

W. GERMAN METAL WORKERS REJECT BRITISH SOCIAL CONTRACT EXPERIMENT

Jan. 9 (IPS)-- Earlier this week, the Baden-Wurtemberg regional organization of the West German Metal Workers' Union attempted to introduce a West German version of the British "social contract" strategy into present wage negotiations. The attempt has been wrecked by the resistance of union members.

The I.G. Metall proposal, aimed at forcing workers to voluntarily reduce their wages to assist the capitalists in surviving the economic crisis, urged that wage demands be individually determined for each factory based on "the ability to pay."

The I.G. Metall national executive, under the chairmanship of Trilateral Commission member Eugen Loderer, fully supported the proposal because of "pressure from the ranks." A day later the experiment was torpedoed jointly by employers and national I.G. Metall members. Statements by local trade unionists carried in the West German Communist Party newspaper, *Unsere Zeit*, indicated that workers immediately understood the scheme as an effort to fragment and disarm the working class.

Earlier *Unsere Zeit* had insisted on treating class traitors like Rockefeller agent Loderer with kid gloves, in order to curry favor with the trade union movement. Yet, although *Unsere Zeit* recognized the true content of the wage-reduction plan, its response was merely to call for "solidarity" and "higher wages!"

In an interview last week in the weekly magazine, *Der Spiegel*, Anthony Wedgewood Benn, one of the engineers of the British social contract, advised his West German co-thinkers, "What matters is the trust of the working class." Trilateral agent Loderer, like his fellow Trilateral cohort in the U.S., Leonard Woodcock, has clearly lost the trust of his membership through Labor Committee exposure campaign.

The active political capacity of German workers to find a working class solution to the problem of skyrocketing unemployment was expressed during a meeting between members of the European Labor Committees and metal workers from the northern city of Hannover. The workers were briefed on the newly founded European Labor Party's electoral program for European-wide conversion of crippled auto and chemical factories towards massive production of tractors and fertilizers in 1975. These workers immediately grasped the full-scale economic mobilization which would have to support such an effort. Serious questions, such as, "How would such a program be financed?" led to more detailed discussion of the technical advances which must now be conceptualized to defeat the depression.