

The Picket Line



News from workers and their unions around the globe, across the country and within our state.

• Poverty In Tompkins County—

A local group called Tompkins County Focus has recently reported what the labor movement has been saying for years now, that low unemployment rates overlook the fact that many in the county are working and poor. A study of nearby counties reveals that the median income in Tompkins County is \$8,000 less than these other areas. An article in the Ithaca Journal confirmed several weeks ago that poverty is indeed a growing problem and stated that 34% of the children under 5 years old in the Town of Caroline are living in poverty. So much for those who claim that the poor just don't want to work.

• BASF Workers Win Major Victory—

For 5 1/2 years hundreds of Louisiana BASF workers, members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW) Local 40-620, have been locked out of their jobs. Over the years the union built a powerful alliance between environmental, labor, public health and civil rights

neutrality clause provides that employers under union contracts will not interfere with efforts to organize workers at newly built hotels and provides that the union will be recognized by the employer when more than half of the workers had signed union authorization cards. The local unions, using six organizers got more than 1800 workers to sign in a three-week period.

• West Coast Longshoremen Boycott El Salvador—

Denise Bergez, of Neighbor to Neighbor (a US-El Salvadoran Solidarity organization) says that thousands of longshoremen, members of the International Longshore and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) honored picket lines set up by Neighbor to Neighbor at four West Coast ports in Long Beach, San Francisco, Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. The group has launched a boycott of El Salvadoran coffee because of human rights abuses and policies of the US backed right-wing regime in El Salvador. Since 1982 more than 70,000 trade unionists, religious people, peasants and others have been murdered by US backed government death squads. The boycott