



Paul R. Schell/Youngstown Vindicator

*Four U.S. Steel blast furnaces being demolished in Youngstown, Ohio in April 1982: but the identities of the steelworkers in the Pennsylvania-Ohio industrial belt have not been destroyed.*

## Attempt to break labor's morale has failed

by Criton Zoakos

A recent election campaign tour through the once-industrial towns and valleys of western Pennsylvania has provided ample and often dramatic evidence that despite mass unemployment and economic hardship, both the morale and the deeply rooted pro-heavy-industry orientation of America's technology-proud labor force remain intact.

### **Rust, not smoke**

The area from south of the town of McKeesport all the way up north to Erie, which helped LaRouche to marshal approximately 400,000 votes in the Pennsylvania primary, is filled with industrial operatives and their families in a mood which can best be described as sullen, angry, and determined to "hang in there," after almost five years of uninterrupted unemployment.

One can drive for hours on the poorly maintained highways and see nothing but shut-down steel factories, remains of demolished blast furnaces, rolling mills with their plant gates shut, and chained steel-pipe factories, with their exterior covered with the familiar reddish color of rusting iron; chimneys and steam pipes protruding into the skyline without smoke or steam rising up. The city of McKeesport, for dec-

ades one of the world's greatest manufacturers of large-diameter steel pipes of the type used for water supply systems, is ironically suffering from a severe water crisis caused by contamination of the water supply resulting from aging and rusting water pipes. Its giant pipe-making factory is completely shut down. Its residential area is deserted, with a great number of houses abandoned and gutted. The scene repeats itself all through Allegheny County, which made and exported most of the world's steel during the 19th and part of the 20th centuries.

Most of the region's workers are steelworkers. Those who are not, are employed to be teachers to steelworkers' children, grocers to service steelworkers' communities, tax collectors to collect steelworkers' taxes, and so forth.

Most steelworkers and their wives are the children and grandchildren of steelworkers, going back to the men and women who founded modern civilization's steel culture back in the days of Abraham Lincoln.

Yet, scores of thousands of these technology-proud industrial operatives have been out of work for four to five years. Many have even been dropped out of the unemployment statistics of the federal government.

As many *EIR* readers will remember, during early 1977, after Jimmy Carter had been smugly installed in the White House, the corporate strategists of Standard Oil of California put into limited circulation a top-secret report dubbed "The Chevron Memorandum," which proposed the final phase of the "institutional unraveling" of the U.S. economy, and outlined a series of major policy steps designed for a drastic, violent transformation of America's industrial/technological culture into the pastoral idiocy of a stagnant, conservation- and services-oriented post-industrial society.

### **The Aquarian paradigm shift**

The Chevron Memorandum and its proposals for that infamous "institutional unraveling" was one of the main instruments by which corporate boards of directors around the country were brought into line with the Carter administration's policy of post-industrial society, or, as Carter's National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski preferred to call it, the "technetronic era." Both the then government and the Chevron-led portion of the private sector were committed to causing a fundamental shift not only in the structure of the U.S. economy but also in the psychological characteristics of the labor force. A series of well-financed psychological and sociological studies was conducted during that time to lay out policies by which to cause a "paradigm shift" in the sense of identity shared among those in the highly skilled, highly productive, heavy-industry portion of the nation's labor force. Teams of industrial psychologists and social engineers were asked to find the most effective ways to cause people to abandon their inner sense of identity as skilled, productive heavy-industry operatives and gradually come to terms with the tame, submissive, and culturally pessimistic horizons of the "post-industrial" society.

These studies targeted in particular the labor force of the traditional heavy industries such as steel, auto, chemicals, non-ferrous metals, machine tools, and rubber, which were collectively dubbed "sunset industries." The combined effects of high interest rates, crumbling international markets, and continuously rising energy prices helped accelerate the corporate management's policies of deliberate shrinkage. From Paul A. Volcker's infamous October 1979 inauguration of high interest rates, mass unemployment has hit all these industries. Disinvestment, shrinkage of industrial floor-space, dismantling of producing facilities, and actual demolition of whole plants were policies pursued systematically by Aquarian-inspired management. The result was a massive reduction of total producing capacity.

### **The actual psychological effect on labor**

The designers of this policy of institutional unraveling had hoped that this destruction would first demoralize the labor force and then cause them to abandon their traditional reliance on the cultural values of industrial excellence, and technological pride, and their habits of producing "more,"

"better," "bigger," and "faster" than ever before. After a few years of such immiseration, according to the Aquarians' plans, a "paradigm shift" would occur in the inner sense of identity of the labor force. The political dividends to the Eastern Establishment authors of this policy were to be enormous.

It did not happen this way. Today, one may encounter such victimized workers in say, the half-deserted bowling alley of an economically depressed steel town of western Pennsylvania. "What line of work are you in, buddy?" one may ask his chance acquaintance. "I am an unemployed steel worker," he says. "But," you say, "I just saw you this morning working in that pizzeria in the corner." "Nope," he says, "I am an unemployed steel worker!" "But I saw you at the pizza parlor." "No, you don't understand," he explains. "Sure, I dish out pizza pies, but I am an unemployed steel worker."

And so he is. After four years of not having been inside a steel plant, after he saw in his local newspaper front-page photographs of his blast furnace being demolished by dynamite, after his President has told him that he should forget his old employment and go through some "retraining program," this fellow still has no doubt in his mind that he is what he always knew himself to be: a productive steel worker like his father and like his father's father before him. He is one of hundreds of thousands in the valleys of western Pennsylvania who have come out of the harrowing experiences of the Volcker Depression with the same basic reaction. Among them were those who contributed toward LaRouche's 400,000-plus votes in the state. A similar situation has been found in neighboring New Jersey, and Ohio, in Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois, the traditional heavy industrial belt of the United States.

No "paradigm shift" has occurred. No transformation of the personal sense of identity of the labor force has been observed. The Aquarian social engineers had sought this shift in identity, but what they got instead was this now surfacing phenomenon of seething rage among those millions in the labor force who have gone through these last four years of vicious economic warfare and have no doubt that "somebody out there" is out to kill the only sense of identity they have, their technology-proud, highly productive, heavy-industry-oriented self. Their well grounded sense of being menaced with extinction has given rise to a deep, settled, persistent sense of rage. And rage is something our Aquarian social engineers and industrial psychologists had not bargained for.

Now, these workers are very interested in some sound advice: "Don't get angry, get even!" Their political advantage is the fact that what they seek for themselves, which is the reopening, expansion, and modernization of our heavy industries, happens to be at this time the central requirement of the national security of the United States. Unless this is done, the U.S. economy will not be able to restore its "surge capability" as required by the present national security emergency. This in part explains the growing influence of the LaRouche Campaign.