

# Workers' Power 41

## NIXON'S WAGE FREEZE:

# Labor Leaders Retreat

James Coleman

AFL-CIO President George Meany's offer of a no-strike pledge (see *Editorial*) only underlined the growing capitulation of labor's leaders to the wage-price freeze. Even before Meany's offer, their opposition was losing its stiffness like a shirt under a steam iron.

President Leonard Woodcock of the United Auto Workers, who at first challenged Nixon to "war" over the freeze, said August 26 that the differences between his union and the Teamsters — which supported the freeze — were only differences in "rhetoric." Unfortunately, he was right.

The unions' retreat came amid growing hints that wage-price control was no 90-day wonder. On August 24, Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans predicted "some form of mandatory wage and price controls" after the freeze.

On August 28, Nixon's second most powerful agent, Treasury Secretary John Connally, stated that the US government "is at the end of an era in our economic policies" — the era of relative non-interference by the government. Business and labor, Connally said, will have to get used to the idea of living within certain parameters" (limits).

On August 30, Paul McCracken, Chairman of Nixon's Council of Economic Advisers, dismissed proposals by Meany, Woodcock, and others to "equalize sacrifice" by limiting profits. A tax on profits, McCracken said, would be a "disincentive" to business investment.

For the moment, Nixon did not dare directly confront the power of the working class — rather, it was the compromising attitude of the labor leaders themselves which encouraged the Administration

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## Equality of Sacrifice

Chris Winslow

On August 29, on the TV program "Meet the Press," United Auto Workers President Leonard Woodcock outlined his recommendations for a policy to follow the 90-day wage-price freeze. Woodcock opposed the creation of wage-price boards with legal powers to limit wages. Instead, he called for boards which would have the power of subpoena.

These boards could compel the representatives of business and labor to appear and give justification for asking higher wages or higher prices. In effect, each side would be compelled to defend itself before public opinion. The boards could compel each side to prove its claim.

This proposal echoed a demand which Woodcock's union, the UAW, first made famous during the 1945-1946 strike against General Motors — the demand

that GM "open the books" to show why it could not meet the union's demands. GM and other corporations have always resisted such demands — they regard their corporate records, like their earnings, as "private property," closed to public view.

In 1946, this was a bold proposal. Woodcock's August 29 proposal, however, was only an echo — and like echoes in real life, it was faded and distorted.

In 1946, the demand "open the books" was made to back up labor's demand for higher wages. The UAW was demanding "wage increases without price increases" — in other words, with no inflation. They demanded that the cost of higher wages come out of profits.

In 1971, Woodcock proposes — like every other liberal — that labor and business be held in check. Not that labor

gain at the expense of business — but that both "sacrifice equally."

The problem with this approach is that Woodcock accepts the fashionable theory which assigns equal responsibility to labor and business in stopping inflation. This is wrong, first, because those who have nothing simply cannot be held equally responsible with those who have millions — an extra dollar an hour is a necessity to one, a trifle to the other.

This is a simple truth which Woodcock has apparently forgotten.

His approach is wrong, second, because it continues to grant business the right to pass on higher costs, in the form of higher prices, in order to maintain its rate of profit. As long as this right is granted to business, labor must at best

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# editorial

## Meany's Deal

Less than a month ago, AFL-CIO President George Meany denounced the wage-price freeze as a "bonanza for big business." Now the biggest bonanza of all has been added to the program — by Meany himself.

The Sunday before Labor Day, Meany, speaking in the name of the entire labor movement, offered to give up the right to strike. Meany said that if labor is given a role in planning the new wage-price policies expected after the 90-day freeze, it will give a no-strike pledge in return.

Meany's remarks were a crowning example of the self-destructive logic with which labor's official leaders have responded to the new attack by government and business. To fend off the President's attack, Meany is offering to cut off labor's head.

This offer will not appease Nixon and the business class behind him. On the contrary, the more they are offered, the more they will demand from labor.

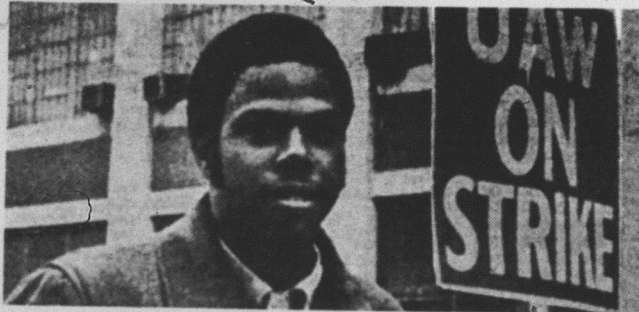
The issue of the right to strike is involved in any wage-control scheme. To begin with, it is impossible to limit wage increases so long as workers still have the right to withhold their labor to demand more. This would only lead to employers themselves defying the government by granting raises in order to resume production. Thus, if the government does not try to limit the right to strike, labor will be able to force one employer, in desperation, to undo the work Nixon has done for all the employers as a class.

Moreover, it is not only strikes for wages that would present a problem. All strikes mean lost production, interruptions in scheduled deliveries, etc. Any strikes would interfere with the rise in productivity which Nixon hopes to stimulate. This is just as much the case with strikes over working conditions and work rules, etc., as with strikes for higher pay.

Yet strikes of this kind will be especially important if Nixon's wage-price control goes through. For with price increases limited, the employers will turn to speedup, elimination of job restrictions, changes in work rules, cutting costs in health and safety, and other such methods to increase profits by getting more production for fewer man-hours. Layoffs and speedup, of course, are not "frozen" by Nixon's policy.

It was therefore inevitable that Nixon would attempt to limit the right to strike. But if a ban on strikes had to be imposed against labor's resistance, the response of millions would be outrage and protest — and this protest would inevitably take the form, not just of angry words, but of strike action.

Hence, the service Meany has performed for Nixon is invaluable. Only he, and the other top labor leaders, can give any sem-



blance of legitimacy to Nixon's campaign to limit the right to strike. Only Meany and the rest can — if they and Nixon are lucky — confuse and divide the ranks and prevent an explosion of class strife.

Meany's offer can be explained by the position and ideology of the labor bureaucracy of which he is the most barnacled representative. The top labor leaders have long lost contact with the shops — with speedup, with 120-degree heat, with deafening noise, with unsafe conditions. They are insulated from their own members by the undemocratic structure and crude machine politics of their unions. Their salaries commonly range between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

Behind their position lies their ideology. They believe in capitalism, although a reformed capitalism, of course. "Reform" to them means largely a voice in the decision-making. Not a voice for the ranks — who have none within the bureaucratized unions either. A voice for themselves. They see themselves, the top

layer of the working class, as junior partners in the system they support.

Because they are committed to capitalism, they are chained to its requirements. When an economic decline and increased foreign competition cause capitalists to clamor for an attack on wages and working conditions — all in the holy name of "fighting inflation," "improving productivity," and "making American goods more competitive" — the labor bureaucracy makes a show of opposition, but has no alternative to propose.

There is an alternative, however, and it is not too complicated to understand: it is for labor to fight for its own needs, to reject any claims of "sacrifice" which fall foremost on its own shoulders, and to defend its rights — if need be — even against the President.

The freeze, and "Phase II" which will follow, can be fought. Even now, the continued strikes by West Coast longshoremen, New York telephone workers,

Teamsters, and others, have forced Nixon to abandon his original campaign for a voluntary end to strikes during the freeze.

Nixon's next attack will be stronger, and will have Meany's support, unless an unholy noise is made now. Meany will offer a binding no-strike pledge, without even token consultation of the ranks he is supposed to represent, unless he is stopped.

The ranks will have to take the initiative if Nixon's offensive is to be beaten back. Caucuses must be organized to demand a real fight, and to take action if the bureaucrats refuse to fight. The call for a 1-DAY NATIONAL WORK STOPPAGE AGAINST THE FREEZE, WITH MASSIVE LABOR DEMONSTRATIONS, should be revived. Already in the first days of the freeze, this call received endorsement from the International Vice-President of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, the Michigan Council of the AFL-CIO, and other labor organizations.

At the same time, labor must demand the UNLIMITED RIGHT TO STRIKE.

All gains in present contracts must be protected. New contracts must contain gains. There must be No Layoffs, and No Speedup, from wage-price policies.

Finally, the ranks of labor must prepare now to fight the danger approaching at the end of the 90-day freeze — the danger of wage-price control boards which will repeat the sorry experience of World War II. It must be recognized that the participation of the labor leadership will only make it more difficult to fight against the discriminatory effects of such boards. NO COMPLIANCE WITH WAGE-PRICE CONTROLS — NO WAGE RESTRAINTS — NO LABOR PARTICIPATION ON WAGE-PRICE BOARDS.

Moreover, since Meany and the other bureaucrats will attempt to settle this question with no consultation of the ranks, we demand A VOTE OF LABOR'S RANKS ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE WAGE-PRICE POLICY.

To organize around these demands is only to begin to fight; the fight must be carried further by putting forward a positive program for labor to solve the economic crisis. And such a program must be made the focus of an independent Labor Party, opposed to the anti-labor Democratic and Republican parties — a party which would be committed first of all not to the requirements of capitalism, but to the needs of working people and the oppressed groups in society, and to the international solidarity of labor. ■



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# Nixon vs. Labor

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tion to forge ahead.

The Administration had backed down from an earlier threat to use legal powers to end strikes in progress. By September 1, only 34,000 of the more than 150,000 workers on strike at the beginning of the freeze had gone back to work. This did not include any of the major strikes.

Despite this demonstration of labor's enormous power, the labor leaders were in full retreat on two fronts — (1) their immediate response to the freeze, and (2) their long-term position on wage-price policies.

Woodcock of the UAW blew the first trumpet. On August 26, 150 members of UAW Local 189 at Michigan Rivet Corporation struck when management refused to pay a 34% cost-of-living increase because of the wage freeze. The UAW ruled this a wildcat strike, and ordered a return to work.

Woodcock had just stated, one day before, that the UAW would "accommodate" itself to the freeze "as a practical matter."

At the same time, Woodcock and other labor leaders such as Meany began to reveal their long-range strategy. Virtually dropping their opposition to the freeze, they announced plans to fight in Congress, through labor's "allies" in the Democratic Party, against the most discriminatory aspects of Nixon's program.

In addition, they called for continuing wage-price controls after the freeze ex-

pires November 13. Woodcock called for a review board without compulsory powers, while Meany called for a present-day version of the War Labor Board of 1941-1945.

During World War II, business, labor, and "the public" each had one-third representation on the Board. Actually, the "public" representatives spoke for the government, which drove the working class ever harder to win the war.

The results were: a 43.5 percent rise in the cost of living between 1941 and 1944; a rise in wages of only 23 percent; and a merry 225 percent rise in corporate profits.

Even if Meany intended to try to defend labor's gains, one third of the votes on control boards, as in World War II, would give him no way to do so. But he has no intention of fighting; he can only hope to rely on the fairness of the business and "public" representatives on the boards.

The labor leaders' strategy is self-defeating. The Democrats may work to trim some pro-business fringes from Nixon's program, such as the "investment tax incentives" (which will have little real effect, since existing productive capacity is 27 percent underutilized). And they will call rhetorically, as Sen. Hubert Humphrey did August 26, for "legislation that is as fair to the working man as it is for business."

In World War II, when an excess profits tax was in effect, corporate profits rose 225 percent from 1941 to 1944.

More fundamentally, in an economic system based on profit mechanisms, business must not only maintain its rate of profit — but must strive to increase the rate of profit. If the profits of one sector of business do not rise, and another sector's profits do, investors switch to the more profitable sector. Thus, all sectors must seek higher profits, and government, if it aims to keep business "healthy," must permit this.

The result is that business is constant-

ly forced to do one of three things: raise prices (high enough to increase the rate of profit) — or reduce wages (or force them to increase more slowly than prices) — or increase the output per worker (productivity), either by greater efficiency, or by driving the worker harder. In practice, business usually does all these things simultaneously.

But the Democrats will not fight to control profits. Already, on August 31, Gardner Ackley, a former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers and one of the top economic strategists for the Democratic Party, called the proposal of an excess profits tax "a lousy idea."

Ackley's specific recommendations deserve study. They reveal why the labor bureaucrats' strategy of supporting the Democrats and calling for "equitable" wage-price control is a double-barreled shotgun pointed at their own members. Ackley's proposal featured "the superceding of deferred wage increases that exceed productivity gains." In other words, workers who have already negotiated contracts would never get the gains they had fought for, unless these gains were the same or less than gains in productivity. (Nothing is said about making sure wage gains are at least this high.)

Although this may be compromised as regards existing contracts, this would become the rule in the future. From this point on, proposes the chief economic adviser to the Democrats, workers are not to get one cent more unless they produce more per man-hour.

The same policy of limiting wage increases to productivity gains has been proposed by the extremely influential John Kenneth Galbraith, another of the Democrats' top economic brains.

On September 1, Ackley further proposed that prices be allowed to rise 2 percent a year, and wages 5 percent. Although this sounds like a gain for the worker, the 3 percent difference is simply the expected increase in productivity. Once again — wage increases only for increased output per man-hour.

## "Incentives"

There are several things wrong with this wage-price-productivity package. First, price controls are at best only half-effective. They work best with the prices of major items (like steel). They are least effective in the thousand areas of the consumer's daily life.

This was true even in World War II, when there was elaborate enforcement machinery, but now, with compliance "voluntary," it is almost impossible to control retail prices.

The same is true of rents. And taxes are not included in the freeze at all.

But wages are easily controlled, because the government does not have to "ask" the worker to control his wages, as with the businessman's prices. The worker does not control his wages now, except by fighting to do so. Wage controls mean that the government asks the employer to control wages (and he is glad to) and at the same time, "asks" the worker not to fight for more.

Further, if labor agrees to link wages to productivity, this means replacing a freeze on wages by a freeze on the distribution of income in the United States. Every cent in higher wages will be "paid

for" (and more than paid for) by adding proportionally to output, and therefore to profits. Whether raked off immediately as dividends, or ploughed back as new investment and raked off later as "capital gains," the increase adds to the "wages" of the capitalist class.

Finally, the only incentive in a capitalist economy for business to increase investment, improve efficiency, or make any other changes whether beneficial or harmful — is the incentive of higher profits. And this, of course, is why neither Republicans nor Democrats — none of those whose ideology limits them to offering advantages ("incentives") to business to stimulate the economy — can really fight against advantages or "give-aways" to business, which are only incentives called by a nastier name.

## Permanent Restraint

The government's probably course of action, although it has not yet decided on the precise timing or mechanisms for control, will be to replace "temporary," "voluntary" controls by permanent, binding ones.

As long ago as June 1970, John Kenneth Galbraith was frank enough to write: "Controls are not a temporary expedient. There must, alas, be a permanent system of restraint."

Because the government recognizes that this policy cannot work — or, to be precise, cannot work nearly so easily — without the acquiescence of the big guns of labor, the labor tops will probably be invited to sit on whatever wage boards are created. (In World War II, they sat on the wage boards but not the price boards.) The idea will be to buy their cooperation by giving them a token "voice." Already, Meany has "demanded" this, and Labor Secretary Hodgson has duly promised that labor will be "consulted" in planning Phase II.

Everything the labor leaders have done since their first inflammatory statements against the freeze shows that they will eventually meekly settle for such a "voice." Their refusal to fight against the freeze can have only one effect. The further labor retreats, the more will Nixon advance. And if trade-union support for the Democratic Party brings this party into office — with its Nixonite program masked by its still-intact reputation as a "friend of labor" — the less resistance will there be, initially, to the curbs on labor's rights, and the greater will be the curbs.

The alternative is for the ranks to begin — now — the resistance to the freeze, and to prepare to resist the imposition of a wage-price control policy after November 13. To start with, where rank and file groups exist or can be formed, they must demand real opposition to the freeze, a refusal by their leaders to cooperate in wage-control boards, and a break with the anti-labor Democratic Party. ■

## Woodcock

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remain stuck in the same position.

Woodcock attempted to deal with this problem by proposing an "excess profits tax." But Woodcock did not specify what profit rate he thought excessive.

ly forced to do one of three things: raise prices (high enough to increase the rate of profit) — or reduce wages (or force them to increase more slowly than prices) — or increase the output per worker (productivity), either by greater efficiency, or by driving the worker harder. In practice, business usually does all these things simultaneously.

This is what creates the "wage-price spiral," as workers fight back by trying to retrieve in wages what they have lost in higher prices. This instinctive response of workers is more in tune with the reality of capitalism than Woodcock's hope

to change the struggle of opposed forces through the influence of public opinion.

This also is why "voluntary" wage-price controls cannot stop the drive of business to raise profits, and therefore cannot keep wages and prices truly "balanced." It is also why wage-price controls cannot be "fair to both sides" — they must be pro-labor or pro-business, but cannot be both.

The pro-labor response to all schemes to limit wages to some "fair" guideline while allowing the rate of profit to rise must be: CONTROL PRICES AND PROFITS, NOT WAGES.



Albert Shanker

# Shanker Keeps The Lid On At AFT Convention

Marilyn Danton

The National Convention of the American Federation of Teachers which met in San Francisco August 16-20 was more than just a meeting of the national teachers' union. It was a microcosm of the entire labor movement: the current crisis it faces, the strategies it has been following, and the long-term solutions that exist.

Over the five days of committee meetings, plenary sessions and caucus gatherings, the drama played itself out. Unlike many conventions where the most important political questions are couched in language which hides their true meaning, here there was never any doubt as to what the major issue was: the direction for a national political strategy. This is partly attributable to the fact that teachers as public employees face the government directly, which tends to focus political questions more clearly.

What were the choices? To follow AFL-CIO President George Meany's policies and support "progressive Democrats" — or to use direct action, and, although few were willing to admit it, to begin to build an independent labor party, carrying this fight into the AFL-CIO.

These are the questions which the American labor movement faces today in terms of a strategy to fight the effects of war-caused inflation, unemployment, and an increasingly anti-labor stance on the part of both major parties.

Over and above these problems the AFT has its own special fight to wage. American education is facing one of its greatest crises. The heart of this crisis is the funding question. It has threatened teachers across the country with layoffs, salary cuts, and the loss of valuable special programs.

Locally some small victories have been by the use of strikes, job actions, and demonstrations — but it is clear that these have been only stop-gap measures. A national offensive on the part of the AFT, backed by the whole labor movement, is the only possible long-range solution.

On the second day of the Convention, President Nixon announced the 90-day wage-price freeze. This timely statement only sharpened the issue of what the strategy of the labor movement should be. Every major leader in the union, in power or out, had to address himself to the freeze. This became an insurmountable problem for some.

The current leadership of the AFT is embodied in the Progressive Caucus, which is dominated by Albert Shanker, President of the largest union local in the country — the 70,000 member New York City United Federation of Teachers. Shanker became prominent as the leader of the racist 1968 New York

teachers' strike against community control.

Shanker took the offensive immediately on the questions of political action and the relationship with other forces in the labor movement. His answer: support to "progressives" in the Democratic Party (the same "progressives" such as Senators Humphrey and Kennedy who support wage controls and who passed the law empowering Nixon to impose his freeze), in alliance with Meany in the AFL-CIO. These points came through loud and clear in the discussion of each issue which hit the floor.

On the war, for example, Shanker argued for a position of "no position," saying the war was "not a labor issue," and that unions should therefore not concern themselves with it. "We must elect progressive Democrats be they hawk or dove," was the rallying cry over and over again. In order to defeat the anti-war motion, Shanker had to discipline the large Chicago local, which was on record in favor of immediate withdrawal from Vietnam.

When the opposition caucus introduced a motion on the wage-price freeze which attacked both Nixon and the Democrats, and called for a two-day work stoppage, Shanker accused them of attempting to split the labor movement, and said that we could not be "complainers and crybabies" inside the AFL-CIO.

The story was the same when it came to the election of delegates to the AFL-CIO Convention, and of two AFT vice-presidents. According to Shanker, "to send any complainers to this convention would make us the laughing stock of the labor movement." All the just demands of blacks and other racial minorities were put down in a most racist manner as "third-worldism," a term which applied to anyone who raised the issue of community control or the problem of racism in the schools and the AFT.

## United Action Caucus

Under the pressure of the general crisis in education, intensified by the wage-price freeze, a strong opposition to the Progressive Caucus developed for the first time. The United Action Caucus (UAC) was formed by the merger of the former New Caucus (a small group of radicals) and the Black Caucus.

The merger was promoted by Carole Graves, the militant black president of the Newark, N.J., local, who, with others, thought it was important to build a strong opposition on a programmatic basis. The caucus had a base of support of about 25 percent of the 1,300 delegates — mostly from locals with a large black membership (Washington, D.C., Newark, and to some extent Detroit), and some smaller militant locals.

The basic points in the program included a stand for immediate withdraw-

al from Vietnam, and the fight for this position against Meany in the AFL-CIO as a whole; work stoppages to fight the wage-price freeze; and mass actions with other public employees to demand the right to strike and an adequate national funding program for the schools.

On the question of what national political strategy to follow, however, the UAC floundered. The International Socialists and some other militants tried unsuccessfully to get the caucus to adopt a call for an independent labor party which could represent the interests of teachers and workers in general.

While this point was rejected by a majority of the caucus, the significant minority which supported it formed the nucleus for a left grouping inside the caucus which will be able to push for this position in the future as the only real answer to Shanker.

## Opposition Growing

The balance sheet of the Convention indicates clearly that the Progressive Caucus carried the day. The one possible exception to this pattern was the issue of the war, where Shanker was forced to allow a watered-down motion calling for "immediate withdrawal with safeguards for American troops" to be introduced and passed, in order to hold his caucus together.

Sentiment was just too high on the war question for there not to be some anti-war position taken. On the wage-price freeze, however, only the most minimal step was taken: to affirm Meany's denunciation of Nixon, and to discuss possible actions in the future with the AFL-CIO leadership. The Progressive Caucus did not call for any action now.

Angela Davis, an AFT member, received not even token support: a motion was passed demanding "a fair trial and reasonable bail," something no one in this society is supposed to have to demand; and the question of racism was not answered in any manner.

A motion was passed withdrawing support for the Equal Rights Amendment (largely a device for undercutting the few laws which protect women in industry), which the AFT had supported last year. Otherwise the record on the issue of women in the AFT was as dismal as the rest.

So, for another year, the AFT, like the rest of the labor movement, will continue to support the Democratic Party, begging for favors, receiving crumbs, and not raising any real opposition to the policies of Nixon. To the short-sighted it looks as though the bureaucrats are safely in control, but as the educational crisis deepens, so will the opposition to Shanker and his policies.

*[Marilyn Danton was a delegate to the AFT Convention and is a member of the International Socialists.]*



Newark Teachers Union President Carol Graves



William Simons, UAC candidate for AFL-CIO Delegate



## NEW YORK TELEPHONE:



For nearly six weeks, the strike of 40,000 New York State telephone craftsmen has appeared to be in a stalemate. As the strike enters its seventh week, however, events are building toward a climax.

The company, New York Telephone (Plant Department), is showing signs of strain. Bell is beginning to muster all its weapons to defeat the 23 New York locals of CWA (Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO).

Hundreds of out-of-state foremen have been brought to New York City as scabs. In some buildings, scabbing clerical workers are being offered upgrades to craft jobs. For the first time in history, N.Y. Tel has offered such upgrades to women workers.

The company has done everything possible to slow down the payment of unemployment insurance to the strikers. Already, strikers have been told it will take them a month to get their first checks, the usual time lapse being two weeks at most.

Backed up by President Nixon's wage-price freeze, which means no pay increase until at least November, no matter when a settlement is reached, this all amounts to a formidable psychological and material attack on the strikers.

There are signs, however, that this attack may backfire. Back-to-work sentiment seems to have reached its peak and died out.

The company claims that 14 percent of the strikers are now scabbing, but there has been no new increase in scabs. Furthermore, the more general back-to-work sentiment that was growing earlier seems to have been replaced by a bitter willingness to stay out until we can return with honor.

The Local leaders have also seen the ineffectiveness of their past wait-and-see policy. On August 14, they finally drew up a serious list of demands. While these demands are far from adequate, they do reflect to some degree the real needs and desires of the ranks.

Until August 27, the International refused to reconvene bargaining around these or any other demands. On the 27th, however, in their second meeting with Joe Bierne, the Presidents of the New York locals forced Bierne to reconvene bargaining and to sanction, grudgingly, the New York strike.

This was an important victory, particularly in that it helps to undermine the myth of invincibility that surrounds Bierne and his machine. But unless the New York Local Presidents use bargaining and the changing spirit of the ranks to win a decisive victory, the present conservative balance of power in the CWA will remain undisturbed.

More immediately, many of the New York locals, particularly Local 1101, will certainly be beaten and fragmented.

### Opportunities

The opportunities for action by Local 1101 and others are endless. For example, mass picketing to intimidate scabs at their buildings and mass demonstrations at the Hotel Commodore, where the out-of-state foremen are staying, would serve notice that the union will not sit still for the company's strike-breaking tactics. They would also tap the growing spirit of resistance among the ranks.

A clear contract victory, with no reprisals or layoffs, is the only basis for returning to work that can save the union and the dignity of the workers. But

# We Can Win If We Act Now

Brian Mackenzie

even more than this is needed. A strategy for dealing with the company after we return to work is also essential.

Such a strategy must include total opposition to the wage-price freeze and whatever wage controls follow. Local 1101's President, Ricky Carnivale, has already stated that 1101 has led labor's attack on the freeze by staying out.

However, insofar as this is true at all, it is largely a matter of coincidence rather than a policy of the leadership. The New York Local Presidents have, after all, given up even the demand for retroactivity from November 15 to July 28, when our contract expired.

Moreover, they have done nothing to mobilize New York labor strength to fight wage controls. They have called no demonstrations. They have not even invited the other labor bureaucrats to

take out a newspaper ad stating opposition. In fact, they haven't made any public statement on the matter.

Given the problem of the scabbing clerical workers, it is also clear that 1101 is going to have to fight to enforce upgrades into the crafts for women, after the strike. The alienation of these women from the union is in part to blame for the company's ability to manipulate them. If the contract fails to deal with this issue, we can expect even greater scabbing in the future.

### No Rewards For Scabs

But even a good contractual wording on upgrades will not solve the problem. A fight after the strike will be needed to actually get upgrades. The union's position should be that these upgrades go to striking women and black workers first — no rewards for scabs.

This fight, along with the continuing struggle against Absence and Lateness Control, forced overtime and weekend assignments, etc., will require organization. But organization, of the ranks or of stewards, has been the one thing the leaders of 1101 seem to fear most. For this reason, we doubt seriously that Carnivale and his followers are capable of making a serious post-strike offensive.

Even now, as the company's attacks grow, Carnivale refuses to mobilize the ranks of 1101. This inaction must be met by rank and file action. If Carnivale and his ilk don't produce, they should be replaced, and we suspect that this will be necessary.

1101's ludicrous by-laws, which tie the stewards to the Local President, instead of to the ranks, should be replaced by a democratic set of by-laws. The ranks should begin to organize behind groups like the rank and file caucus, United Action, to build a mass opposition movement.

The strike can be pushed to victory and used as the means to start building an opposition movement by the initiative of the rank and file. 1101 members should call the union to demand a membership meeting and should show up at picket lines to stop the scabs. On the lines, contact among the ranks can be reestablished and people can be mobilized for bolder action.

United Action is in the process of initiating a demonstration by rank and file workers from several industries against wage-price controls. This and other actions can be the basis for building a rank and file movement as audacious as our present union leaders are timid.

[Brian Mackenzie works for N.Y. Tel in the plant department and is a member of CWA Local 1101 and the International Socialists.]



# Long Voyage Home

R.F. Kampfer



According to recent press reports, the military high command is becoming increasingly anxious to get its remaining troops out of Viet Nam. Not that the Pentagon has become riddled with pacifism or anti-imperialism; the generals want to withdraw while they still have an army left.

The Viet Nam experience represents the most traumatic military happening since the Wehrmacht froze its toes at Stalingrad. Its effects on US military potential, and therefore US foreign policy, may be felt for the next decade.

The army suffered a military defeat in Viet Nam and the army knows it. Politicians may pretend that US forces were restricted or "handcuffed" in their conduct of the war. The officers and the troops know that this was not true. They know that US forces had all and

more than the force they needed to achieve a resounding victory. They know that they were outfought, militarily and politically.

This is not the first time, of course, that US forces have suffered defeats. They were soundly trounced more than once in Korea, for example. But there they were fighting against China, and it was not really such a disgrace to be beaten by a country as big as China. To be beaten by a "miserable little country" like Viet Nam is something else altogether.

The myth of invincibility, carefully fostered by the US army for decades, has been irretrievably shattered. Before Viet Nam, the professional core of the army was confident and aggressive. They championed US intervention in Laos, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. Now

they might hesitate to send troops to Monaco.

Army draftees always had their doubts as to just how well US forces would do in a real war. As their M-16 rifles jammed, their Sheridan tanks blew themselves up, and their F-111 planes fell from the sky like autumn leaves, these doubts increased.

Now these misgivings have been fully confirmed. The army, poorly motivated, overmechanized, and shot through with inefficiency and corruption, proved completely incapable of winning a guerrilla war in the midst of a hostile population. It has not even been able to save its face by building a puppet regime capable of lasting for a decent interval after it withdraws. The Saigon regime would fall in short order just from internal conflicts, even if there were no NLF.

While conscripts derive a certain satisfaction from the army's humiliation, the lifters have had the ground completely cut out from under them. They now know how the Egyptian army felt. The officer-NCO caste, outnumbered and outgunned by its subjects, depends very much on bluff to maintain control.

The high command must preserve the image of power because it lacks the reality. But that image has been lost — it is sinking into the rice paddy mud. It is impossible to respect or fear an army that has been fought to a standstill by poorly armed "gooks," weighing about 95 pounds each.

The results of the army's loss of prestige have become increasingly obvious: fraying, desertion, indiscipline, drug use, racial conflict. Nixon's policy of dragging out the defeat, apparently in the hope that some fairy godmother will lay a victory on him, only makes the situation worse. It is the equivalent

of a surgeon amputating a gangrenous leg an inch at a time.

Nor have all the Vietnamese chickens yet come home to roost. Some politicians will welcome the chance to trim the political power of an army that has proven itself so incompetent. Others will attack Nixon for his handling of the war, which may lead him to look for scapegoats with stars on their shoulders.

The Air Force has been handed a powerful weapon in its constant drive for a cutback in ground forces and increased reliance on air defense. No wonder Westmoreland and his clique want to pull this rotting tooth before it infects the whole body.

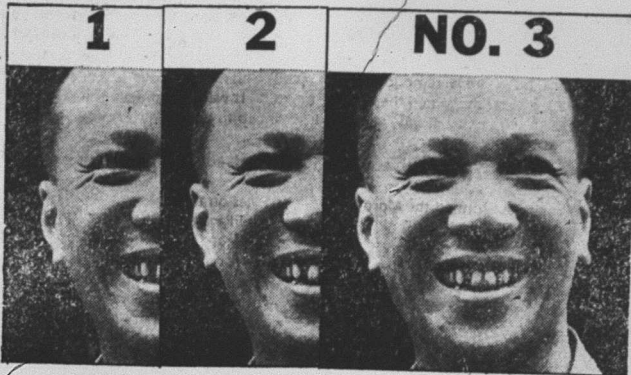
There may be other consequences of the American defeat. Beaten military establishments tend to enter the most reactionary movements of their home countries. Such was the case in Germany after World War I and in France after World War II, Indo-China, and Algeria. If a fascist movement arises here, we can expect it to find officer veterans of Viet Nam at its heart, seeking to blame their defeat on everyone but themselves and the imperialism they were pledged to defend.

The US army would like to crawl into the dark and lick its wounds — until the defeats of Viet Nam have been forgotten, until it can recapture its exalted position in the government, until it can reimpose Prussian discipline on a new generation of draftees. It must not be allowed to do so.

The demand must be raised to not only withdraw all US troops from Viet Nam, but also pull them out of every country in which they are stationed. The military establishment has nothing to offer the working class. It is capitalism's most faithful servant; to us it can only be an enemy. ■

# THIEU'S THE ONE

Michael Stewart



This was the year when democracy was supposed to come to South Vietnam. The presidential elections were supposed to represent the coming of age of South Vietnam, and it was hoped they would reinforce the myth that the Saigon regime actually represents the will of the people.

President Nguyen Van Thieu, however, didn't agree. He is quite willing to have elections, so long as he is the only candidate. He first forced Vice President Ky off the ballot, and "Big" Minh decided to withdraw when it was clear that the elections were a fraud.

That left Thieu alone on the ballot.

These developments brought universal condemnation from the news media in the United States. After all, how could a one-man race be considered democratic?

The *New York Times*, editorializing on the elections, said that "the United States still has sufficient leverage to bring about the only type of contest that will give the South Vietnamese people a meaningful choice — a three-way race." The *Times* went on to argue that "a one-candidate election... would be the worst defeat the United States

has suffered yet in Vietnam.

Contrary to *The Times*, however, the one-candidate race is not the result of a failure of the US to intervene. Indeed, for 20 years now the US has been intervening in Vietnam, precisely to make sure that the will of the people was ignored.

In this instance, the problem for the US was to find a way to force the kind of elections it wanted, without making it obvious that the US was controlling the situation.

Neither the US government nor the major news media are truly interested in democracy in Vietnam, but only in its appearance, a two or three-man race. The appearance of democracy is useful in maintaining the fiction of a legitimate US role.

The major opposition, however, is completely outlawed. The NLF and its Provisional Revolutionary Government, which all observers agree have the support of the majority of people in South Vietnam, will not be on the ballot. Neither Nixon and *The Times*, nor Minh and Ky, have criticized Thieu for keeping them out of the elections.

In fact, all neutralists, pacifists, and supporters of coalition government are barred from running! Everyone who represents even the slightest threat to the status quo is barred.

The election fraud has prompted many Senate Democratic leaders in the US to call for faster withdrawal, since the US has failed to achieve democracy in South Vietnam. And if the fraudulent elections were to hasten American withdrawal, that of course would be fine.

But the US never intervened in Viet-

nam for the purpose of restoring democracy. Indeed, its first acts were to bar elections aimed at unifying the country, which had been scheduled by the Geneva agreements of 1954. (Few Senate Democrats protested then, or at any other time so long as it looked as if the US might win.)

The US intervened in Vietnam to keep Communists out of power. The excuse was that Communists are undemocratic — and they are. But the United States was never willing to give Vietnam's people a choice.

The real American program for Vietnam contained only two planks — US control, and a Vietnamese capitalism totally dependent on the US. All the US Presidents involved — Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and now Nixon — have sensed that this platform can win few votes except from the tiny group of Vietnamese merchants, generals, and landlords who were its only real beneficiaries. None have been willing to allow the reality of democracy.

In truth, there can be no democratic election in a country under foreign occupation. Aside from fraud and intimidation, the occupying troops themselves are a sign to the voters that the real results of the election are decided in a different capital.

American imperialism has no legitimate rights in Vietnam. The Vietnamese themselves must decide their fate. But there will be no free elections when the Communists are in power either. The Vietnamese will not be the first people in the world — or the last — to struggle heroically against one master, only to find that they must struggle again against the new. ■





Members of the cast of FTA

# FTA Revue

Celia Emerson Tom Maguire

FTA (Free or Fuck the Army) came to the Sports Arena in Tacoma, Washington, on Saturday, August 6. 3,500 people cheered the anti-war show, the radical movement's answer to Bob Hope's pro-military revues. At least two-thirds of the crowd were GI's, including several hundred who attended in uniform.

Two women, Francine Parker and Nina Serrano, produced and directed the show, which consists of songs, skits, and readings. Donald Sutherland opened it with a section from Dalton Trumbo's novel, *Johnny Got His Gun*.

The FTA Show is sponsored and presented by the United States Servicemen's Fund and produced by the Entertainment Industry for Peace and Justice. The Shelter Hall, a GI coffee house in Tacoma, was the local sponsor.

After Sutherland's reading, Country Joe McDonald sang a number of songs, including his well-known "Fixin' to Die Rag." Many of his selections were songs about the army, the war, and GI's. By the end

of his performance, the whole audience was on its feet, and a whole section of GI's, led by the GI Alliance, a Tacoma GI organization, threw out the chant "Turn the Guns Around."

The short skits in the show focused on the war in Vietnam and the oppressiveness of army life. One, for example, portrayed the hatred privates have for sergeants:

*Sergeant: I'm scared. I gotta get a watch dog.*

*Private: What do you need a watch dog for? You're surrounded by 250 armed soldiers.*

*Sergeant: That's why I need a watch dog.*

In another, the dissent within the army is depicted by Jane Fonda, who plays Pat Nixon. Pat comes running to her husband, Richard, played by Darryl Henriques:

*Pat: Oh, Richard, there are thousands of angry demonstrators in front of the capitol. They are demanding Free Angela*

*Davis and All Political Prisoners, Immediate Withdrawal from Vietnam, and Draft Federal Employees.*

*Richard: Oh dear, this is serious, I'll call in the 101st Airborn.*

*Pat: But Richard, they are the 101st Airborn. [Enormous cheers and applause.]*

## Two Themes

Two additional themes ran through the entire presentation, Black Liberation and Women's Liberation.

Ben Vereen, formerly of the New York and Los Angeles casts of *Hair*, read a selection from Charles Cordón's play *No Place to Be Somebody*. Rita Martinson, from the Entertainment Industry for Peace and Justice, sang a blues song about a black woman's fight against her oppression.

Robin Menken both wrote and acted the major skit, the story of a woman in the army. She wanted more of life than just marriage, but there were no jobs in her home town — so she joined the WACs. WACs are promised equal pay, equal

training and work, decent living conditions and good health care (all this got a big laugh out of the audience), along with the opportunity to "serve mankind." As it turned out, the heroine spent her army career "serving mankind" as a secretary to the Inspector General.

She finds faults in the army, and takes her complaints to the Inspector General. But his response to her complaints about the stockade, the ill care of the sick, and finally about the My Lai massacre, is to tell her to "file" them. Then he asks her for a date!

Kitty angrily turns to the audience and says, "There's murder in my files!" The whole cast then joins her in the Finale, a call to resist.

## We Got The Brass

Wherever it goes, FTA runs into trouble from the brass. In San Diego, for example, over half the crew of the *USS Constellation* petitioned the Captain to let the show on board, as he does Bob Hope's revue. The Captain's answer was warhawk Bob Hope is OK, but the anti-war show, No! At Ft. Lewis, the fort just south of Tacoma, the brass wouldn't even allow an ad in the base paper, the *Ranger*.

Nonetheless FTA plays for GI's. After Tacoma, they will appear near Mountain Home, Idaho, Ft. Hood, Travis Air Force Base, and the Walter Reed Army Hospital.

The show receives most of its publicity because Jane Fonda is associated with it. The local papers/complained about her "small" role in the show.

Her political activity in organizing the show and supporting the GI movement led *Life* magazine to do a story about her entitled, "Nag, Nag, Nag." It portrayed her as a sort of flighty female radical who flits across the country "promoting causes." Evidently the media cannot honestly deal with a politically serious and committed radical woman; she was fine only so long as she remained non-political and "sexy."

Who sees the show is just as important as what the show says, and the trip to Tacoma was a big success. People call Tacoma an "arm-pit" town, by which they mean that it has lots of industry, smoke and smog, and unemployed people, and not much ever happens there.

The FTA Show reached a lot of people in Tacoma. The audience was GI's, working class high school kids and young workers — men and women and black and white. Its size and enthusiasm, its make-up and its reaction to the show were notable. It was the kind of audience with which to build a revolutionary movement.



# Patton

George C. Scott well deserves his Oscar for his portrayal of Patton. He comes across as the worst officer since Charles Laughton played Captain Bligh; a foul-mouthed, petty, tyrannical, cold-blooded martinet. Everything about him is repulsive, from the top of his spit-shined helmet to the toes of his archaic cavalry boots. Even his teeth look rotten.

But Patton isn't the only General in the movie. Carl Malden co-stars as Omar Bradley, who was built up by the press as the "GI general". Bradley is as nice as Patton is nasty; and he is rewarded by being given command of all the US troops in Europe while Patton is sent home in disgrace.

So much for the Hollywood liberal history of World War II. The truth is a little more complicated.

Armies have always had use for men who were willing to bull their way through to an objective, regardless of

the cost. Such men formed the Moro *juramentos*, the Pathan *ghazis*, and the Viking *berserkers*.

One of the disadvantages of such formations is that they are often as dangerous to their own side as to the enemy. A general like Patton needed somebody to tell him in which direction to charge and when to stop. His drive on Metz, for example, is considered by many military historians to have been no help to the main thrust in Europe and a waste of men and gasoline.

On the other hand, Patton was just the kind of leader needed for the relief of Bastogne. The army will let an officer like that get away with quite a bit. Patton wasn't relieved for slapping a hospitalized soldier, the least of his crimes, or even for the needless casualties he inflicted on his troops.

Patton was relieved because he couldn't keep his mouth shut about the British and the Russians. The movie

hedges on this question by making it look like the newspapers were putting words into his mouth, but nobody ever had to do that for Patton.

In short, Patton was no worse than the average general, even if he did write poetry, believe in reincarnation and wear ivory-handled six-guns. Even Bradley wasted thousands of men by failing to defend the Ardennes properly. *The real criminals were the ones who gave Patton the Third Army to act out his fantasies with.*

As a movie, *Patton* is better than average. The opening scene, of Arabs stripping the clothes from dead GI's at Kasserine Pass, contains a great deal of truth about what war is really like. The battle scenes aren't any phony than necessary to put them on the screen.

The tanks used are M-48's and modified M-60's; Hollywood seems to have finally worn out its Shermans and Panthers. ■



# Life and Limb

Dr. Alice Watts

# JOBS THAT KILL

Many workers are fighting for pensions and winning them. For some, however, these victories will be hollow — they will be killed by the long-term effects of their many years of unhealthy working conditions, either before they reach retirement or shortly afterwards.

This is especially true for workers exposed to substances on the job to which they become addicted. Their bodies cannot function normally except when drugged by the toxic substances. One such substance is nitroglycerine.

Nitroglycerine is a substance which causes dilation (widening) of the small blood vessels of the body, especially of the heart and the brain. After exposure to this substance on the job, the body initially responds with widening of the small blood vessels, and the worker experiences weakness, a pounding headache, and even psychological effects.

After daily, continuous high-dose exposure, however, the blood vessels attempt to stop dilating in response to nitroglycerine. Scientists think the vessels do this by increasing the strength and size of the muscles in the blood vessel wall, which is then able to contract more strongly and return the vessel to a normal diameter.

When a worker whose body is in this stage of adaptation to the nitroglycerine leaves the plant for a weekend or a vacation, the dilation ceases but

the increased muscle tone (strength) does not. The vessel is narrowed by the strong muscle and the oxygen supply to the heart is cut off.

The worker may experience chest pain, or even a heart attack. To prevent this attack, the worker must take nitroglycerine pills all the time when he or she is outside of the plant.

During the years of constant exposure to nitroglycerine, the blood vessel wall becomes much thicker and more muscular than normal. It apparently does not receive enough oxygen and food from the blood stream through its own tiny blood vessels, and this leads to the accumulation of cholesterol in the wall of the blood vessel.

This is the common condition of "hardening of the arteries" (arteriosclerosis), which causes permanent narrowing of the blood vessels and blockage of blood circulation to the section of the body the vessels supply.

If circulation to a part of the heart muscle is blocked, a heart attack results. If circulation to a part of the brain is blocked, the result is a stroke (cerebrovascular accident).

The serious health effects of nitroglycerine were demonstrated to workers in the Badger Army Ammunition Plant in Baraboo, Wisconsin. While off the job for a weekend or more, the workers experience chest pains that continue until they return to the plant and its nitro-

glycerine dust, which they unknowingly inhale and absorb through the skin when handling chunks of nitroglycerine dough used for making rocket fuel.

The workers in this factory have been found to have 30 times more heart disease than people who are not nitroglycerine workers.

Others who may be affected by this substance include workers who manufacture nitroglycerine pills, shell fillers, rocket fuel makers, and smokeless powder makers.

The workers in the munitions plant are supposed to be protected from occupational disease by the Walsh-Healey Act, which sets federal standards for chemicals in factories having more than \$10,000 of government contracts. The

dust levels in the Baraboo plant were apparently within the legal limit for nitroglycerine dust, 0.2 parts per million parts of air by volume, or 2 milligrams per cubic meter of air.

The new Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970 also applies to this plant. One section of the act provides that the Secretary of Labor must set standards for limits of exposure to toxic substances. (Although this section of the law does not take effect until February 1972. The Secretary of Labor may be petitioned to set standards by any of several types of organizations — including employees and their representatives.

In the past, reliance on the Labor Department for protection of workers has been futile (see *Workers Power* no. 27 for its failure to act on a coal-dust standard). Thus, for working people, this section of the law means that they must become informed about the specific health hazards of their jobs and must be prepared to fight for standards which really do protect their health.

This fight will involve legal battles, but it will not be won if it is limited to the courts. As with other grievances, it will need united action by the rank and file.

*[Dr. Alice Watts, a physician and a member of the International Socialists, is working in the field of Occupational Medicine. She is working with a group of radical scientists designing a course on occupational health and safety for trade union shop stewards and safety officers.]*

*Specific questions about conditions in your workplace can be addressed to Dr. Watts in care of Workers' Power.]*

*[The following is reprinted from The Fifth Wheel, a monthly newspaper published by rank and file Teamsters in the San Francisco Bay Area, June 1971. Teamster militants and others who wish further information or to subscribe should write: P.O. Box 23962, Oakland, California.]*

The canneries of California are in ferment. Our brother and sister Teamster members in the canneries of the Sacramento and King City areas are shaking up the big companies and stodgy union officials for the first time in 30 years.

All efforts to improve our Teamster Union will fail as long as tens of thousands of food processing workers are ignored. That's why the Cannery Workers Committee is so important to all Teamsters.

The Cannery Workers Committee was organized by Ruben Reyes, a Libby, McNeill & Libby worker, in Sacramento in February 1969. It was organized primarily among Mexican-American workers to deal with the discrimination they experience in the canneries, but it takes up all kinds of grievances and is open to all cannery workers.

One of the first petitions demanded a steward for the swing shift. It was signed by Mexican-American, White, Black, and Chinese workers. Today the Cannery Workers Committee has over 700 members who work at Americo Home Food, Basic Vegetable, Bercut Richards, Del Monte and Hunts in the towns of Davis, Woodland, Sacramento, and King City.

The type of grievance they have taken

# CANNERY ORGANIZATION



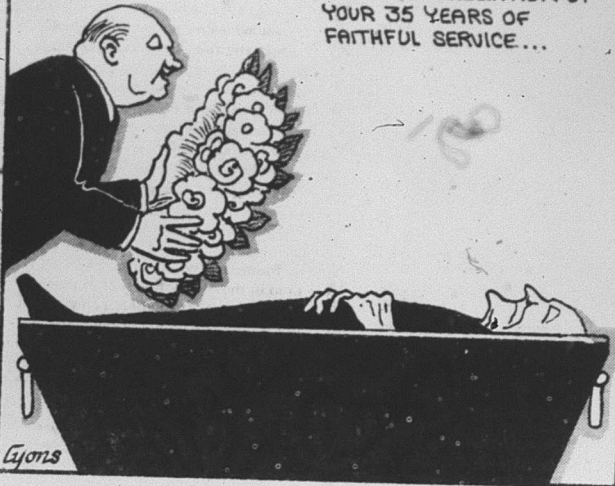
Cannery Workers Com

up is shown by the demands of the Basic Vegetable full-time workers in King City:

— We want to know which side the union is on. Is the present contract valid or not?

— The company and union should explain all employee rights and benefits to

AND IN APPRECIATION OF YOUR 35 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE...





Leo Bernstein

# L.A. CAB STRIKE SOLD OUT

Teamsters Local 640 (Chauffeurs) is composed of Los Angeles-area cab and airport transit drivers. In early July, after weeks of contract negotiations with management, the union leadership came into a specially-called meeting of drivers snorting at the company's offer.

"It's an insult to us all!" shouted usually meek Jimmie Lucas, one of 640's long-time leaders. "Give us a club to use against the company and we'll come back with what we all need and deserve!"

The two meetings for drivers for Los Angeles Yellow Cab Co., who make up some 90 percent of the local, produced a 10-1 strike authorization. Anger at the company's offer was brimming over among

many drivers of all ages, but especially among younger drivers who really were getting shafted. A long, perhaps violence-punctuated strike appeared to be a certainty.

Smaller suburban taxi companies, and probably cab companies across the nation, were closely watching the progress of negotiations. Yellow Cab of California (Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Oakland), owned by the enormously successful Westgate Corporation (everything from taxis to tuna), is the bellwether of the business on the west coast.

Among other privileges, the company has a city-chartered monopoly on taxi business in the City of Los Angeles. This

is renewed year after year despite service that leaves much to be desired, particularly in outlying areas, and dilapidated cabs (many of which have over 200,000 miles on them).

Rather than cut into the immense profits of the parent company, the management of L.A. Yellow has made it clear that to pay for any increases in the new contract, it will go to its friends on the Bureau of Public Utilities for another fare increase, passing the burden of inflation onto the public once more.

## Counter-attack

In the 16 years since the last cab strike in Los Angeles, the union had managed to extract a 50 percent fare commission for all drivers. This year, the company counter-attacked and made what they called an unnegotiable offer of 42½ percent for new drivers' first six months, climbing to 50 percent only after a year.

This, they argued, is the only way they can afford their share of proposed pension concessions and an enlarged dental plan. The sugar-coating on this pill is that anyone working for the company on the date of the contract signing is to be considered as having one year's seniority for purposes of determining percentage — thus screwing the drivers not yet working for the company, who had no choice in accepting or rejecting such a roll-back.

What is in the company's mind, of course, is that cab driving is a job with rapid turnover. At any one time, a high percentage of the total workforce consists of drivers with only a few months' seniority. Thus a lower "initial" wage rate means lower pay for many cab drivers during the whole time they work for Yellow.

Other "concessions" offered by Yellow included granting sick-leave for the first time in the company's history — but only if the driver was hospitalized (and even then, not if he received workman's compensation from the state) — and our first and only paid holiday, our birthday (and that at only \$14 a day, a guaranteed minimum which is considerably less than a figure based on an average day's booking — to say nothing of tips, which make up almost a third of our earnings).

For vacation pay, the generous employer offered all of \$16 a day — this on a job where we sweat through nine hours of fighting traffic, heat, drunks, etc., and where no overtime is permitted (we can be fired for repeatedly working overtime).

In early July this offer was an insult. But in late July, the local "leadership" presented the drivers with a unanimous endorsement of acceptance of the company's "final offer" — an offer which bore almost 100 percent resemblance to the original insult.

The reaction of the great majority of the drivers (particularly the younger ones receiving questionable benefit from pension concessions on a job with an incredibly high turnover rate) was an angry one. Shouts of "Sell-out!" disrupted what the local leaders had hoped would be a quick, quiet meeting to ratify their agreement with management.

Because there was no organized rank and file group to work actively for rejection, the pension concessions enticed enough drivers into voting for acceptance. But the 40 percent vote for rejection was a clear indication of widespread unhappiness with the union leadership. For the first time, rank and file opposition — as yet unorganized, but vocal — seems to be emerging.

In contrast to cab drivers in other areas (notably New York and Chicago), L.A. drivers for years have quietly tolerated the little clique running the show for Local 640 at the Teamster District 42 building. Like union bureaucracies everywhere, Local 640's leadership has held on to its position by reinforcing the apathy of members who have lost confidence in the union and the union movement.

Regular meetings are very infrequent and poorly attended when they do take place. All executive board meetings are closed to the membership. Contract negotiations have also been closed.

Even in possible strike situations the union leadership opposes garage-level strike rallies, newsletters (there is no newsletter of any kind in the local), or strike committees of rank and file. Rank and file organization is a real threat to their continued leadership and they don't want to help anything get started that could eventually sweep them out.

They tell us, "We are your elected representatives. Let us negotiate on your behalf," and, "In times like these, we have to take what they'll give us." The problem with this is that the company will only give us what we are strong enough to take for ourselves — in other words, what we are strong enough to force them to give us.

Strength is not and cannot be measured in the negotiating skill of bureaucratic leaders. It can only be measured in the collective will and energy of rank and file workers, their involvement in all the affairs of the union, and their willingness to get out on the picket line to fight for a living wage and decent working conditions. This is the first step in the long, hard road to taking full control of our lives and futures. ■

# WORKERS ORGANIZE

by that executive.

*No one is ever praised for his good deeds, but is subject to disciplinary layoff for mistakes.*

Cannery workers are second class citizens in the Teamster Union. Here is an example of a work injury the Cannery Workers Committee took up:

Benito Ramirez testified before the Sacramento City-County Human Relations Commission that the end of his thumb was cut off while operating a lifting crane in March 1970. Skin from his arm was grafted to his thumb.

The graft area had not healed by November 1970, but brother Ramirez said the surgery was performed by a company doctor who, he said, ordered him back to work afterwards. He said he received no time off and no compensation for the injury. This is the kind of thing cannery workers have had to put up with so far.

Our Mexican-American brothers and sisters have had it worse than other workers. The Cannery Workers Committee points out that 40 percent of the cannery work force is Mexican-American but they make up only 2 percent of the higher-paying jobs.

The Cannery Workers Committee put forward six demands, covering stepped-up training of Mexican-Americans as warehouse and maintenance mechanics, the addition of Mexican-Americans to the now one-man job evaluation board and the personnel offices, the removal of prejudiced supervisors who show favoritism or display arrogant and prejudiced attitudes towards Mexican-Americans, the ending of the policy in which Mexican-Americans are penalized more than other workers for job infractions, and the ap-

pointment of Mexican-American foremen and foreladies.

These demands are in the interest of all cannery workers, not just Mexican-Americans. Only the company benefits when the workers are divided and fighting among themselves.

The old union slogans "An injury to one is an injury to all" and "In unity there is strength" apply here — and all cannery workers should unite behind these demands so that our Mexican-American brothers and sisters get their just due.

The Cannery Workers Committee brought their grievances to the State Fair Employment Practices Committee, the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, the Department of Defense Contract Compliance Bureau, and the Human Relations Commission. "The results have been zero," brother Reyes declared.

Recently Congressmen and Senators were pressured to put the heat on the Equal Employment Opportunity Committee to come up with a decision. This committee has been dragging its feet for two years.

Brother Reyes has been suspended indefinitely for not removing a poster of Emiliano Zapata, a Mexican popular hero, from his office wall. Brother Reyes refused to remove it, claiming his right of free speech, and pointing to the fact that the company had continually refused to remove signs and wall scrawlings which were racially and morally offensive. He has not yet been reinstated. ■

[The Cannery Workers Committee can be reached at P.O. Box 896, Sacramento, CA 95804.]



Committee meeting

- all employees.
- Training programs should be instituted to allow capable men to take training for better positions.
- Thefts at the plant are usually blamed on the wrong individuals.
- When an employee greets an executive at the plant, he is not acknowledged

# August 26 And Working Women

Molly Specter



Thousands of women marched in the second annual march for women's equality on August 26 in New York City. A highlight of this year's march was the formation of a Working Women's Contingent, with endorsement by many women trade union leaders. Black and Puerto Rican women were also featured as speakers.

Jeannette Washington of the National Welfare Rights Organization, and Dorothy Pitman Hughes, representing the movement for free child care centers, spoke at the rally following the march. Both called for changing the system that both breeds and profits from racism and male supremacy.

Eleanor Bailey, a vice-president of the Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union, and Julie Rivera, an operator at New York Telephone, represented trade union women. They described the conditions of working women in the city and urged women to organize against sex discrimination and racism within their unions and on their jobs.

However, these developments took place almost in spite of the march organizers. The march was poorly planned, initiated at the last minute, and badly organized. Organizing efforts were dominated by NOW (the liberal National Organization of Women) and the Women's

Political Caucus, a new coalition of prominent Democratic and Republican Party women. They wavered back and forth over having the march at all, and were reluctant to involve more radical women or Third World groups in the planning.

The demands they decided on were watered-down versions of last year's slogans — the right to *Abortion, Childcare, Equal Work/Equal Pay, Political Power, and Equality Under the Law* this year, in contrast to last year's slogans, *Equal Work/Equal Pay, Free Abortion on Demand, Free 24-Hour Childcare*.

## Stunts vs. Politics

The publicity for the march was oriented toward wealthy, suburban women. The focus was on the political strategy of the Women's Political Caucus. As a result, the march was much smaller than last year, in spite of the rapid spread of the ideas of women's liberation.

As a publicity gimmick, on the day of the march a woman in a space suit and another dressed as Dolly Madison were paraded around the city as representatives of "our future" and "our past." This was great material for newspapers that are trying hard to relegate the women's movement to the "nuts and kooks" department — and there is an even more serious mistake involved in such a stunt.

The satin, jeweled, bewigged finery of Mrs. Madison does not reflect the background of most women in New York City. Most women (and most men, for that matter) do not even look forward to four weeks of paid vacation a year, much less to an all-expenses-paid tour of the moon.

Another publicity stunt was a disruption of the New York Stock Exchange, protesting the fact that it lacks women stock brokers. This action came only a week after the market had jumped 30 points at the news of the wage freeze, and the layoffs of thousands of government employees — policies that will hurt most working women.

The publicity for the march should have focused instead on issues affecting the majority of New York women. Actions should have been organized to protest the new fees being imposed on city-run child care centers, or to expose businesses discriminating against women workers.

Instead of relying on catchy news stories, the march committee should have organized a massive leaflet campaign in areas where thousands of women work. But only the small committee organizing the Working Women's Contingent was willing to undertake this kind of preparation.

The disorganized, last-minute character of the march is an example of how the Political Caucus is likely to misfocus the women's movement. The Caucus sees electoral and legislating action as the central thrust of the movement, rather than as merely one means to build the movement. For this reason it is likely to increasingly substitute these forms of activity for the many other forms of struggle essential to the creation of a strong, independent movement — the organizing of rallies, marches, and sit-ins, for example.

Speakers from the Women's Political Caucus included Betty Friedan, and Carol Greitzer, New York City Councilwoman. They called for women to exercise political power by voting and pressuring the Democratic and Republican parties.

Ilene Winkler from the International Socialists criticized this strategy as a dead end that would help only a few women politicians. She called for women to build a powerful independent movement based on the strength of working women and on independent political action [the text of her speech is printed in this issue on page 11].

## Not NOW

Although NOW concentrated on attracting wealthy, suburban women to the march, women's liberation ideas are spreading to many other groups of women. Women in welfare rights groups, trade unions, and community organizations are becoming increasingly aware of the connection between their day-to-day struggle and their oppression as women. Women are beginning to see that the women's liberation movement could play an important part in such struggles.

However, if such struggles are to succeed they cannot take the path that Betty Friedan and the Women's Political Caucus have suggested. Their strategy is to fit more women into the establishment rather than challenging and changing the society that keeps us submissive unequals.

Independent goals, organizations, and forms of resistance must still be created by and for ourselves. Not to do so would be a disaster that our infant movement can ill afford. We must develop a strong, independent movement, capable of meeting the tasks we have set for ourselves. ■



[Jeannette Washington (left) and Eleanor Bailey (right) speaking to the August 26 rally in New York City.]





# Women & the Democratic Party

*[The following is a speech given to the August 26 Women's Rally in New York by Ilene Winkler of the International Socialists.]*

A lot of women are telling us today that the way to win our demands is to put more women in Congress. They're telling us that political power for women means replacing all the men Democrats and Republicans with women Democrats and Republicans. But they're wrong.

We're not going to get what we need by trying to change the Democratic and Republican parties. We might be able to get a few more women elected to office, but that's not going to get rid of the political system that keeps women down.

The Democratic and Republican parties aren't going to do anything for us. Both those parties are controlled by big businessmen, and big businessmen aren't interested in women unless it means more money for them.

They might let us have a few more women Senators, but that won't get us free childcare. That won't get us equal work for women and jobs for everyone. That won't get us free abortions, or end the harassment of lesbians. It won't get us new housing or new schools, or free health care or a decent welfare system.

We're only going to get what we need if we fight for it ourselves. We can't depend on politicians to do it for us. We have to fight for our liberation by build-

ing a new kind of political power — political power that is independent, that is based on the strength of our movement.

We're starting to build a powerful movement now because we're conscious of our oppression and we're showing that we're willing to fight. We are marching to demand the right to abortions. We are fighting to get rid of the dehumanizing welfare system. We are organizing unions and getting together to fight for equal pay and equal jobs for women.

And we do have a lot of power we can use. Most of all, we have power on our jobs. We do a lot of the important work that keeps this country going, and that means that we can shut it down.

Telephone service would fall apart if all the operators walked off their jobs. No clothing would be made in the garment center if women refused to work.

And if all the secretaries and typists didn't show up for work, you know that their bosses wouldn't be able to do anything at all.

Working people have the power to say whether this country keeps going or stands still. We have the power to stop the wage freeze right now if we all go on strike against it. And we can use the power we have as working women to build a women's liberation movement that can really win our demands.

But if we waste our time trying to change the Republican and Democratic Parties, we'll lose the fight. If we let those parties use the power of our movement in exchange for getting a few women elected, we won't win anything.

The Democrats are no better than the Republicans. It was the Democratic Party that told Nixon to freeze our pay —

and that freezes us on the bottom. It was the Democratic Party that started the war in Vietnam — and that war is soaking up billions of dollars that need to be used at home.

The Democratic Party tries to take over the leadership of our movements, but it never does anything about racism or poverty or the oppression of women. They may let us elect a few women, but those women won't have any power in the party, and the party isn't going to fight for our needs.

We have to decide. Are we going to use our movement to advance the careers of a few women politicians, or are we going to build a movement that can really fight for the masses of women? The choice is clear.

The only way we will win our liberation is by building a movement that is controlled by us, not by the Democratic Party. Our candidates must run on our programs and be responsible to us, not to the big businessmen who finance the Democratic Party.

Our allies must be the Black liberation movement, the Puerto Rican and Chicano liberation movement, and the working class movement — not Democratic Party politicians. We must build an independent movement that will turn this country upside down — that will give power to women, to poor people, to working people, and to Third World people, and really win the liberation of women. ■



## Operators Pick Company Union

To the total surprise of almost all concerned, the incumbent company union, the Telephone Traffic Union (TTU), won the election for bargaining representation of the Downstate New York Traffic Department, against the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and District 65. Since three unions were involved it had been generally expected that no union would win on the first ballot and a run-off election would be held between TTU and CWA.

The question of why the company union won is a complicated one. The TTU is run almost entirely by older, "company-minded" white women, and almost universally hated by the largely younger black work force.

In the first place, the scandalous way that Joe Bieme sold out the national telephone strike had a great effect. An appeal to the idea of "strength through unity" could hold little weight when New York State plant men remained out on the streets alone unaided by the CWA International. Many once "pro-CWA" women didn't bother voting, since the CWA seemed as bad as the TTU.

Second, intimidation by both the company and the TTU was responsible for the votes that TTU did get. Newer workers were often taken off their boards and told that they would not get raises, upgrades, or transfers if they didn't vote for TTU. In many offices TTU delegates actually collected ballots, telling the women how to vote, and mailed them in.

Moreover, the CWA conducted the election campaign from the top down without really involving Traffic women or building the kind of organizational base that could have overcome the national sellout and the intimidation. The CWA's attitude was that they were the professionals, they had years of experience representing telephone workers and knew what they were doing — they were the best around, and therefore Traffic should elect them to do the job.

When Traffic women saw fully the kind of "job" the CWA was doing for plant in New York and Traffic around the country, they threw up their hands

in disgust.

Had the CWA opened the organizing drive to all operators and Traffic clerks willing to work, had they helped organize CWA committees in each location, had they helped the women organize demonstrations, fight harassment and firings, had they encouraged the women to build their own active organizing campaign from the bottom up — the women themselves would have been able to build up the kind of support necessary to defeat the company union even in the face of intimidation and a rotten national settlement.

The women would no doubt have made mistakes (so has the CWA), but

in the process they would have learned how to organize themselves into an active, militant force capable of taking on the company — and the International if necessary. That, of course, was exactly what Bieme would not risk — he would rather lose the election in New York Traffic than lose his job.

As bad as the CWA is, it is a tragedy for all telephone workers that New York Traffic remains tied to a company union. This means that for at least three more years N.Y. Tel workers will be weak and divided. The company will continue to play one department off against the other and the opportunities for joint action between plant and Traffic will be greatly diminished.

Many of the women who were involved in the CWA organizing drive have decided to get together to try to map out a strategy for the next three years. They have decided to meet together without CWA organizers or officials. This is an important first step toward building the kind of independent organization necessary both to defeat the TTU and to assure that when New York Traffic does enter the CWA it is on their own terms.

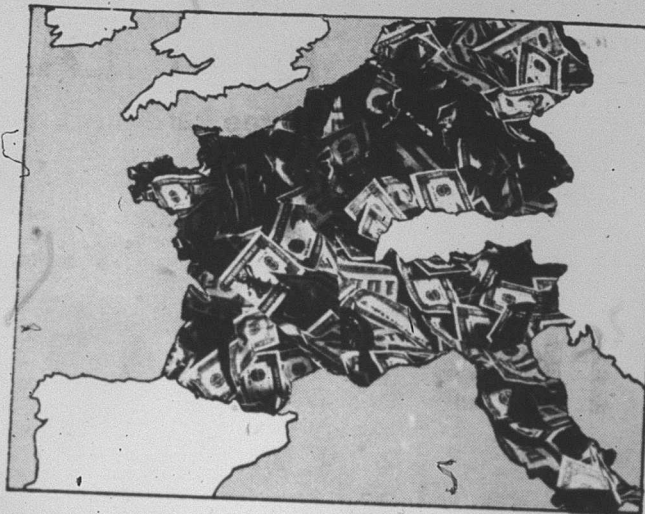
The only way telephone workers will be able to win against the company is by fighting together: through the union, when possible, against the union bureaucracy when necessary. ■



*[Rose Vevlaka works for New York Tel. in the Traffic Department and is a member of the International Socialists.]*

# The Common Market And The British Working Class

Ian Birchall



The British people — and in particular the British Labor movement — are in the throes of a "great debate" about entry to the Common Market. Or so the press and television would have us believe.

The "great debate" has come at an opportune time for the British Conservative Government. The Industrial Relations Bill, which threatens the basic rights of shop-floor organization, is on the way to becoming law. Unemployment is mounting rapidly. Nothing could be more desirable for the ruling class than to channel the energies of the labor movement into a campaign around nationalist slogans, and away from issues where concrete militant activity could be organized.

## Left In A Trap

The British left, for the most part, has marched cheerfully into the trap. We can safely forget the antics of Harold Wilson, anxious to rake in votes from any source without actually shattering the Labor Party into pieces. But further left the picture is equally grotesque. Left-wing labor MPs are sharing platforms with Tory aristocrats and racists to oppose entry to the Market.

The West Midlands Communist Party has issued lapel badges reproducing the British flag. Clive Jenkins, one of the wildest of the "left" trade union leaders, told the special Labor Party conference that we could not afford to be associated with an "unstable" country like France, which had come close to civil war twice in the last decade (one of the two occasions was presumably the general strike of 1968).

Such postures are pernicious as well as ludicrous, for they set a precedent for the period after Britain has entered the Market, when every ill affecting British workers — inflation, unemployment, etc. — will be blamed on the association with foreigners rather than on the true causes.

The whole notion of "national independence" being bandied about by left and right alike is nonsense. Britain has had nothing remotely resembling national independence since the Second World War.

Members of the late Labor Government, who blamed every attack on the working class on the "international bankers", know this better than anyone. International finance, and above all the giant international companies, make any kind of economic planning within one country less and less possible.

For that matter, even an enlarged Common Market will still be a junior

partner within Western capitalism, and the dream of a European bloc rivalling US imperialism is a vain one. Between 1961 and 1969 there were only 257 mergers between firms in Common Market countries, as against 861 initiated from outside, mainly by US firms. In or out of the Common Market, British workers will still be faced with American imperialism.

This is not to say that entry or non-entry is a matter of complete indifference to British workers.

Acceptance of the Common Market agricultural policy will mean a sharp increase in food prices. Common Market taxation requirements will mean a switch towards more consumer taxation rather than income tax, which will hit the lowest-paid hardest. Mergers and rationalisation will certainly increase unemployment, most of all in those already underdeveloped areas furthest removed from continental Europe — the North-East, Scotland and the North of Ireland.

It is, however, also true to say that these are merely the sharpening of tendencies already present in the British economy, which will continue even if Britain stays out.

In general, the British ruling class is committed to entry. But the conflict of sectional interests and the complexity of the ideological implications are such that both major political parties are split over the question. A great deal of wriggling and manoeuvring will go on over the summer; but when the House of Commons debates the issue in October the Tories will probably be unable to muster a majority from their

own members, and the survival of the Government will be ensured by the votes of pro-Market Labor MPs.

Despite Labor's program and the decline of working-class involvement in the organisation, it still has organic links with the trade union movement. In this situation the left must demand the expulsion of any Labor MP who has propped up a Tory Government.

When a speaker at the Transport Workers' conference suggested that pro-Market MPs could not expect to continue receiving financial support from the unions, there was an immediate outcry about parliamentary "privilege" (the eighteenth century principle that MPs are not accountable to any outside body).

## Internationalism

In this context the British International Socialists have decided to support resolutions opposing entry in the trade union movement, but not to participate in any rallies or demonstrations around nationalist slogans. The important thing for revolutionary socialists, is not to take up a position on entry, but to develop an internationalist program for workers during and after entry.

Such a program has still to be worked out. Two important themes in it would be international parity of conditions and international link-up of workers.

In many respects British workers enjoy conditions far inferior to those in the Common Market. Thus French workers get four weeks annual holiday with pay, whereas many British workers get only two; and some Italian workers get up to 47 days a year holiday.

If wages used to be higher in Britain,

they are rising more slowly. (In the period 1964-70 real wages rose 31% in Germany, 30% in France, 17% in Britain). To raise the demand for parity — and to point to the fact that European workers won their conditions in Struggle (e.g. the fourth week of holiday in France after May 1968), offers an important focus for demands.

It also permits a head-on challenge to a major element of ruling-class ideology — the claim that excessive demands by workers are impairing Britain's "competitive position".

The Common Market will encourage the further growth of international firms, able to switch production from one European country to another to beat wage-claims and break strikes. The links that have existed between Ford workers in Britain, Belgium and Germany since 1969 were a useful asset during the British Ford strike this year.

Moreover, the Common Market provides for free movement of labor. Some British shipyard workers have already found jobs in continental Europe, and with rising unemployment such movement may become much more widespread. The political and religious divisions in the continental labor movement make link-up both more difficult and more urgent.

The fundamental requirement for any such program is a well-organised working-class, and a political current capable of fighting for internationalist ideas. This is the message that must make itself heard amid the "great debate".

(Ian Birchall is a member of the British International Socialists)





# NORTHERN IRELAND

Part Two of Three Parts

## The IRA And The Irish Left

Robert St. Cyr



[In Workers' Power no. 39, Robert St. Cyr analyzed the political background to the continuing crisis in Northern Ireland. In this article, the second of a three-part series, he discusses the Irish Republican Army and the Irish left.]

The murder of three young, off-duty soldiers in March, 1971, was the final blow to Northern Ireland's Prime Minister Chichester-Clark. He apparently tried to convince London that more severe measures were needed against the Irish Republican Army. Failing in this, he was unwilling to take further responsibility.

London felt that internment of all Republican activists — the nostrum of most Unionists — would only stiffen the resistance of the Catholics. They preferred to go along without severe measures, hoping that support for the terrorists would evaporate if people found them to be more the cause of destruction and disorder than the Army.

In fact, increasing evidence has implicated the Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) in these murders. There is precedent for this sort of thing. The 1969 bombing wave which ousted Prime Minister O'Neill was assumed to be the fault of the Irish Republican Army, but was actually the UVF's way of getting rid of O'Neill while their rivals took the blame.

### 1. Four Forces

Chichester-Clark's successor, the skilled opportunist Brian Faulkner, had to operate among four hostile forces:

(1) **London** — wanting the appearance of reform without affecting its position of domination over Ireland's economy (North and South); (2) **right-wing Unionism** — fearing any concessions within this depressed economy to the demands of Catholic workers and poor; (3) **Catholic moderates** — largely collected under the banner of the new Social Democratic and Labour Party — many of whom will remain "moderate" only so long as they think reforms are coming; and (4) **Catholic militants** — mostly ardent nationalists who want to reunite Ireland, overthrowing the Unionists and the British; these include some with social-revolutionary views. This fourth category is composed of the various factions of the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

The recent arrests of hundreds of Republicans and other leftists mark the end of Faulkner's fence-straddling. Faulkner is now gambling on being able to destroy these forces — particularly the IRA

### 2. Resistance

The Irish Republican Army was organized during the 1918-1921 struggle for independence as the armed force of the Provisional Republican government.

This government was responsible to the First Dail Eireann (Irish Assembly) which had been elected in November 1918. Of course, this election meant different things to different people.

The British thought it was an ordinary general election. Sinn Fein ("Ourselves Alone"), the Irish national liberation front, decided, however, that when its candidates won a majority of the Irish seats to the British Parliament they should constitute themselves the legitimate authority of an independent Republic.

In 1918 Sinn Fein won every constituency with a Catholic majority except one. The Unionists won all the Protestant-majority constituencies (those clustered in east Ulster) and continued attending Parliament in London.

The organization and leadership of the IRA was largely the responsibility of a secret, 50 year old revolutionary group called the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The IRB essentially dissolved into the

IRA, and bequeathed to it many IRB values and traditions (among them the quaint custom of regarding their Chief of Staff as the *de jure* President of the Irish Republic).

The independence war ended in a compromise. A slight majority of the Dail (with those units of the IRA which supported it) gave up the fight for a united republic and accepted partition — and a much-circumscribed "dominion" status. Twenty-six counties became the "Irish Free State"; six of Ulster's nine counties had already been established as "Northern Ireland."

Civil war resulted as the Dail minority and "its" IRA rejected the Free State as treason. But faced with military defeat and imprisonment the political leadership of the Republican faction finally capitulated. By 1927 they had formed Fianna Fail ("Soldiers of Destiny" under Eamon DeValera, the Brooklyn-born President of the 1919 Republic and now President of the "Second" Republic.

Fianna Fail promised to beat the Free Staters at their own game. That is, they would swallow their loyalty to the overthrown Republic and accept the legitimacy of the Free State — but only as a means of restoring, via the constitutional procedures of the Free State, the Republic of old.

A small minority of the IRA and its supporters could not go this far. They retained undiluted loyalty to the Republic and uncompromising hostility to the Free State and the partition, refusing to recognize the legitimacy of the Free State or its courts.

DeValera, however, persuaded most

IRA members that they could vote for his party with a clear conscience. It was only after five years of "Dev" in office (in 1938) that some of the IRA leaders finally became convinced that he was not going to restore "their" Republic. (The creation of the present Irish Republic in 1949 is a complicated story accompanied by a further split in the IRA. Suffice it to say, it is still not "their" Republic.)

### 3. Classlessness

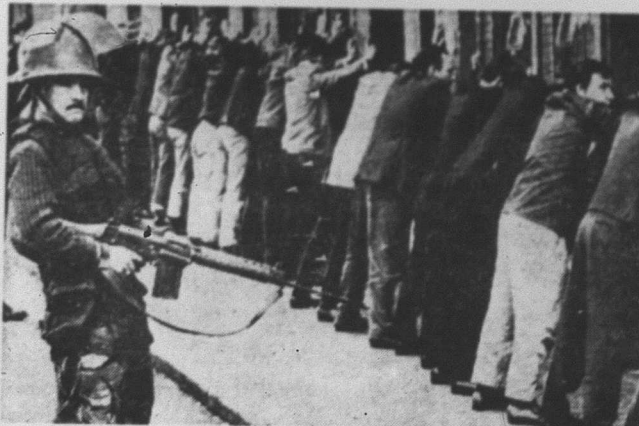
The essence of the IRA tradition can be summed up as follows: (1) Total opposition to partition and Unionism; (2) for full independence from British control; (3) no respect for laws or constitutions which accept partition or limitation upon Irish sovereignty; and (4) the reliance upon force of arms to correct these evils.

Since the 1920's, the Republicans have drawn their support particularly from clerks and other white-collar workers, and the poorer rural population. In the North — not surprisingly — they have had a proportionately larger influence among the Catholic population than in the "Free" South.

Within the South, they are stronger in the poorer sections of the country and in Dublin. During the economic catastrophe of the 1930's the social-radical elements within Republicanism attempted a link-up with the socialist and labor movement (itself largely influenced by Stalinism) which was enjoying a revival North and South.

Even during this period most of the IRA leadership remained staunchly "above" any social or economic issues which smacked of class struggle or any other "alien" notions. The fact that one of the chief glorious martyrs of Easter Week 1916, James Connolly, was a Marxist and an avid believer in proletarian revolution had been quickly forgotten by those Republicans who wished to win back the middle classes for the Cause.

To "classless" Republicanism, Connolly's martyrdom only "proves" that he was a patriot first and a socialist afterward. This sort of socialist — and they are mistaken to think Connolly among them — they can tolerate. ■



British soldier guards IRA suspects

[Next issue: Perspectives for the Irish Revolution Today.]



# feedback

## Worked To Death

Peter Justice

I was employed at Procter & Gamble in October 1965 as a research and development bench mechanic. I was not informed at this time that I would have to work outside the shop in an area where there were volatile fumes and dust from different types of detergents that were manufactured there.

It was approximately one year after I was there that I had to work at a place called the Synthesis Plant, where there were soap products being synthetically produced. As a result from working around these chemicals, I have a problem trying to sleep at night, some nights I just can't sleep at all.

My sinuses are continually infected; my left nostril stays stopped up every night and sometimes all during the day. I have had other very bad pains as a result from these fumes, such as very bad headaches, chest pains, seborrheic dermatitis, and skin cancer. Sometimes I would be very ill for weeks after working in areas where there were strong fumes and dust.

I talked to my boss many times, as well as to the company doctor, about my health condition. I repeatedly asked for a transfer. The most I could get out of my boss was, "Let's see if it happens to anyone else and then we will do something about it."

There were three of us R&D bench mechanics that worked in the same capacity. One died in January of 1968. I left there in February 1970 on the verge of death; shortly after I left, the third mechanic died.

### Brainwashing

I wrote about this to the Federal Trade Commission and to the State Safety and Hygiene Department. I received no response from these government agencies that are supposed to look into these problems. This should make you aware of how much racketeering goes on in this capitalist society.

Due to my insights into Procter and Gamble Company, I can very honestly say that P&G has a staff of people that brainwash society. They can take the truth and turn it into a lie (and conversely) in order to meet their needs, no matter how many people this may hurt.

They have such a control over the medical field that they can maroon a doctor's diagnosis in their favor. The company doctors that examined me said that there was nothing wrong with me physically — I had what they called an "emotional problem."

I think that some scientists would disagree. From *Prevention* magazine: "Workers exposed to enzyme dust in British detergent factories developed an allergic type of severe bronchial ailment, according to Dr. M.L.H. Flindt of the Department of Occupational Health, University of Manchester (*Lancet*, June 14, 1969). Besides causing breathlessness, coughing and chest pain, inhalation of the powder 'may lead to irreversible impairment of lung function,' Dr. Flindt warned."

Another study reported in *Science* magazine, at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, found that enzyme inhalation and injection caused "hemorrhage and death in hamsters." Perhaps these hamsters had an "emotional problem."

I was very much shocked when I read a bulletin on the Ivy Dale Technical Center bulletin board in Cincinnati. In commenting on the Federal Trade Commission's announced plan to investigate the consumer safety of enzyme detergents, the bulletin stated:

*"The Procter & Gamble Company today took vigorous exception to the Commission's implication that there is a consumer health hazard in the use of these products... Some workers in our factories who were exposed to large amounts of very concentrated enzyme dust during the production process did develop minor skin rashes and allergy symptoms like hay fever, which responded readily to standard medical treatment. Procter & Gamble has acted promptly to correct this problem within its plants and it is now well under control."*

Nothing but lies. It is under control from one point of view: more profits for Procter & Gamble.

Who does the Federal Trade Commission, the Safety & Hygiene Department work for? Certainly not for the working people, but for Big Industry that has the money to do its talking for it.

It was only a few weeks before I left P&G, after my body had received all these damages, that the company bought a gas mask and safety boots for me. In the past the company had given us one pair of acid resistant pants, and we could wear them only when they would give us enough time to put them on.

When the pants were in the laundry, we had to do without them no matter how bad the job was. There were times when I had to work in these acids and chemicals without the protection of rubber gloves, because they were kept locked up and when the boss was not around you just had to work without them. When the boss was around it was like trying to take the shirt off his back when you asked him for a pair of rubber gloves or any other

safety protection.

There were times that my hands and other parts of the body would be clammy, sticky, and raw from direct contact with these chemicals. The ailments that I suffered were the direct result of this exposure.

Most of the jobs were rush jobs and the boss would say that you didn't need protective clothing. I had seven pairs of acid resistant pants eaten off my body, six pairs of shoes pulverized, and three leather watch bands deteriorate from chemical contact. The cost of these pants, shoes, watch bands, and the doctor bills came out of my own pocket.

One day in February 1970 the boss called me off the job to a meeting with the department head. The department head asked me if I was going to keep working at the Synthesis Plant. I explained to him what the work was doing to my health and that I was seeing a doctor.

He ignored me and kept saying over and over, "Yes or no? Are you going to work there or not?" I gave up explaining this to him and said no, I wasn't going to work there any more. He told me I was fired.

P&G thinks that by blacklisting me they have put the clamp on a voice that speaks out against their crooked operations. They saw to it that I was denied both unemployment and workman's compensation.

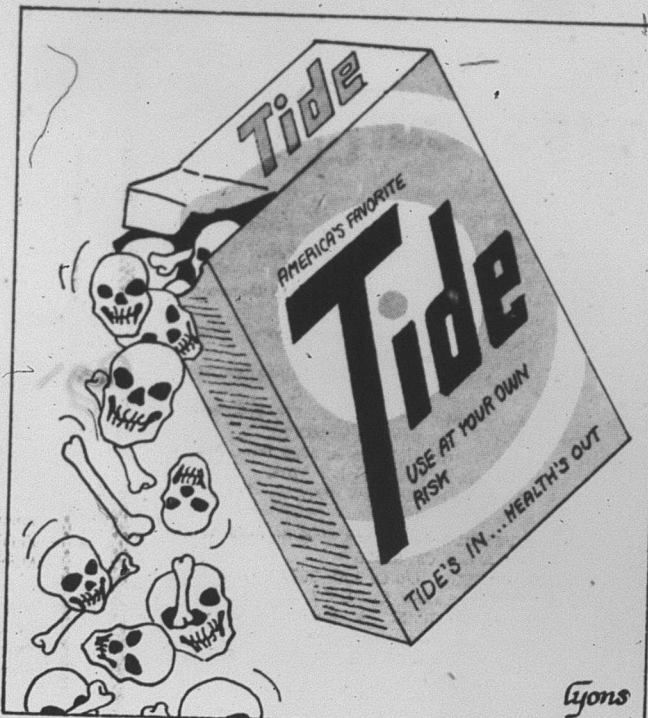
In March I got a job working as a product development mechanic at another company. After I had worked there for two weeks, this company gave me a week's notice. I was given no reason for this discharge.

### Raw Material

Big corporations don't care about workers, they use us up like raw material. There is a love affair going on between Procter & Gamble and the share holding VIP's of our Government. We need a workers' party to fight for labor's interests, since Democrats and Republicans are tools of big business.

We need a party made up of people who work for an honest living with no strings attached to the beguiling industries, one that will fight for the people it represents. Until then, workers remain a bug for businessmen to squash when things don't go their way.

[Editor's note: Procter and Gamble employs almost 10,000 people in the Cincinnati area. It is one of the last major corporations to have successfully resisted unionization of its factory personnel.]





# I.S. LAUNCHES \$10,000 FUND DRIVE

The International Socialists are launching a fund drive to raise \$10,000. The drive begins on September 15th, and will run for 10 weeks. It was initiated by the I.S. National Committee, which met over Labor Day weekend to map plans for fighting Nixon's new economic policies.

The International Socialists believe the 90-day wage freeze is only the opening salvo in a government offensive on the working class. To shore up the profits of big business and aid its drive for international trade, the government has started a long-term attack on the labor movement — a capitalist offensive to make working people pay for America's economic crisis.

The Nixon regime is now planning to move toward wage review boards, incomes policy, tying wages to productivity, eliminating work rules, increasing speedup, and introducing new anti-union legislation. Already, the treacherous union bureaucrats are capitulating.

To launch a counterattack to the government offensive against working people, a militant, democratic movement must arise inside the rank and file of the unions. The I.S. is dedicated to this task and will be sharpening its efforts in the coming new period of intense labor struggles.

The members of the I.S. are more than militant and consistent champions of the labor movement. We are revolutionary socialists who fight for the political independence of the working class.

We are for a revolution from below, against the capitalist minority which today controls the economy and the state. We are for socialism and democracy; we

work to place social, economic, and political power into the hands of the mass of working people.

We are found in the ranks of every progressive fight — in the anti-war movement, in the struggles of blacks, women, and gays for liberation, and in the student movement. We fight to break the hold of the Democratic Party over all movements of protest and reform. Eventually, these struggles require the formation of a revolutionary party, and we work to contribute to this end.

Revolutionary opponents of capitalism, we also oppose the so-called "Communists" who aim toward a new form of class society ruled by a totalitarian bureaucracy. We fight for the anti-Stalinist revolution in the East, as for the anti-capitalist revolution in the West and for

the struggle for national independence in the Third World.

In the coming period, and the coming struggles of the workers, the I.S. has a significant contribution to make. But to do so we need greater resources. We must improve and expand our press. We must issue a series of popular pamphlets, and move toward putting out a theoretical journal.

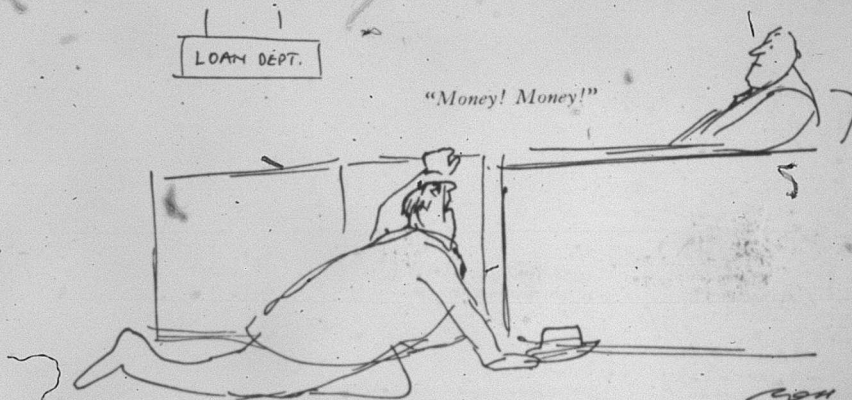
We must send out speakers to spread our ideas around the country. We must expand our national office. We need new equipment. All of these things are costly and beyond the resources of our normal dues income. Thus, we are launching this drive to meet those needs.

Most of the money will come from our own members, who already make great personal and financial sacrifices

to maintain the cause of revolutionary-democratic socialism. For the first time we are appealing to our friends, sympathizers, and readers for help. Those who agree with our great aims have, as we do, a responsibility to help bring those ideas to the working class. We appeal to them to give and to give deeply to our fund drive.

Our successes, and our failures, are part of the process of creating an independent socialist working class in this country. Our friends and readers must do their share.

[Send checks made out to the International Socialists, or to Joel Geier, to 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, MI 48203.]



## support your local



**NATIONAL OFFICE:** 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich., 48203.

**ANN ARBOR:** 2503 Student Activities Building, Ann Arbor, Mich., 41101.

**AUSTIN:** P.O. Box 1344, Austin, Texas, 78767.

**BALTIMORE:** P.O. Box 1644, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

**BAY AREA:** P.O. Box 910, Berkeley, Ca., 94701.

**BERKELEY:** 6395 Telegraph, Oakland, Ca., 94609.

**CHAMPAIGN/URBANA:** Box 2062, Sta. A, Champaign, Illinois, 61820.

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