BOLERIUM BOOKS Est. 1981
2141 Mission St #300, San Francisco, CA 94110 (415) 863-6353

Food and Politics



What Shall We Do for Food?

From every industrial center in the United States comes the cry that the cost of food is so high that the working class can only barely exist on the wages it receives.

Meat strikes have been on in hundred of cities; labor organizations in many places have declared a boycott on meat; in the newspapers the principal topic of discussion is the high cost of living.

The national administration at Washington, aroused by this universal cry, instructed the Bureau of Labor to prepare a report to Congress, and this report shows some astounding facts.

Labor Commissioner Neill informs Congress that THE RETAIL COST OF ALL FOOD PRODUCTS IS HIGHER THAN AT ANY PERIOD DURING THE PAST EIGHTEEN YEARS.

That, from statements secured from 1,014 dealers in sixty-eight different cities in thirty-nine states on thirty staple food articles, it is found that the prices of twenty of the thirty articles are higher than at any time in eighteen years, and that sixteen articles are more than 25 per cent higher than in 1896.

Bacon, it is found, is 62.7 per cent higher; eggs, 48.4 per cent; salt pork, 47.9 per cent; fresh pork, 46.8 per cent; lard, 45.1 per cent.

Taken as a whole and weighed according to family use the price for the thirty articles is 19.3 per cent higher than in 1900.

A Dollar Buys Much Less Food

WEIGHED ACCURATELY ACCORDING TO THE PURCHASING POWER OF THE PAY ENVELOPE, THESE FIGURES MEAN THAT YOU GET FOR YOUR DOLLAR MUCH LESS IN FOOD THAN IN 1890.

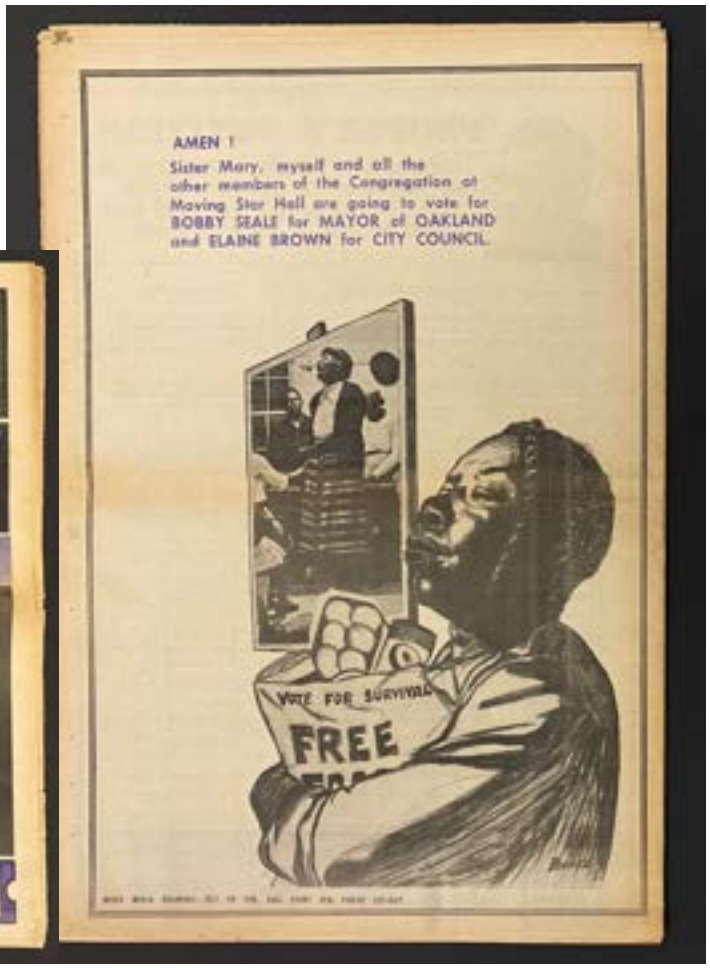
Analyzed closely, the figures show that for $1 you get just about:

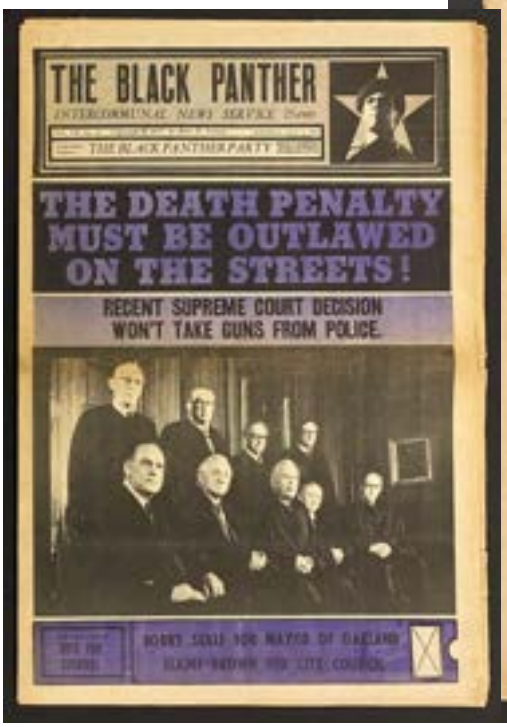


TERMS: We reserve titles ordered by email (reds@bolerium.com) or phone for 10 days. Individuals may remit by check, PayPal, or standard credit cards. Credit cards are accepted for phone orders; please have your card number and expiration date available when ordering. Catalog prices do not include postage. For domestic mail, add $6.50 for the first item; for multiple items we charge at the approximate cost. If you prefer delivery via other methods, we will strive to comply; actual postage cost will be charged. Foreign first class international or priority shipping will be charged at actual cost. California customers please add applicable sales tax. Libraries may request items to be shipped and billed, or we are happy to hold items awaiting Purchase Orders. Foreign customers may remit in US dollars with a check drawn upon a US bank, or by credit card.
Note: Larger photos of all items may be found on our website, www.bolerium.com. We also have many other related items, and substantial uncatalogued backstock. Please feel free to reach out and let us know about your interests.

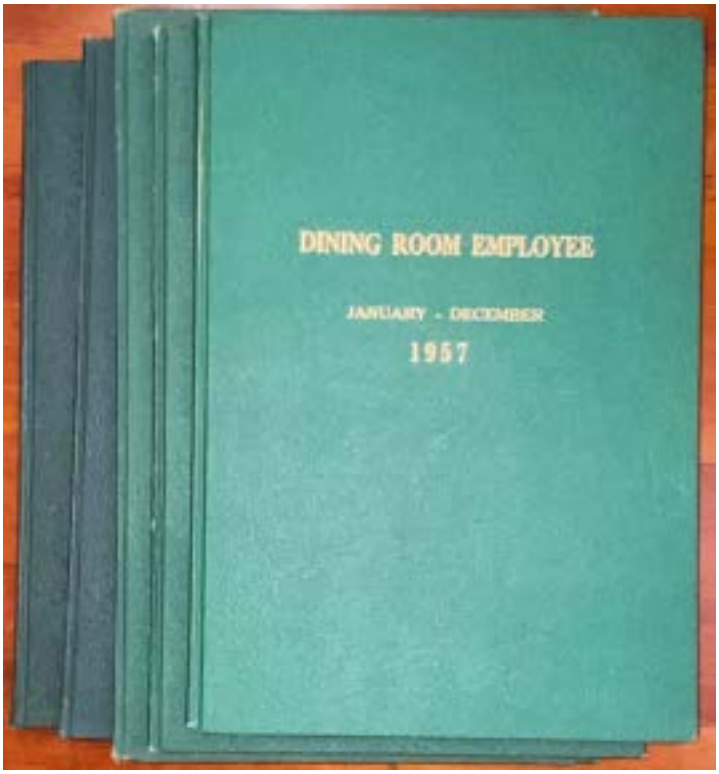


1. Aufruf! Männer und Frauen! [WW I poster opposing the fermentation of food for alcohol]. Vienna: Der Deutsche Vortrupp-Bund, [191-]. 12.5x16.5 inch poster, creased from having been folded into quarters, some uneven toning, otherwise very good. Text within the outline of a glass. Year "1914 or 15" penciled in upper left corner, but this could have been a previous owner's guess. (#318063) $200.00
In the context of the war, argues that the use of potatoes, grain, and fruit to brew alcoholic drinks is wasteful and can lead to malnutrition, removing food from people's tables and sabotaging the war effort. Contact information for various teetotaling organizations in Austria is provided near the bottom. The Vortrupp-Bund advocated abstinence from alcohol and tobacco even in peacetime, all the more so during the war.





2. The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service. Vol. VIII, no. 16, Saturday, July 8, 1972. Oakland: Black Panther Party, 1972. 20p.. tabloid newspaper, horizontal fold, minor toning. (#295533) $150.00
Cover story on police violence demands "The death penalty must be outlawed on the streets! Recent Supreme Court decision won't take guns from police." Back cover is a poster by Boored depicting a woman with groceries from the Panthers' Free Food Program, declaring her support for the campaigns of Bobby Seale for Mayor and Elaine Brown for City Council. One of the Panthers' main claims to authenticity in the local election campaigns of its candidates was their history of food distribution to the poor.





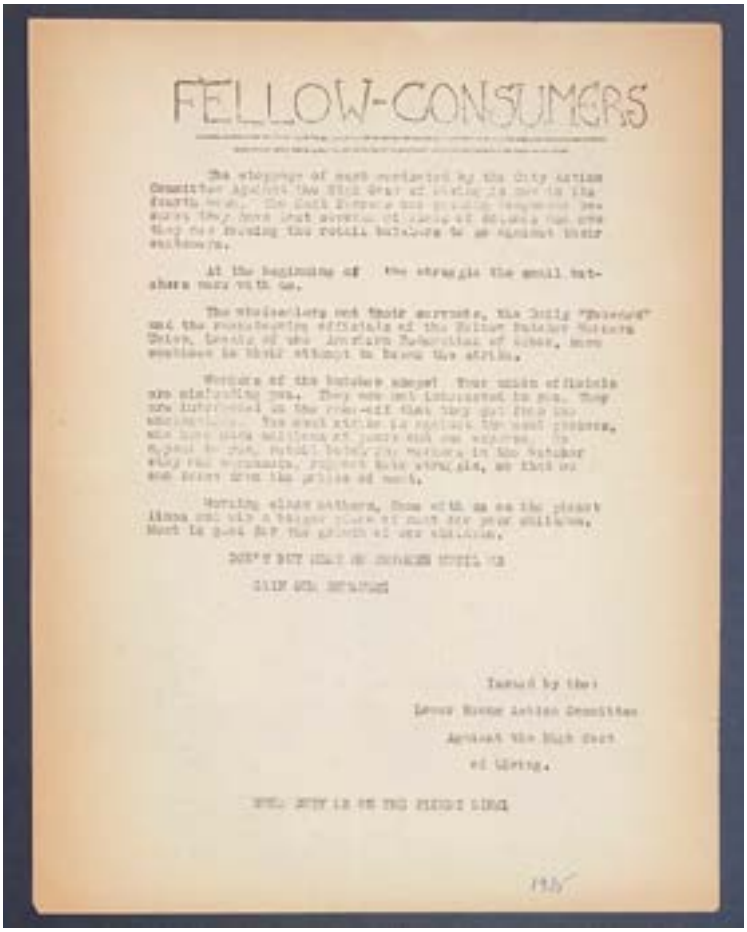
3. Dining Room Employee [five bound volumes]. New York: Dining Room Employee Union Local 1, Hotel & Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union, 1957-1963. Bound hardcover volumes of the monthly tabloid-format newspaper for 1957, 1958, 1959, 1962 and 1963. Paper toned, otherwise very good. (#317628) $175.00
Includes discussion of civil rights issues, among other news of union activities and labor struggles.



4. Don't buy bombs when you buy bread! [handbill]. New York: War Resisters League, [1972]. 8.5x11 inch handbill, printed one side only, two horizontal folds, edgeworn, year penciled at bottom, else good condition. (#308920) $20.00
Asks the reader to boycott Wonder Bread, whose manufacturer was owned by IT&T, because of that company's work in the electronic armaments industry.



5. Facing the Facts [15 issues]. New York: National Committee on Food for the Small Democracies, 1941. Fifteen issues of the broadsheet, each a single large 17x22 inch sheet folded into quarters; printed on sturdy paper, generally very good condition. Numbers present are 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16-23. (#306757) $350.00
The Committee sought to organize civilian relief programs for Norway, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Poland during WWII, in the period before the US joined the war.

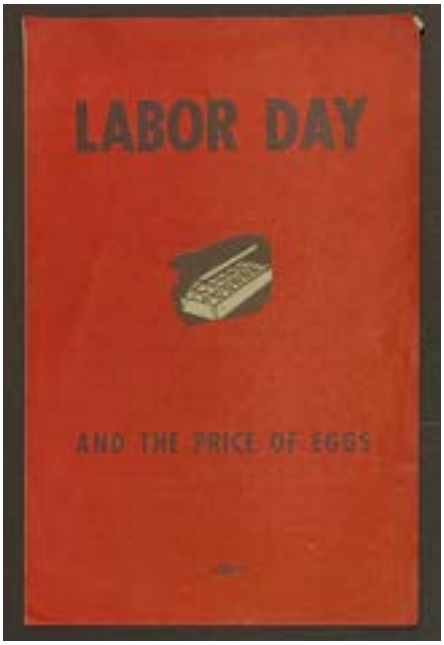

FELLOW-CONSUMERS

6. Fellow-consumers [handbill]. Bronx, NY: Lower Bronx Action Committee Against the High Cost of Living, [1935]. 8.5x11 inch leaflet, printed one side; paper toned. Year penned in lower right margin. (#301271) $80.00

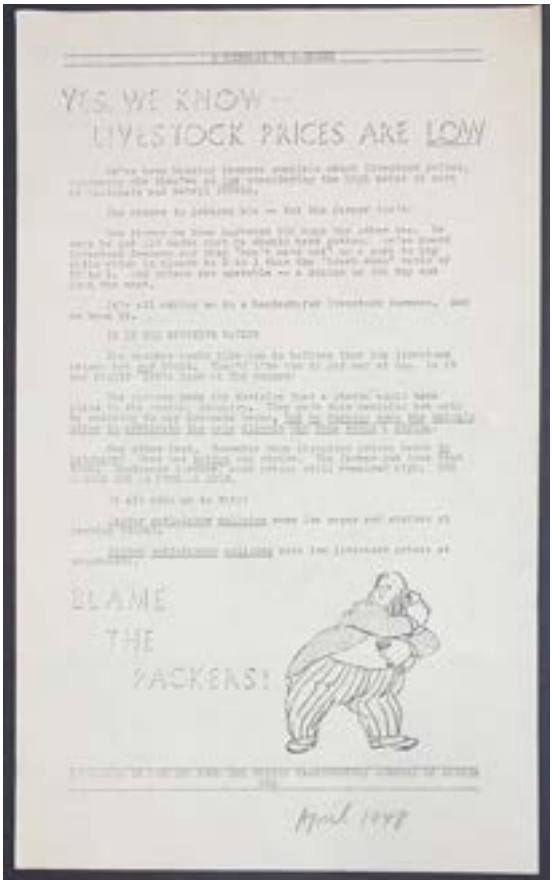
"The wholesalers and their servants, the Daily 'Forward' and the racketeering officials of the Hebrew Butcher Workers Union, Locals of the American Federation of Labor, have combined in their attempt to break the strike. Workers of the butcher shops! Your union officials are misleading you. They are not interested in you. They are interested in the rake-off that they got from the wholesalers. The meat strike is against the meat packers, who have made millions at yours and our expense. We appeal to you, retail butchers, workers in the butcher shop and consumers, support this struggle, so that we can force down the prices of meat. Working class mothers, Come with us on the picket lines and win a bigger piece of meat for your children. Meat is good for the growth of our children. Don't buy meat or chicken until we gain our demands!"

7. Food as Art. Celebrate the aesthetics of food in the Bay Area at the Batterdip Cafe. 6319 College Ave., Oakland (between Alcatraz and Claremont). May 22 thru May 27 [poster]. Oakland: Batterdip Cafe, n.d.. 11x17 inch poster, very good. (#300756) $40.00



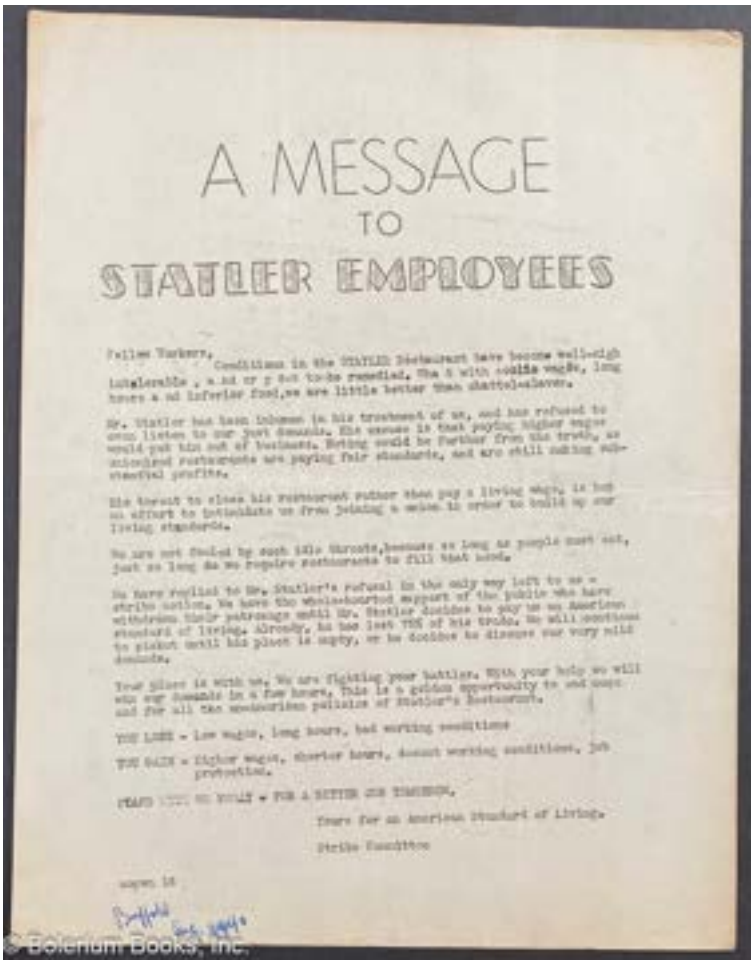


8. Labor day and the price of eggs. San Francisco: Communist Party of San Francisco, [1946?]. Four panel brochure, 5.5x8.5 inches folded size, unevenly toned, minor corner chipping. Campaign brochure done for Archie Brown's write-in campaign for California governor. (#92721) $20.00



9. A message to farmers. Yes, we know - Livestock prices are low... Blame the packers! [handbill]. n.p.: United Packinghouse Workers of America, CIO, [1948]. 8.5x14 inch mimeographed handbill, faint horizontal crease, date of April 1948 penciled at bottom. (#301274) $75.00

Argues that the packinghouse workers' strike should not be blamed for the farmers' financial hardship; rather, the packinghouse owners are to blame for refusing to pay adequate wages and turning down an arbitration offer.



10. A message to Statler employees [handbill]. [Buffalo, NY]: Strike Committee, [1940]. 8.5x11 inch mimeographed handbill, "Buffalo, Aug. 1940" penned at bottom, otherwise very good. (#321604) $50.00

"Fellow workers, Conditions in the Statler Restaurant have become well-nigh intolerable, and cry out to be remedied. What with coolie wages, long hours and inferior food, we are little better than chattel-slaves." Asks the reader to join a strike for better wages, despite the owner's threat to shut down the restaurant.

11. Northwest Trade Directory. Seattle, WA: Northwest Trade Directory, [c1976?]. [iii] + [154]p., comprises three-directories-in-one with individual pagination, 8.5x11 inch multi-colored sheets, disbound; punch holes along left side, some minor toning, else in very good condition. (#330284) $75.00. "The Northwest Trade Directory is intended as a model for a decentralized food system in the Northwest Coast Region of North America."





Retail Salesmen and Poultry Workers Union
OF THE
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
SPEAKS
Concerning Poultry and Meat Strike

Dear Consumer:—

The Consumer's strike against POULTRY AND MEAT is beginning to crumble as a result of the widespread information that the movement was communist strategy to gain control of the labor unions in New York. As a result of this publicity housewives resent being used as a tool to secure funds for the Communist newspapers.

One of the demands made for boycotting the poultry and butcher shops was that $2.00 monthly dues be paid to the committee that was conducting the strike.

THE RETAIL SALESMEN AND POULTRY WORKERS UNION OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR, WILL ALWAYS BE READY TO HELP THE CONSUMER FIGHT TO LOWER THE COST OF LIVING. Where such an attempt will be made and will sincerely represent the consumers, we stand ready to give up our jobs to assist in such a movement.

The City Action Committee, which is a part of the Communist Party is NOT interested in lowering the prices of POULTRY AND MEATS. We urge you to refuse to enlist your aid in securing funds for the Communist Party.

HELP THE POULTRY WORKER TO GET BACK HIS JOB SO THAT HE WILL BE ABLE AGAIN TO BUY THE BARE NEEDS OF LIFE.

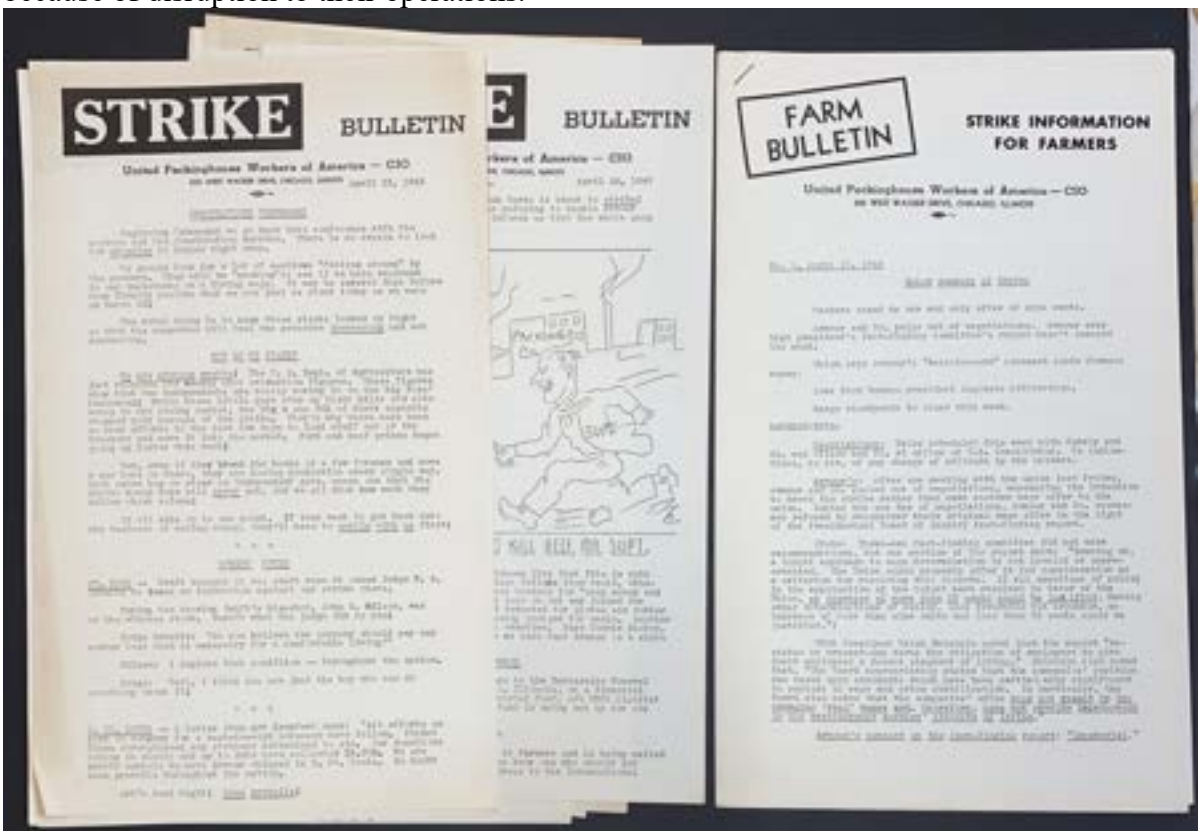
SALESMEN & POULTRY WORKERS UNION
OF GREATER NEW YORK, LOCAL 662,
A. M. C. & B. W. of N. A.
Affiliated with the
American Federation of Labor
Central Trades and Labor Council
and U. H. T.

12. Retail Salesmen and Poultry Workers Union of the American Federation of Labor Speaks Concerning Poultry and Meat Strike [handbill]. New York: Salesmen and Poultry Workers Union of NY, Local 662, [1935]. 8.5x11 inch handbill, English on one side, Yiddish on the other, creased from having been folded into quarters, "June, 1935" penciled in corner. (#321343) $100.00

An example of the conflict between AFL-affiliated unions and Communist-organized worker and consumer groups in this period. "Dear Consumer: The Consumer's strike against poultry and meat is beginning to crumble as a result of the widespread information that the movement was communist strategy to gain control of the labor unions in New York. As a result of this publicity housewives resent being used as a tool to secure funds for the Communist newspapers ... Help the poultry worker to get back his job so that he will be able again to buy the bare needs of life."

13. Strike Bulletin [24 issues, plus a Farm Bulletin, Strike Information for Farmers]. Chicago: United Packinghouse Workers of America, CIO, 1948. Twenty-four issues of the single-sheet, 8.5x14 inch mimeographed bulletin; several issues toned, otherwise very good. Issues present are April 13, two from the 14th, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30, then May 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 17. Also included is a two-page Farm Bulletin, no. 1 (April 19), very good. (#306627) $175.00

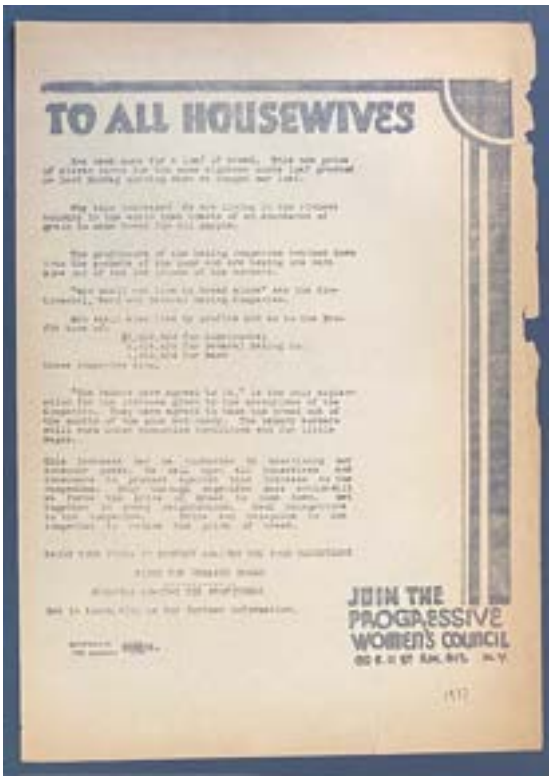
The Strike Bulletins give updates on negotiations in the 1948 Meatpackers' Strike and respond to claims by management; the Farm Bulletin presents the Union's perspective to farmers, some of whom were growing restive because of disruption to their operations.



STRIKE BULLETIN
United Packinghouse Workers of America — CIO

BULLETIN

FARM BULLETIN
STRIKE INFORMATION FOR FARMERS
United Packinghouse Workers of America — CIO



14. To all housewives... [handbill]. New York: Progressive Women's Council, [1937]. 8.5x11 inch handbill, "1937" penned in corner, paper toned, some chipping at right edge. (#329517) $40.00
"One cent more for a loaf of bread. This new price of eleven cents for the same eighteen ounce loaf greeted us last Monday morning when we bought our loaf. Why this increase? We are living in the richest country in the world that boasts an abundance of grain to make bread for all people. The profiteers of the baking companies reached down into the pockets of the poor and are taking one cent more out of the low income of the workers..." The Progressive Women's Council (formerly the United Council of Working-Class Women, co-founded by Clara Lemlich Shavelson in 1929) had multiple chapters in New York City.

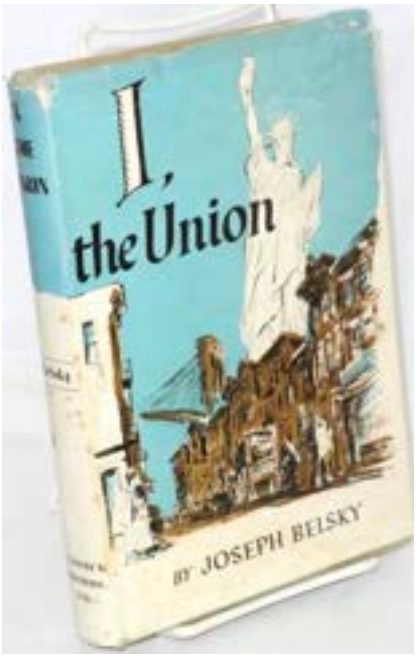
15. Voice of the Food Chain Store Employees. No. 6 (April 1938). [New York]: Reeves Chapter of the United Retail and Wholesale Employees of America, CIO, 1938. 4p. tabloid format newspaper, horizontal fold, some foxing and wear. (#328001) $75.00
Pro-CIO paper targeting employees at the Daniel Reeves Stores in New York. Includes reprints of relevant media coverage, including a pro-CIO editorial by a Catholic priest, and urges the reader to listen to WEVD (a Queens-based Socialist station using the initials of Eugene V. Debs) to hear labor leaders addressing Reeves' employees. Workers were set to vote on whether to join the CIO on the 21st of April.





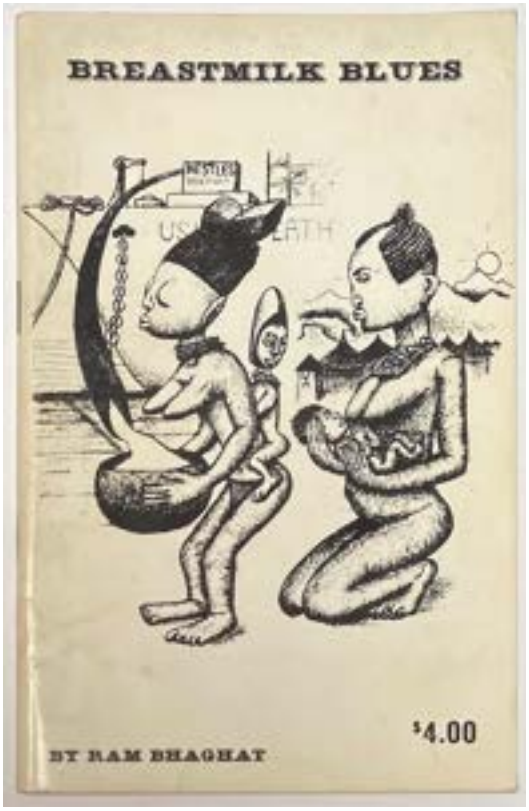
16. Women on the March. Vol. 1 no. 2 (June 1936). New York: Women's Commission, CC Communist Party, 1936. 4p., 8.5x11 inches, upper right corner creased with minor edge chipping, no loss of text. Newsletter. (#306587) $125.00
Includes a cover story about the organization of a meat strike to protest high prices. Notes that some men in the Party tried to prevent women from leading the campaign, but the Party instructed them not to take leadership away from the women.



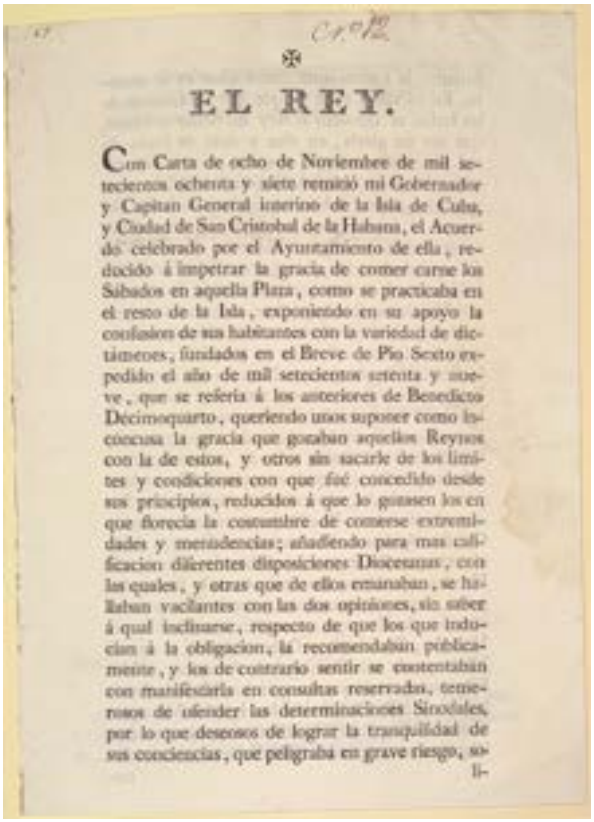


17. Women United for Action [seven different handbills]. New York: Women United for Action, 1972-1974. Seven different 8.5x11 inch handbills or printed letters from the organization, all with date of receipt noted in pencil, otherwise generally very good. (#333561) $95.00
Most are announcements of campaigns and rallies against the rising prices of bread, milk, and other groceries.

18. Belsky, Joseph. I, the union: being the personalized trade union story of the Hebrew Butcher Workers of America. New York: Raddock & Brothers, 1952. xix, [i], 194p., illus., fore-edge foxed, else very good condition in a worn, foxed, and dampstained dust jacket. (#375) $15.00



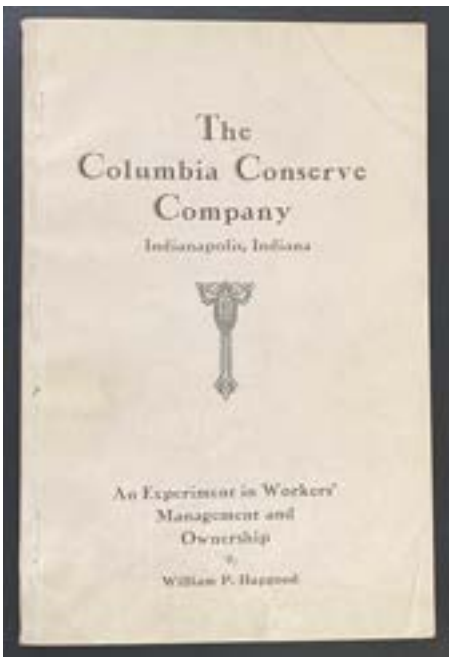
19. Bhaghat, Ram. Breastmilk Blues. A collection of poems for all the children of the universe. Petersburg, VA: Owen Printing Company, 1981. 44p., staplebound booklet, 5.5x8.5 inches, inscribed by the author, minor creasing to the covers, interior very good. Cover art by Tony Finlayson depicts an African family receiving a bowl of Nestle powdered formula from a ship (a reference to the controversial marketing of infant formula to women in the Third World who lacked access to clean water). (#275120) $40.00
The African American author, born Craig Gooding, took the name Ram Bhaghat (spelling later changed to Bhagat) after becoming a disciple of the yoga teacher and microbiology professor Janeshwar Upadhyay. His poetry addresses racism, junk food, environmental destruction, and gun violence. The author went on to establish the Drums Not Guns percussion ensemble.



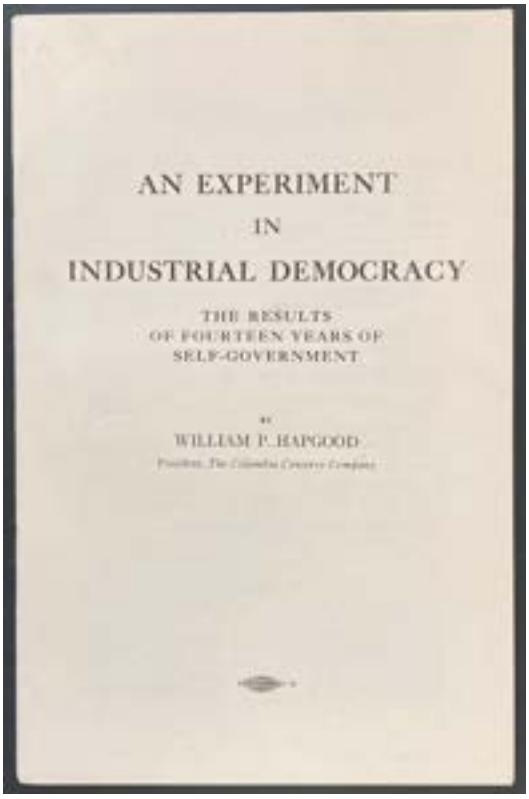
EL REY.

Con Carta de ocho de Noviembre de mil setecientos ochenta y siete remitió mi Gobernador y Capitan General interino de la Isla de Cuba, y Ciudad de San Cristobal de la Habana, el Acuerdo celebrado por el Ayuntamiento de ella, reducido á impetrar la gracia de comer carne los Sábados en aquella Plaza, como se practicaba en el resto de la Isla, exponiendo en su apoyo la confusion de sus habitantes con la variedad de dictámenes, fundados en el Breve de Pio Sexto expedido el año de mil setecientos setenta y nueve, que se referia á los anteriores de Benedicto Decimoquarto, queriendo unos suponer como revocada la gracia que gozaban aquellos Reynos con la de estos, y otros sin sacarle de los límites y condiciones con que fué concedido desde sus principios, reducidos á que lo gozasen los en que florecia la costumbre de comerse extremidades y menudencias; añadiendo para mas calificacion diferentes disposiciones Diocesanas, con las quales, y otras que de ellos emanaban, se hallaban vacilantes con las dos opiniones, sin saber á qual inclinarse, respecto de que los que inducian á la obligacion, la recomendaban públicamente, y los de contrario sentir se contentaban con manifestarla en consultas reservadas, temerosos de ofender las determinaciones Sinodales, por lo que deseosos de lograr la tranquilidad de sus conciencias, que peligraba en grave riesgo, su-

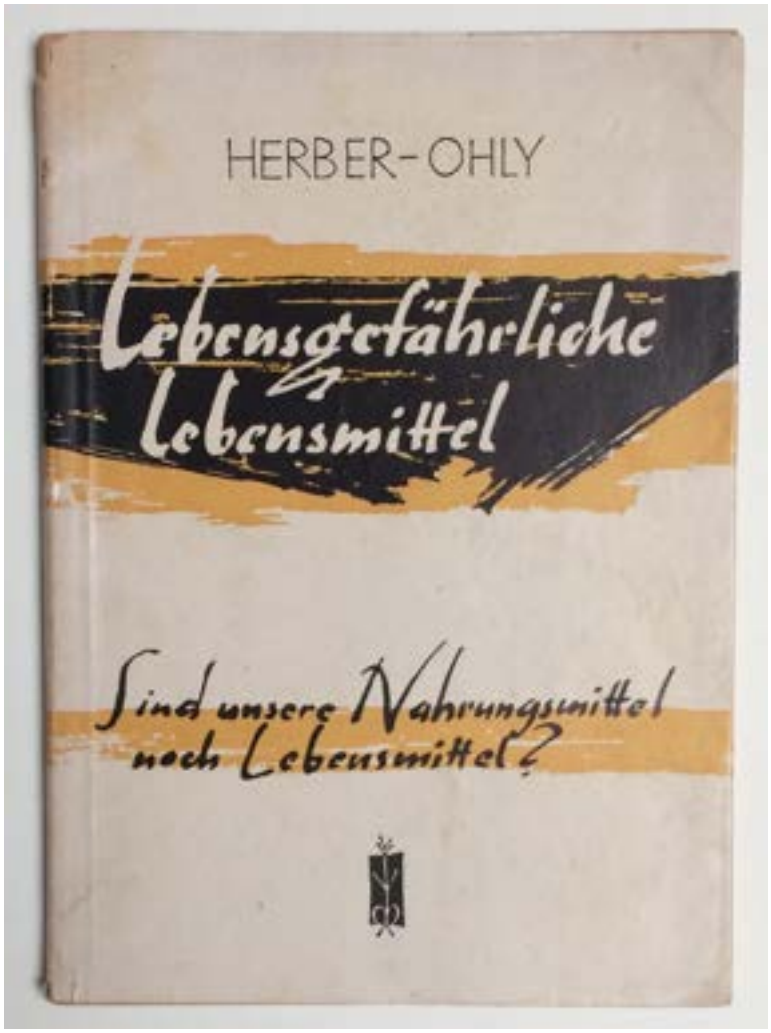
20. [Carlos IV]. El Rey. Con carta de ocho de noviembre de mil setecientos ochenta y siete remitió mi gobernador y capitan general interino de la isla de Cuba, y ciudad de San Christobal de la Habana, el acuerdo celebrado por el Ayuntamiento de ella, reducido á impetrar la gracia de comer carne los sábados en aquella plaza ... [royal proclamation signed "Yo El Rey"]. n.p., 1790. Three page printed proclamation, leaves attached at left, disbound from a larger volume; the edges have been trimmed, without loss of the printed text but cutting off part of the penned inscription on the final page. (#331079) $250.00
"By letter dated November 8, 1787, my governor and acting captain general of the island of Cuba and the city of San Cristobal de la Habana, forwarded the agreement reached by the City Council of the same, reduced to requesting the grace of eating meat on Saturdays in that square..."



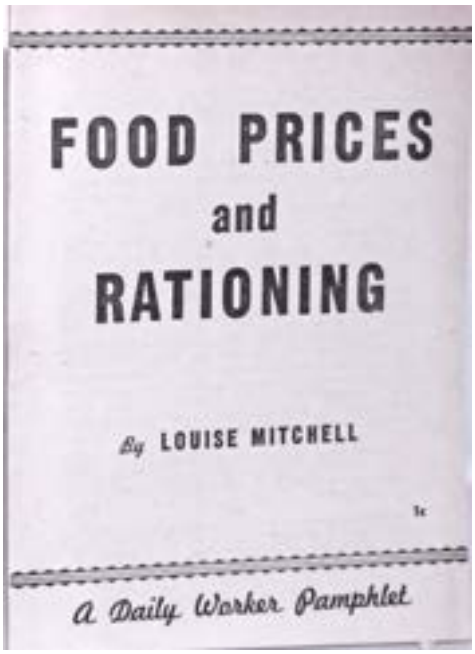
21. Hapgood, William P. The Columbia Conserve Company: an Experiment in Workers' Management and Ownership. Indianapolis: Columbia Conserve Company, 1934. xi, 187p. paperback, mild handling wear to covers, interior clean; very good. (#291163) $60.00
Hapgood established the Columbia Conserve Company and instituted an employee ownership program in 1917. For details of the company's unprecedented experiments in industrial democracy, its years of success, and its eventual schism and sale to a larger company, see Kim McQuaid's 1976 article in Labor History, "Industry and the co-operative commonwealth: William P. Hapgood and the Columbia Conserve Company, 1917–1943."



22. Hapgood, William P. An experiment in industrial democracy; the results of fourteen years of self-government. Indianapolis: Columbia Conserve Company, [193-]. 48p., staplebound pamphlet, very good; this edition intended for distribution in Cleveland, with a statement on the rear cover that the company's canned soups could be found there under the Weideman Boy brand. One of several revised versions of this pamphlet. (#291162) $35.00

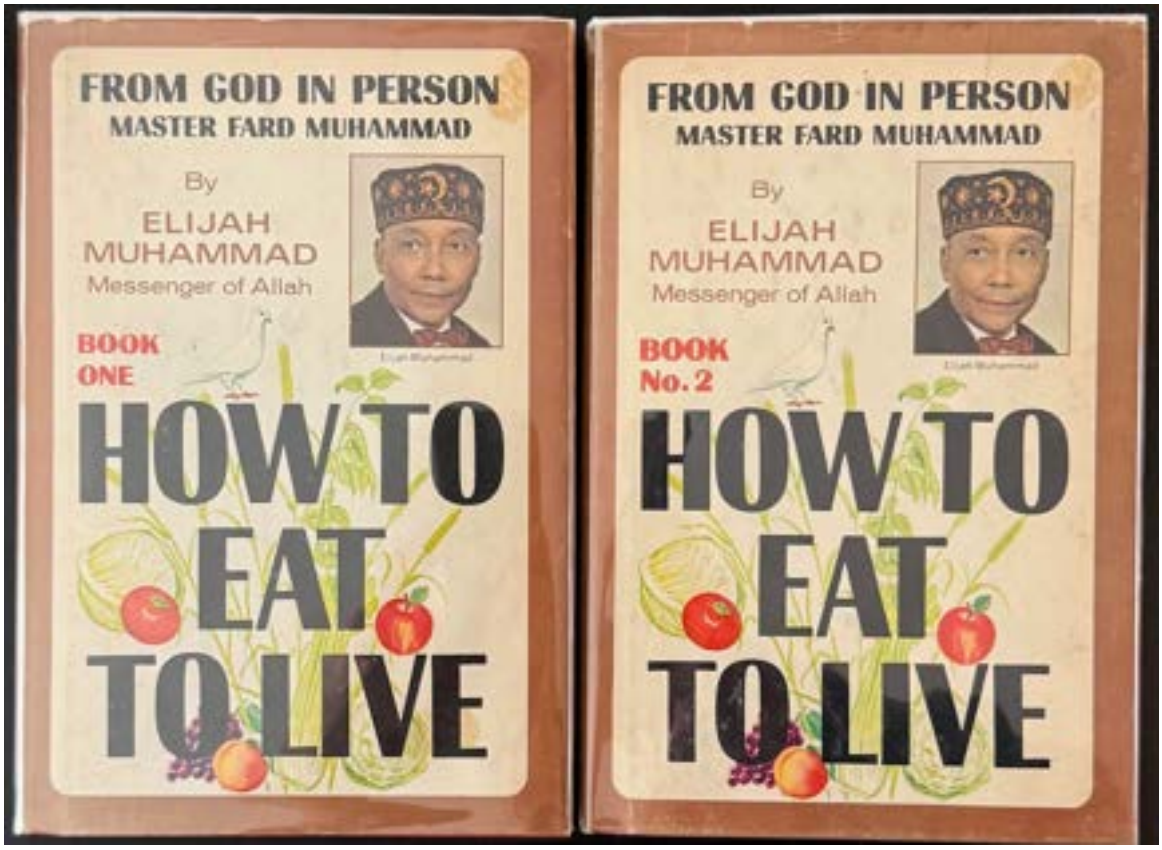


23. Herber, Lewis [pseudonym of Murray Bookchin]; Gotz Ohly. Lebensgefährliche "Lebensmittel" Krailling bei München: H.G. Müller, 1953. 87p., very good paperback in a chipped dustwrapper. Originally published in "Contemporary Issues," 1952, as an article titled ""The Problem of Chemicals in Food." This German translation is Bookchin's first book. His later books "Our Synthetic Environment" (1962) and "Crisis in Our Cities" (1965) also appeared under the name Lewis Herber. (#256195) $250.00



Subtitle asks, "Are our foods still food?" This work prefigured Bookchin's focus on environmental issues.

24. Mitchell, Louise. Food prices and rationing. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1943. 15p., wraps, paper toned, else very good condition, 5x7 inches. A Daily Worker pamphlet. (#70008) $20.00



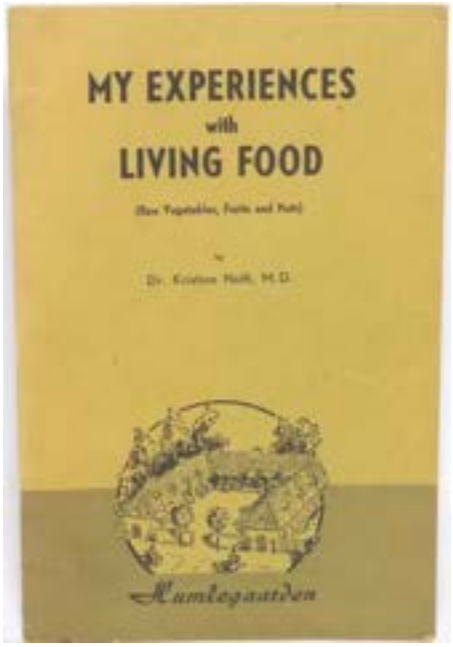
25. Muhammad, Elijah. From God in person, master Fard Muhammad. How to eat to live [Book One and Book Two, together]. Chicago: Muhammad's Temple of Islam No. 2, 1967, 1972. Two hardcover volumes, 123 and 199p. respectively, very good in lightly edgeworn dustjackets with old price sticker shadow in upper right corner of front panels. (#332521) $95.00

A series of thematic essays containing dietary advice, including emphasis on natural foods, avoidance of drugs (including birth control pills), adherence to Muslim prohibition of pork, and much more. States that it was sold as a fundraiser to build an educational center in Chicago.



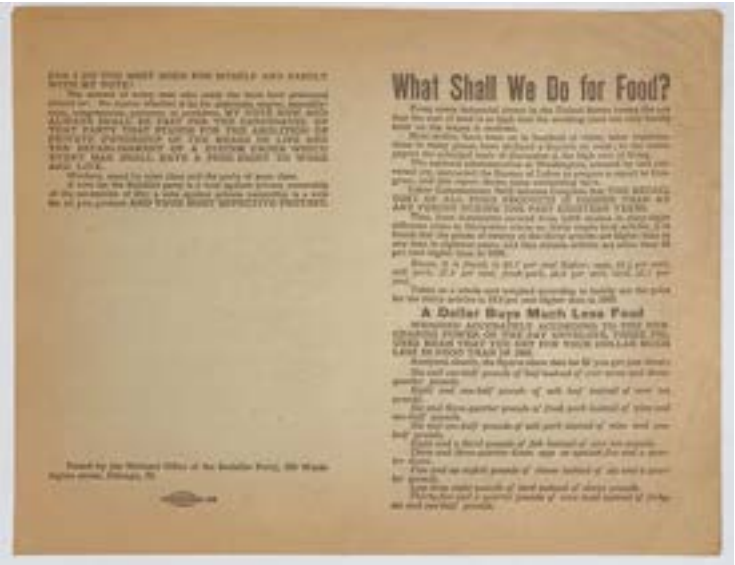
26. New York Communist Workers Organization. Jobs and bread: a political problem. New York: New York Communist Workers Organization, 1974. 46p., staplebound pamphlet, cover toned at bottom with a minor stain, interior clean. (#210753) $25.00

Includes an analysis of the baking industry. "The last year has witnessed a tremendous increase in the burdens of the working class. In this pamphlet we deal with two such problems -- unemployment in manufacturing industries and soaring food prices." - preface.

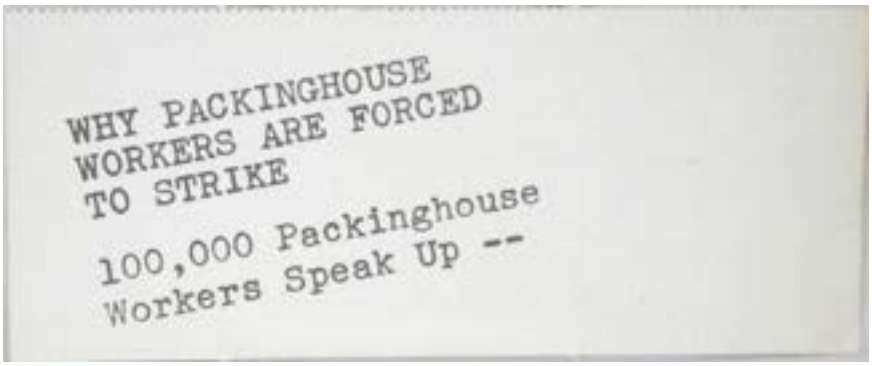


27. Nolfi, Dr. Kristine. My experience with living food (raw vegetables, fruits and nuts). npl: Humlegaarden, [c1956?]. 24p., 5.5x8.5 inch staplebound wrappers; faint bit of rust on staples, hint of soil on front cover, heavier soil spot on back cover, else in very good condition. (#334683) $95.00.

Humlegaarden is a health resort founded by Dr. Nolfi, who claimed to have treated her own cancer through sun-bathing and a raw vegetable and fruit diet.



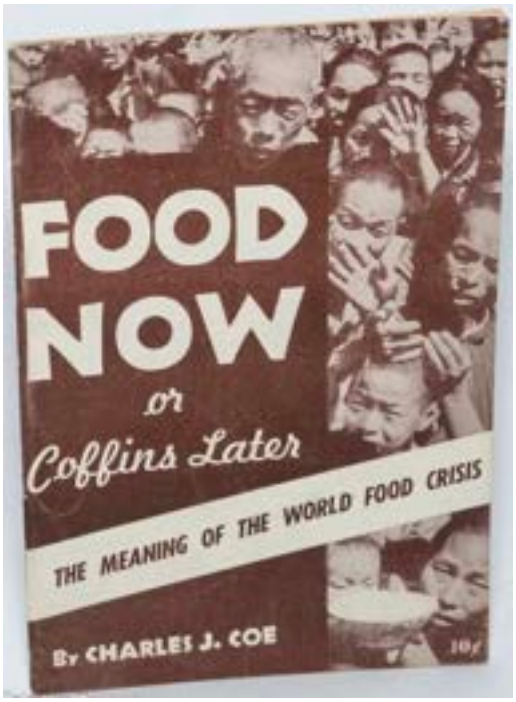
28. Socialist Party. What shall we do for food? Chicago: Socialist Party, [191-]. Sheet intended to be folded to make a four-panel brochure of 5.5x8.5 inches, but this example not folded; evenly toned, minor wear. (#271929) $50.00
Discusses rising food prices, comparing current prices of various commodities to those of various dates in the 1890s. Concludes: "A vote for the Socialist party is a vote against private ownership of the necessities of life; a vote against private ownership is a vote for all you produce AND YOUR MOST EFFECTIVE PROTEST."



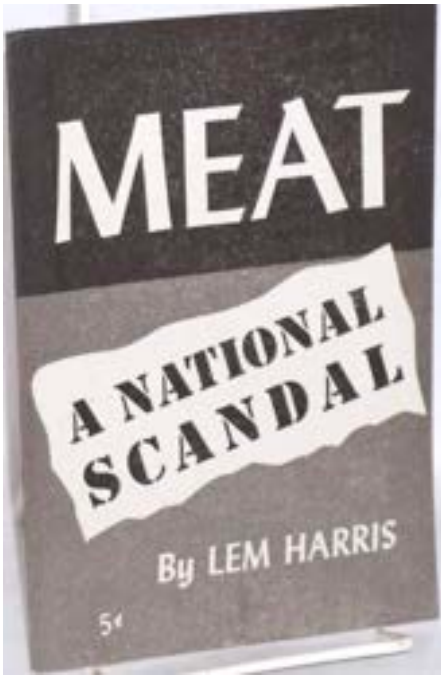
29. United Packinghouse Workers of America, CIO. Farmer-Labor Relations Department. Why packinghouse workers are forced to strike. Des Moines: United Packinghouse Workers of America, CIO, [1948]. Single sheet folded accordion-style, unfolding to reveal an open letter to farmers, very good condition. (#145583) $15.00



30. Wells, Kate, Mary Scott, Doi, Tui Bevin, Jocelyn Walker, Gordon Caley, et al, editors. Mushroom; a magazine on alternative living in New Zealand, no. 18 (August 1979). Dunedin North, New Zealand: Mushroom, 1979. Single issue of the counter-cultural magazine, 8.5x11 inches; illus., cartoons, pictorial wraps are faintly handled, pages are evenly toned, else in very good condition. Special issue seed-to-feed cooking and food complete with recipes for cheese, spreads, wines, soy pate, desserts, butter, preservation, cosmetics made out of food, and lastly, tips on permaculture, composting, and alternative cooking methods. Interestingly, this issue also includes an article on the merits of vaccines with eugenicist tones. Instead of vaccines, the nutritionist recommends a healthy lifestyle with exercise, a content mind, and auto-therapy as the best prevention measures against disease. (#305366) $150.00



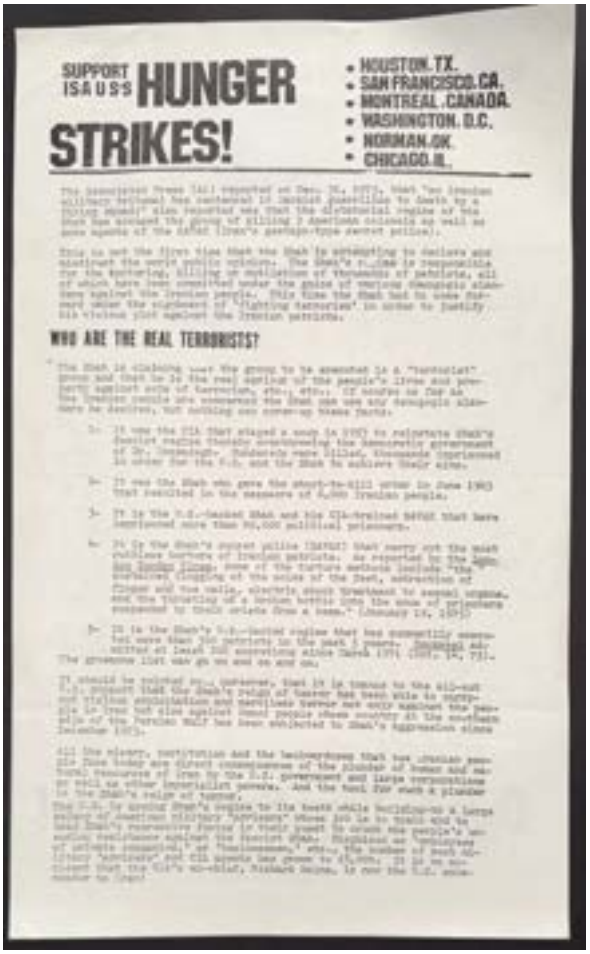
31. Food Now or Coffins Later: the meaning of the world food crisis. Coe, Charles J. New York: Farm Research, 1946. 32p., staplebound pamphlet, 5x7.5 inches, wraps worn, staples rusted else very good condition. *Seidman C218. (#30173) $15.00



32. Meat: a national scandal. Harris, Lem. New York: New Century Publishers, 1946. 23p., staplebound pamphlet, 5x7.25 inches, paper toned else very good condition. Seidman H77. Communist perspective on the industry. (#34308) $12.00

33. Food stamps. Poems about hungers. Cesa, Margaret. Berkeley: West Coast Printing Center, 1975. [12] leaves, oblong wraps. 2.75 x 5.5 in. Perforated leaves. Booklet of poems about hunger, want, and need, modeled after a book of food stamps. (#324135) $50.00





34. Support ISAUS's Hunger Strikes! [handbill]. Washington DC: Iranian Students Association in United States, ISAUS, [1976]. 8.5x14 inch handbill, printed both sides, faint creasing. Iranian student activists in the US were leading a hunger strike to protest the sentencing and planned executions of ten Marxist guerrillas in Iran. (#339737) $30.00