations. In the sporting life as well as in their community activism, the dialectic of accommodation and resistance of formal and informal resistance is displayed in their daily activities. In each case, they build a changed, novel type of working class community when they share autonomous self-created activities not at work, but beyond it. This study, like all of the community beyond work points to accommodation as well as resistance.

Notes

1. Charles Winick, "Atonie: The Psychology of the Unemployed and the Marginal Worker."
2. L. B. Rubin, Worlds of Pain, New York: Basic Books, 1976.
3. William W. Pilcher, The Portland Longshoremen.
4. Danel Bell, "The Racket-Ridden Longshoremen."
5. Michael Gordon, The American Family, New York: Random House, 1978, 212-220.
6. R. O. Blood and R. L. Hamblin, "The Effect of the Wife's Employment on the Family Power Structure," Social Forces, 36, 1958, 347-352.
7. M. M. Poloma and T. N. Garland, "The Married Professional Woman: A Study in the Tolerance of Domestication," Journal of Marriage and the Family, 33:3, 1971, 531-540.
8. Lillian Breslow Rubin, Worlds of Pain: Life in the Working Class Family.
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Chapter Six

CONCLUSION: THE 1977 STRIKE AND THE DYNAMICS OF RESISTANCE

Nietzsche may have seen the relentless struggle of the individual as the prerequisite for his full development, while socialism found the same thing in the suppression of all competition but in each of these the same fundamental motive was at work, namely the resistance of the individual to be leveled, swallowed up in the social technological mechanism.

Georg Simmel¹

The main finding of this study has been that longshoremen on the GAI have neither become degraded or bored because they have been separated from the workplace. Men on the GAI have refused to work and have even gambled on being penalized by debits when work is available to them. The small group of men who have lamented the GAI, and who seem nostalgic for the "old days," when they worked daily in their gangs, refused to work. As did those who weren't critical of the GAI.

This seeming paradox of the men who are critical of GAI still refusing to work can be understood in terms of this study's main theme: the everyday, informal resistance and accommodation of longshoremen in the workplace and in the neighborhood. As I have shown, the transformation of the industry from labor intensive to capital intensive displaced men and led to the dissolution of workplace community. It

is in terms of their informal resistance to the break-up of workplace community that their refusal to work can be understood. Their gang provided a system of meaningful interactions and relationships. They do not want to work outside of this collectivity. The majority of the men in this study have worked in the same gang for over twenty years and are only willing to work if their gang can be maintained.

As a result of the dissolution of their old workgang the men do not become isolated and bored but actively get involved in the creation of community elsewhere outside of their work on the piers. It is to the extent that they are successful in the creation of community in other spheres of their lives that they resist the authority of the formal institutions that govern their lives. To the extent that they cannot resist, they become workers who cannot transcend their degraded status: they accommodate to the formal institutional authorities. Workers who resist the transformation of work on the docks are conscious of themselves and participate in the creation of possibly new forms of solidarity and community.

I have tried to demonstrate in this study that just as the degradation of work through capital intensive technologies did not necessarily lead to Braverman's degraded worker, the separation of the worker from work did not necessarily mean the end of working class community and consciousness. In the last few chapters I tried to explicate

the new forms of community that the men continuously attempt to create at the informal level. These new forms of community, outside of the workplace, comprise an informal culture of resistance in which the conscious needs of the men are expressed. The informal culture of resistance is an expression of the continuous and everyday nature of the working class's continuous struggle to control their own lives. The men's needs are not completely dominated by a hegemonic situation, by the needs of large capital (shipping and stevedore companies) and by big labor (ILA).

As long as the men express their needs and can actively create community within the hiring hall and outside of the workplace, the men suffer none of the pathologies that social scientists have associated with "non-work." In a community of their own making they informally resist the external demands of the formal system and thus the process through which their lives are degraded. Through their informal resistance as a community of workers, the degradation of work ceases to mean the inevitable degradation of the worker. It is in terms of this community-based informal resistance that the refusal to work becomes the refusal to be exploited. From this everyday refusal flows the struggle against the institutional needs of the unions and the shipping companies.

The problem that remains for this study is: can informal resistance lead to a struggle for change at the

formal, institutional level? Can informal resistance in the hiring hall be transformed into informal resistance aimed at the formal institutional level? The longshoremen's strike of 1977 specifically suggests a positive answer. In that strike the process by which resistance changes from informal to formal becomes apparent. In that way, the 1977 strike serves as a fine example of the dynamics of resistance.

The 1977 Strike

It has been the view of longshoremen that if work cannot be brought to the piers, they must be guaranteed a living wage without work. It is to this end that the ILA and longshoremen are presently involved in the protection of their job security.

As has been mentioned earlier, the GAI is a defensive measure which has protected longshoremen from technological unemployment. This agreement was won at great personal cost to the longshoremen through the reduction of the size of the gang, the closing of the books, and a general decline in the actual number of working longshoremen. At the same time, the GAI has come under continuous attack from container carriers, the Supreme Court and the Waterfront Commission. The October 1977 strike was part of the continuous effort of the union to protect the GAI from these attacks.

The union and the men are unified in their support for a job security program. That program deals with one

important issue: variations in the rates paid for GAI benefits in different Atlantic and Gulf ports. In its strike demands, the ILA called for a master contract for all Atlantic and Gulf ports. They called for a relative equalization of wages and benefits in all ILA ports. The union viewed the settlement, after a sixty day walkout, as a major step in this direction.

Anthony Scotto made this clear in his address to the members of Local 1814 on November 21, 1977 in the union hall (on Court Street in Brooklyn). He said this about the provisions for the Job Security Program (JSP) in the 1977 settlement: "...the plan is important because it puts a damper on the damage the carriers create by bypassing a port. The steamship companies now have to pay for what they have caused."

Another major issue came to a head in 1977. This second issue also made the JSP crucial in contract negotiations. The settlement of the 1968 strike stipulated that stripping (unloading) and stuffing (loading) of any and all cargo within a fifty mile radius of each port has to be done by ILA members. In 1975, as a result of a challenge to the legality of this rule by Consolidated Express, Inc. and Twin Express, Inc., the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) declared the the provisions violated the Taft-Hartley Act. In 1977 the Supreme Court upheld the decision. This in turn led to a five day walkout by the longshoremen. The

union is still involved in waging a legal battle against the Court's ruling on the "fifty mile rule." The JSP is necessitated by the Court's ruling. The JSP negotiated during the 1977 contract guarantees that ocean carriers will pay pension and welfare benefits in ports where there have been shortfalls.

Thomas W. Gleason, President of the ILA, described the JSP:

The JSP automatically goes into effect in the event of a shortfall by providing sufficient funds to pay the local benefits negotiated by employers and ILA and its affiliates.

A shortfall means a deficit in contributions to any of the local port plans covering GAI, pensions and welfare. The shortfall must occur after October 1, 1977. It must result from a loss of manhours; or of tonnage, if local assessments are on a tonnage basis.²

The JSP is an important benefit won as a result of the 1977 strike. The men agree that the JSP is important. The ambivalence of the men about the union is not apparent when the men are asked about the contract that resulted from the strike. The men agree that the JSP program is a significant contractual development. They were worried that the new contract would administer a stricter debit system. The Docker News continually warned the men that the debit system was going to be made stricter. This did not happen.

Although the men wanted a greater wage increase than the \$2.40 an hour increase that they got, the increase was sufficient and was not a point of contention between the men and the union. The ambivalence of the men is expressed in

terms of what I call their informal resistance: they question the actual structure of the strike. In particular, they question the absence of union democracy and communication during the strike.

Questioning the Partial Strike of 1977

The men did not understand the strategy of striking only container carriers and not all ocean carriers. The men believed that a total strike was a better strategy for ending the contract than the partial strike. More importantly they did not understand the union's belief that the partial strike was necessary and a good strategy.

The men felt that the union was not communicating with them. This lack of communication led to a specific problem for senior men on the Guarantee. The strike almost totally closed down Staten Island where the cargo is containerized. In Brooklyn, where the cargo is mostly break-bulk (not containerized), the men were working. When the strike was over the men on the GAI in Brooklyn, who had made themselves available for work during the partial strike, were told that they weren't going to be paid for the eight weeks that that the strike lasted.

The men argued that this crisis was the result of the union's failure to communicate with them. The men argued that they should be paid for the duration of the strike. The majority of Brooklyn piers were working. Why should

longshoremen on the GAI be penalized? After all, the men had not been told that the GAI was suspended. They didn't know that if they didn't work during the strike they were going to lose a day's pay. It is the prime contention of the men that the union is not democratic and the lack of communication during the strike is a manifestation of this development.

Anthony Scotto, President of the Brooklyn Local, was asked in an interview about the lack of communication with the men and the loss of eight weeks' pay during the partial strike. He answered:

You have to judge the strike by the record in terms of what they acquired. Why would a guy want to work during the strike...if he's on the GAI most of the time why would he want to work during the strike.

It's an unfortunate thing we thought we could have got them all covered by extending their vacation...But it was unfair to the guys who were striking to cover the guys on the GAI in that way.

In explaining the lack of communication, Scotto went on to say that it wasn't intentional on the union's part. It was the result of a lack of communication in the negotiations that took place out of town.

One of the major problems is that the negotiations took place out of town, we were just out of town a lot. And the real story, was that there really wasn't very much, just the waiting and staying out most of the time. There were no real issues therefore there just wasn't much to say.

The best thing that we could of said and I'm not sure it would have been helpful we had which were really trying to get the industry, trying to keep them together so that we could talk to them. There were so many goddamn splits, the port employers versus the carriers versus the stevedores. We spent

most of our time trying to keep the group together so that we'd have somebody to aim at.

Scotto explains the importance of the partial strike as a strategy for winning the strike. Scotto explains why it is difficult for the men to understand this strategy, and why this form of a strike is good for the industry.

That was a hard thing to get across, why we were doing it. The other thing is that it was hard to get across to some of our membership. Which I think there was some validity to. Why are we working an operation like Mormack which has three hundred containers on it, even though it is a break-bulk operation. The stuff in those containers is still containerized. Our intelligence on that was that if we stopped we were sure to have a Taft-Hartley injunction against us. If we had the Taft-Hartley we couldn't end the strike.

The logic of the partial strike is that it has been the container operators that have displaced the men and not the break-bulk operators. The partial strike was a strategy to protect the break-bulk operators while trying to win concessions from the container operators. This is the union's version that can be seen in the following statement made by Anthony Scotto:

We must protect the conventional operator. who while he isn't the future, he's the guy who gives us the manhours right now and is the biggest supplier we have now.

In the final analysis, for Scotto the contract won by the 1977 strike is a good one if the strike is treated as a balance sheet. If all of the rumors that the union was going to "sell out" the men turned out to be groundless, as they did, then the strike was a good one. As Scotto

stated when he addressed the men at the union hall on November 21, 1977,

There were many rumors about the GAI, we know. Some of you were worried about being required to work two hundred hours, fifty hours, that we have the same rate, that there would be no categories, that the inverse order of hiring would be canceled. None of this happened. It is a possibility that the men will be paid for two months. But you cannot expect the shipping companies to come up with this money after they've been struck for two months... They didn't think we would strike, we caught them by surprise and brought them to their knees.

The men basically agree with Scotto on the quality of the contract. They do not agree about the eight weeks they lost and the lack of communication on the first partial strike in the history of the ILA. The rest of this chapter deals with the men's reaction to the partial strike of 1977 and the critique of the union that ensued as a result of this dissatisfaction.

The Origins of Informal Resistance: The Men's Critique of the Strike

As mentioned earlier, the longshoremen are not critical of the contractual agreement that was the result of the 1977 strike. They realize the importance of the JSP and of the importance of having a coastwise agreement. Mack, a radical longshoreman, expresses the general feeling in his assessment of the settlement.

They had a valid reason for trying to go coastwise because the westcoast has something like that. They've had a coastwide agreement since 1934 with the exception of Portland, Oregon which became

affiliated with the ILWU in the 1950's or 60's. But there is a coastwide agreement. A coastwide agreement is new for the ILA to fight for. In the past it had always floundered because of sectional jealousies and things like that. So it's a step in the right direction. It's a real good step as far as the ILA is concerned. Because it's an attempt to stop runaway ships, you know runaway companies from paying their obligation to the GAI.

Was the contract a good one, I say from that point of view it was a good one. From the point of view of money it was a good one. I think we took a setback in that the union gave up the twenty year pension at age fifty. I think that, that was a crime. You heard me talking about that at the union meeting...I think it was terrible since we had it in two or three contracts.

If you remember the Dockers News that came out, they were very vehement about any changes in the GAI system, in the debit system. And there was no change in the system as far as I know.

Mack expresses the men's general satisfaction with the contractual agreement but doesn't express the anger and animosity that the men felt about the organization of the strike and the union. Every longshoremen that I interviewed or had conversation with expressed this general ambivalence. This ambivalence is an expression in their everyday lives of the dialectic of resistance and accommodation. It is this ambivalence that I will now attempt to explain in the men's own words.

The men's grievances with the partial strike are threefold. They begin with the idea of the partial strike itself, the newness of the concept required explanation. Instead of a continuous network of communication between the men and the union during the strike explaining both its necessity and its logic, there were only two union meetings:

one at the beginning of the strike, the other at the end of the strike called to explain the contract.

During the strike the men received almost no information on the progress of the strike. The men depended for information on local newspapers, the Dockers News and strike gossip. The men continually depended upon me for strike gossip since they knew that I spent time doing research in the union hall and interviewing union leaders. They wanted any information I might have overheard in the union hall.

The following conversation took place on October 25, 1977. It expresses the men's frustrations about taking part in the strike.

Charley: I don't know anything. They don't tell us nothing. All I know is what I read in the papers. They say they want the shipping companies to guarantee the money for the other ports in which they don't have jurisdiction and the shipping companies say they can't guarantee the union what they want. Who knows? We don't know anything.

Tony: We don't know anything, what progress with the negotiations, we don't know. [Tony gets increasingly angry as he talks and attacks the authoritarianism in the union.]

What are they fascists? What do they have fascism here? Everything is done behind our backs and they don't tell us anything.

Red: Nah, they don't even have meetings. On other strikes they had meetings every twelve or ten days. Now they have no meetings. They used to hand out pamphlets, now nothing.

As the strike progresses into November, the men begin to play guessing games because of the lack of information on the progress of the negotiations. Rumors that the debit system will be made stricter, and that a longshoreman will

will to work two hundred hours a year to qualify for the GAI, are heard throughout the hall. As the strike progresses, the men become increasingly suspicious that the union is selling them out.

The more the men have to depend on hearsay and the local press, the more they become aware of the extent that they are removed from the decision making process of the union. They become aware that the decisions are made without them and that their only part in the process is to vote on decisions that are already made at the formal level. It is in terms of this separation that Tony's charge of fascism must be taken seriously. Even men like Joe who are in almost total support of union strategy make this charge about the partial strike.

Other strikes, they'd tell you at least once a week. Or you'd get a letter in the mail telling you when you were goin to vote. How can we vote? We don't know anything.

Secondly, the lack of communication between the men and the union manifests itself in the men becoming increasingly critical of the concept of a partial strike. The men don't understand the logic of a partial strike. It creates a division between longshoremen who work break-bulk (mostly Brooklyn) and those who work containers (mostly Staten Island and New Jersey). To the men this division is artificial. It has been created by the union and functions to create animosity between longshoremen. During the strike, longshoremen working break-bulk will be collecting an

income, while those longshoremen who work containers will be striking and thus losing income.

On another level the logic of the partial strike succumbs to the reality that most large ocean carriers operate both break-bulk and container lines. To complicate matters even more, often the same ship will have both break-bulk and container cargo. The men view the partial strike thus as a method for minimizing hardship for the shipping companies for the duration of the strike.

The men are concerned with winning the strike as quickly as possible and the partial strike, as far as they are concerned, only prolongs the strike. These views are continuously expressed by the longshoremen. Charlie makes this apparent in the following statement.

Jackie Gleason, he wants to unify the union, he always talks about union unity and what do we have a strike that no one knows anything about.

The men's animosity is not only apparent in slurs against union officials as in Charlie's statement. We see it in their contention that the partial strike is a divisive strategy. Joe, who typically accommodates to union policy, is critical of the partial strike. He said so in an interview in the union hall.

It wasn't a good strike it pulled up a lot of animosity for the simple reason that some people worked the conventional ships, worked the freighters that is and the container ships didn't work. I don't know, I don't think anything came of it. It should have been handled in a better manner.

The men would have preferred that every longshoreman

be out on strike. Tony makes this clear in the following statement:

I think it was very bad because when they went out on strike everybody should have went out. If everybody would have went out it would have been settled in no time. I would say that the men would have gone back a long time ago and we wouldn't have lost the nine weeks. Everything would have been settled fast.

Lenny, who agrees with Tony, also thinks that the partial strike was soft on the shipping companies. Thus the duration of the strike was prolonged. Throughout the strike it is clear that the men believed that the union was clearly wrong in its use of the partial strike. As Lenny states,

Terrible, you don't get anywhere when you have a partial strike. When you have some people working and some not working it doesn't amount to nothing. Because the companies are still getting the work out. There wasn't a big loss in the last strike because some of the ships were working. They had containers goin on ships, goin on the bulk ships. What the hell was their game.

The men suspect the union's motives. Increasingly the lack of union democracy is apparent to the men. Most of the men feel that the union has sold them out, not in terms of the contract but in terms of the way the strike is organized. The men are never consulted on the course of the strike. It is on this point, in particular, that even union accommodaters are critical of the strategy of a partial strike. These longshoremen are in agreement with the following statement made by the radical Mack.

A lot of the guys couldn't see how you can strike the container ships one way and not strike the break-bulk ships another way. Because every one

of the container ship lines has some kind of working agreement with break-bulk lines. So if you can strike a container line and leave the break-bulk operation you're not hurting the company. Maybe the company is breaking even or maybe they're losing a little bit.

But this type of strategy is never talked over with the men. The men never discuss what the strategy should be. It comes from the top down. There are always questions that should be answered because the guys on the bottom have to figure out how to live with these decisions.

For Mack and Lenny and other longshoremen, the result of their questions not being answered is confusion and frustration in the course of the strike. This culminates for the men on the GAI in the union meeting towards the end of the strike. Only a fraction of the men on the GAI attend the strike meeting. This might lead one to believe that the men weren't interested in the settlement and that their charge that the union failed to communicate with them is invalid. From the point of view of the men nothing could be further from the truth.

A radical longshoreman expresses his ideas about what is the truth about union meetings:

It's programmed, it reflects a well-oiled organization. What the organization does is stifle participation because they really don't want it. That's what I think. In all these instances I think it's the organization rather than the participation by the men in the union meeting. That's specifically why they keep the air conditioning off the guys get disgusted, it's hot...

What we've done in our union hall is cut down the meeting size. So that the guys have to stand up, get disgruntled, come in and walk out. For us it's programmed.

The radical longshoreman's position that the meetings are programmed is also the consensus of non-radical

longshoremen. Although they are interested in what took place at the meeting, their sense of the meeting is that it's organized in such a way that men critical of the union position can have little impact on union policy. The men's position can be seen in their behavior in the hiring hall on the day after the strike meeting. Since only two of the men in the workgroup and myself had been at the meeting, the men wanted to hear what I had to say about the meeting when I entered the hiring hall. The structure of the union meeting is familiar to the men. They were able to describe the meeting to me without having attended it. The men contend that the programmed nature of the union meetings results in members having little impact on the meetings and thus there is little reason to attend them. This is expressed in the following discussion that took place in the Brooklyn hiring hall on the day after the meeting. As I came into the hall at 7:00 A.M. on November 22, 1977, Lippy is complaining about the strike. He is loud and his voice can be heard over the other men, "The union is selling us out."

Bowly: If it gets you so crazy why don't you go to the meetings.

Lippy: You guys get me so angry, you're all such idiots.

Moe: Well, what do you do.

Lippy: Vote, it doesn't make a difference.

Bill asks me about the strike. He wants to know if anybody disagreed with Scotto. I told him that the men who disagreed were told that their questions were pertinent.

Lippy says, "Oh Scotto, he's a cutie."

Bowly: They applaud him after every statement. He's got all his boys there. That's why I hate to go to the meetings. All those ass kissers voting. It doesn't make a difference. The union gets whatever they want.

Tony: Scotto he went to Paul Hall school, the seaman's place on 21st Street. They taught the ways of the union. They taught him how to con the men. Really, before he became head of the local they sent him to Paul Hall's school. They taught him how to talk, how to make speeches, all the ways of the union.

Bowly: Was Clyde Blue there?

I answer: Yes he was the last speaker. He talked about what a good contract it was. How good the union had been and then he said the men should ratify the agreement. Scotto asked Blue if he was willing to make a motion to close the meeting. Blue made the motion and one-third of the men voted for it while the rest stayed silent.

Bowly: Clyde Blue, you hear that? That was all prearranged so that the meeting could be ended. So no questions could be asked.

Tony: Sure they don't want anybody asking too many questions.

Bowly: Sure they want their men there. Like Clyde Blue. If they aren't at a meeting they won't hold a meeting. I went to a meeting where the men were angry and their people weren't there so they called off the meeting. They said Scotto couldn't make it. They just called off the meeting. That's why I don't like to go.

Buster [seeing Charlie the Lawyer walking into the hall, asks him] What did Scotto say.

Charlie the Lawyer: What Scotto said yesterday could fit on the head of a pin.

For non-radical longshoremen, the union meeting reinforces their belief that the union is minimally concerned with any input that the men have. From the point of view of the men, the meetings are structured in such a way that all

criticism is held to a minimum and that the union's position is the only position that is given a fair hearing. Thus, it is not because of apathy that only a fraction of the men attend union meetings. The men theorize that the structure of the meetings makes it a "foregone conclusion" that the union position will be aired, while all opposition will be muted as much as possible.

The structure of union meetings confirms the "Mafia model of power" that the men take for granted. It is their belief that all power is centralized and basically authoritarian. The union is concerned with the needs of the men to the extent that active resistance of the men forces their needs to be met and to the extent that union interests are served as well. The men's ambivalence is a result of this conclusion.

The men theorize that the union is concerned with the JSP which also guarantees the security of the union and the monies that it has coming to it through dues as a result. It is in terms of this that the men are cynical about the union's lack of concern over the eight weeks of pay that the senior men on the GAI lost as the result of the partial strike.

The third objection to the partial strike is particularly applicable to the men on the GAI because they lost eight weeks' pay. The men on the GAI had been led to believe by the union that they should report to the hiring hall and

make themselves available for work during the partial strike. With the conclusion of the strike these Brooklyn longshoremen on the GAI found out that they would not be paid for the two months they had badged-in at the hiring hall. They found out that they had lost \$2,200. It is this event that precipitates the "eight week crisis" which has still not been resolved. This loss of eight weeks' pay has created animosity against the union for men on the GAI. Tony expresses his thoughts on the eight week crisis which is representative of men on the GAI.

With these eight weeks that we didn't get paid, if they represent us how come we don't know nothing about this. I know if it was up to me though I'm not an official, I would tell the men. Though Gleason started it, and they're blaming Gleason, but I'm blaming him I'm in Brooklyn now...and you're my boy down here, tell me what's going on. I don't have to go around to find out. I don't have to go to New York to find out what they're doing. Where's the eight weeks we lost. We come down here every morning and we don't know what's going on. Everybody's guessing. Now I don't think that's right.

Tony's reference to "you're my boy down here," is to Anthony Scotto. A great deal of the men's animosity is directed against Anthony Scotto. The men view the union's refusal to fight for their loss of eight weeks pay as another example of the union's compliance with the shipping companies' interests. After all, the partial strike was the union's strategy. They disagreed with it but they went along with it and now that they need the union to back them up in the struggle against the shipping company, the union is silent. They have suffered for their accommodation. The

men heard Scotto's position on the "eight week crisis" at the union meeting. "It's a possibility that the men will be paid for two months. But you cannot expect the shipping companies to come up with the money after they've been struck for two months..."

The men on the GAI are pessimistic about the union's help in regaining their lost wages. The majority of the men think that the union "sold us out," and are angry at the union's inaction. Their anger at Scotto, for many of the men, has not diminished and many of the men express their antagonism toward him by hoping he would be convicted on labor racketeering. When he was convicted, these men felt that they had had their revenge. The majority of the senior men on the GAI were disturbed by the guilty verdict but, as I have said, many of the men felt that he got what he deserved. Thus, when I ask Buster on November 16, 1979, what his opinion on Scotto's guilty verdict is, his sarcastic answer is, "All I know is, where is my eight weeks."

The longshoremen on the GAI are angry at their union and pessimistic about help in their struggle for their lost wages. Throughout the strike the union has ignored them. They have been deserted at the formal institutional level. They have had no access to the formal communication network and have had to rely on the informal mechanisms of gossip and inside connections for knowledge of the progress of the negotiations. The unresponsiveness of the union necessitates

resistance at the informal level.

The men are not passive. They do not quietly accommodate to the union. They begin to resist. At first through a critique of the union's handling of the strike. When they find out that they are not going to be paid for the duration of the strike, they take direct action.

Informal resistance is a result of the limits of the union's representation of its membership. It is an expression of the frustration that the membership feels when it sees that the union is more concerned with the needs of corporations than it is with the needs of the men. In terms of the "eight week crisis," the men's viewpoint is that the union is in collaboration with the shipping companies. Through informal resistance it becomes possible for the men to become critical of the union and enable them to see their own part in the struggle between themselves and the shipping and stevedore companies. The following statement by Charlie is an expression of this dynamic.

...the union never got us anything. Do you know how we got benefits? You know who got us anything over the years? It was the men. We won our own benefits.

Informal resistance in the hiring hall leads them to contemplate legal action against the shipping companies.

As Mack stated after the strike was over, in an interview in his home in Brooklyn:

I can see a legal basis for them being paid. They lived up to the contract. They appeared in the hiring hall every day...I can see a legal basis for them being paid because they absolutely lived

up to the contract. They appeared at the hiring hall every day. They badged-in and they badged-out. They presented themselves for hiring.

There was hiring being done in the hall. They didn't get hired. They could get unemployment insurance, which is recognition by the state that they made themselves available for work. This is one of the prerequisites for the GAI to be available to work. So the possibility is if brought to a court they might win...They have a valid reason to be paid.

The longshoremen on the GAI presently have a class action suit against the shipping companies. They sued for pay for the eight weeks in which they were available for work in 1977.

Although the resolution of the 1977 strike is still pending, that crisis is particularly relevant to this study because it specifically involves senior longshoremen on the GAI. When the union fails to take action these men do not become passive but begin to fight vigorously for their interests. The men are outraged. They become critical of the union and understand the union's inaction as an indicator of the limits of the union's representation of them. The men express their outrage at the union and at the shipping companies by filing a class action suit for the money that they have been denied. In this way the men demonstrate working class community through their struggle over wages independent of the union. Through informal resistance they demonstrate their own capability to make decisions for themselves.

In conclusion, the 1977 strike is a display of the informal resistance of the men coming to the surface. It

provides an occasion for social scientists to view how working class people struggle for change. It may never be revolutionary in the "big bang" sense that Marxists speak of. Yet it demonstrates how workers struggle for their collective interests. We mean specifically, in this case, in the struggle of senior Brooklyn longshoremen on the GAI. Backed against the wall during the strike they struggle in a conscious way against both the shipping companies and the union. They continue to struggle, and attempt to solve their own collective problems and thus to create their own history.

It is in terms of daily life and how men and women experience it that what Marxists call the contradictions of capital can be made real. They are no longer theoretical abstractions but become a living reality in the daily lives of ordinary workers. It is thus that the everyday relations of longshoremen, and workers in general, in both the formal and informal spheres of their lives, should be studied by social scientists. Workers are not to be studied as abstractions but as the living, breathing, complicated human beings that they are. In this sense, I am agreement with Sartre when he states:

Marxism considers the market a thing and holds that its inexorable laws contribute to reifying the relations among men. But when suddenly -- to use Henri Lefebvre's terms a dialectical conjuring trick shows us the monstrous abstraction as the veritable concrete while individuals fall into abstraction...for the dependence of the worker who comes to sell his working strength cannot under

any circumstance signify that this worker has fallen into an abstract existence.³

The men's versions of what happens is important. It has been my argument throughout this study that the men are involved in continuous informal resistance against the shipping companies and the union. The men are competent to organize their lives, their time, their work schedules and their unions. It is my contention that the informal resistance of the men against the union and the corporations is the basis of a real class politics, politics from the bottom up and not from the top down.

The informal resistance of the men studied is not resistance in the sense that left theorists typically think of. It is not a formally organized strategy in opposition to the ruling class. They do not set out to transform the nature of capitalism. The resistance is radical in terms of their daily lives and their daily needs. It is in opposition to any formal institution that threatens their daily routines. It takes the form of constant informal critique and the ever present threat of action. Feeling backed against the wall, they may well act. In terms of longshoremen, the threat of action derives from their sense that the shipping companies mistreat them and the union at times fails to represent them. When we find that shared sense in a closeknit everyday community of workers, it makes such a community all-important because of its continual potential for going beyond formal resistance as well as accommodation.

In closing, let me recall that all of this theoretically oriented ethnography deals with a sample of three dozen senior longshoremen very much like my own father and two of my uncles. The study demonstrated that longshoremen and workers in general can be understood better in terms of a dialectic of resistance and accommodation (or, in the same vein, informal versus formal resistance). In this context they are conservative insofar as they take for granted the owners or the union. They are conservative, too, when they feel that women are getting "too fair a shake" on the piers. Or that Blacks are getting too much power in the union. At the same time, they are profoundly radical when they try to take charge of their own lives from day to day. Or when they oppose the union and the shipping companies on their own, as they are doing now over the pay they lost unfairly during the 1977 strike.

Be the workers conservative or radical on a given issue, we saw here that a guaranteed income in place of work leads not so much to apathy or degradation -- the usual expectation -- as to a shift of everyday community (and hence informal resistance) from workplace to its fringe or beyond workplace to neighborhood. The resisting community need not die. It can move from one site to the next.

Notes

1. Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in The Sociology of Georg Simmel, Ed. by Kurt H. Wolf, London: Free Press of Glenco, 1950, 409-424.
2. Thomas Gleason, "Job security Program," 1977.
3. Jean Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, New York: Vintage Press, 1968, 77.

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