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# independent socialist



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**white racism & black power & the eve of adam  
ranks'-shaft of reuther  
california new politics at bay**

special feature on  
current american serfdom:  
migrant workers in new york and california  
report on boycott effectiveness & the other suburbia

report on the malaise & movement  
in the SSEU of new york:  
a new caucus counters the bureaucratization

# independent socialist

published bi-monthly by the new york independent socialist club, post office box 481, cooper station, new york, n.y. 10003

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subscription: \$1.00 for one year (six issues), \$5.00 for supporting subscription. Please add \$1.00 for all foreign subscriptions. Bundle rates 10 or more at 15c; 50 or more at 10c. please enclose self-addressed stamped envelopes with manuscripts.



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## editor's notes

**INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST** has received an excellent reception. Subscriptions and bundle orders have been pouring in. If you are aware of any bookstores, organizations or individuals who would be interested in I.S., we will be happy to send them sample copies. Bundle order rates are 15 cents for 10 or more and 10 cents for 50 or more. Regular subscriptions are one dollar and contributing subs are \$5.00 (incidentally, in case there is any confusion on this point, any contribution will be more than welcome). As you can see from changes in this issue, suggestions and comments are greatly appreciated. Unfortunately, because of shortage of space, we have been unable to print any correspondence in this issue. Hopefully, in later issues there will be more room.

### AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE:

**Ken Blum** worked for the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee in Delano in the summer of 1966 as research director. **Joel Geier**, a graduate student in history at Berkeley, was a leader of the strike last December. **Barry Gorden** is a member of the Executive Board of the SSEU for the Harlem Welfare Center. **Joe Pierpont** is Administrative Secretary of the Workers Defense League. **Mike Shute** is a contributor to **New Politics** and **Partisan Review** and an activist in the California Community for New Politics. **Sy Landy** and **Kim Moody** are familiar to our readers.

In the next issue articles will appear on Vietnam and the NLF, economics of underdeveloped areas and the New York public employees' fight against the anti-labor Conlin-Wadlin Act.

**ANDRE BRETON**, the chief theoretician of the Surrealist movement and revolutionary socialist, died at the end of September, 1966. Breton himself was not a great artist, like many in the movement he represented. Many of his associates in the '20s and '30s, Magritte, Eluard, Miro, DeChirico, Picabia, Man Ray and Bunuel, produced works of painting, sculpture, photography and films of greater importance. His works were few.

But Breton was the embodiment of that which was Surrealism. What is significant about Surrealism then and now is not so much the individual contributions of its members but the force of its ideas. And these ideas, largely, were Breton's. In art he sought to unify the revolutionary possibilities inherent in all aspects of human behavior, conscious and unconscious. It was therefore necessary to Breton to seek to free human consciousness, by raising the problems of "love, dream, madness, art and religion in the same light . . . as we . . . consider revolution." As a Marxist, Breton sought a synthesis in the previously disparate efforts to both free human consciousness and to liberate society from their respective shackles. Breton's view was one of total revolution. For a time he actively participated in the French Communist Party. But after being subjected to harassment and interrogations he was to write in 1929, "I, myself, could not enter, freely and unobserved, the headquarters of the French Party, where nevertheless, so many disreputable individuals—police and others—are allowed to carry on as though they were in a boiler factory. In the course of three interrogations of several hours length, I had to defend Surrealism against the childish accusation of being in essence a political movement with a clearly anti-communist and counter-revolutionary bent. 'If you are a Marxist,' Michel Marty shouted at one of us around that time, 'you do not need to be a Surrealist' . . . how can one not be terribly worried about such a weakening of the ideological level of a party which not long before had emerged so brilliantly armed with two of the best minds of the nineteenth century!"

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Breton neither lent his services to Stalinism nor capitulated to 'L'Art pour l'art.' In 1938, he associated himself with Diego Rivera and Leon Trotsky in Mexico where in collaboration with them he sought to establish the **International Federation of Independent Revolutionary Art**. Their manifesto, **Pour un Art Revolutionnaire Independent**, published in 1938 stated:

**We believe that the supreme task of art in our epoch is to take part actively and consciously in the preparation of the revolution. But the artist cannot serve the struggle for freedom unless he subjectively assimilates its social content, unless he feels in his very nerves its meaning and drama, and freely seeks to give his own inner work incarnation in his art.**

Although the organization of the I.F.I.R.A. did not materialize, its ideas still seem particularly relevant. There is little in the various tendencies of contemporary art to indicate a viable alternative. The substance of the real world is surely more fantastic than shining tractors and Campbell's soup cans. As the official arts of both camps still dominate their captive audiences, Breton's call for "absolute non-conformism" in art and the provocation by artists of the "most universal and serious kind of crise de conscience" remains intensely relevant.



THE Spring Mobilization against the Vietnam War testifies to the massive discontent which exists against America's barbarous war. In New York, from 300,000-500,000 protestors marched against the War. Undoubtedly this massive protest, the largest in decades, expressed the feelings of many millions more who did not march. Unfortunately, it expressed those feelings in more ways than one: not only in the disgust felt for the Vietnam War but also in the confusion as to how the War can be stopped. Indeed, none of the spokesmen for the Mobilization expressed a meaningful program for ending the war. "We will organize," or "We will march," sound very compelling but they are only half of the answer. These statements beg the questions of program and *kind* of organization. What shall we organize? What will our program be? What will we say to the millions of Americans who are not acting against the War? Millions who indeed do not see the War as opposed to their interests.

This last statement offers the key to the answer: demonstrating to millions of Americans the way in which the war is against their interests. This means more than fighting the draft and pointing out that American youth are dying to defend a reactionary regime in South-East Asia. It means demonstrating the *economic* and *social* effects of the War. These effects are by no means insignificant.

## vietnam

They have a tremendous influence on the everyday lives of tens of millions of Americans. As we go to press, striking workers in a Connecticut helicopter plant have been met with a Taft-Hartley injunction. The excuse is unambiguous—the War in Vietnam. While War linked inflation continues, workers are pressured by the government to stop struggling to defend their standard of living. The War is being used as an excuse to cut the standard of living of *all* American workers: of organized workers in suppressing the right to strike and through pressure against wage increases; for Negroes and the poor by cuts in welfare spending; and for all workers by increase in taxes and steady inflation.

Understanding all these facts means that the peace movement must engage in concrete activity in strengthening these movements and demonstrating the relationship between the War over there and their lives here. It means orienting towards the creation of an independent political movement of American Negroes, workers and poor which will be responsible to *their* needs as opposed to the corporate Establishment and the two political parties which reflect *its* needs. It might be a hard fact to face, but there

is little question that striking workers who wrest higher wages from the corporations and Negroes who fight for increased income will do more to end the War than hundreds of demonstrations. The anti-war movement must make these fighting workers, Negroes and poor, aware of what they are doing. It must take the concrete form of *political opposition*: Millions of demonstrators have little meaning for the Establishment unless their opposition is made concrete—unless they crystallize their opposition by offering independent political movements of their own against the parties of the status quo.

The War in Vietnam can only be stopped if American workers, Negroes, and poor, refuse to take its effects lying down. It is the job of the peace movement to see that they *do* refuse. The anti-war movement must do all in its power to strengthen these movements and to lead them towards the concrete form of *political* opposition to both the Democratic and Republican Parties.

In addressing itself to America, it must make clear the need for a revolutionary social program for the improvement of the condition of the masses of American workers, Negroes and poor: full employment; destruction of the slums, complete equality now! It must refuse to subordinate these needs to those of the status quo and its War in Asia.

In international policy, it must call for the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam and for cessation of American military support to all reactionary regimes throughout the world. It must make clear the fact that America represents no alternative to Communism—that America's military policy both destroys meaningful non-Communist opposition and drives peasant discontent behind the Communist movements. As the struggles of workers and peasants under Communism testify, these societies themselves offer no alternative for the millions to American militarism. As Americans, it is our responsibility to call for the cessation of American reactionary suppression. As radicals and human beings we must support independent movements of workers and peasants as the alternative to the new Communist rulers of these areas.

Only by relating the concrete needs of the masses of American workers, Negroes, and poor to the fight against the War and by leading that movement towards an independent political direction, opposed to both Establishment parties, can the War in Vietnam and the possibility of such wars in the future be ended.

The mobilization has proven the discontent exists—we must advance now!

A. J. MUSTE (1885-1967) was one of the most prominent and respected figures on the American left for many decades. His life of dedicated commitment to radical principle, his personal courage in enduring any hardship, form a heritage which will be a permanent source of strength for American radicals. While independent socialists differed often and strongly with A. J., we gratefully acknowledge that legacy and mourn his passing.

# UAW rank and file revolt

IN early February, Walter Reuther treated the nation to a dramatic flourish of his famous "social unionism" in the form of an attack on the leadership of the AFL-CIO and George Meany in particular. Originally, couched in terms of the well known foreign policy dispute between Reuther and Meany, the attack was clarified and broadened on February 8, when Reuther sent an administrative letter to all UAW Local Presidents informing them of their new attitude toward the AFL-CIO. This letter stated bluntly that the "undemocratic administration of AFL-CIO prevents meaningful participation in its decision making process" and that "a free labor movement must be the instrument of its members and must reflect their hopes and aspirations and must be able to translate their needs and their will into effective policy and program." This criticism, the first to come from an AFL-CIO official in years, seemed to be given substance by Reuther's resignation from the AFL-CIO Executive Board and even the veiled threat of a UAW split from the AFL-CIO. The possibility of such a split became even more credible on February 17, when local level delegates of the Chicago area UAW, representing 60,000 workers, voted 300 to 1 to withdraw from the Chicago Federation of Labor, with the approval of UAW International vice-president Leonard Woodcock. Since that time rumors have circulated even as to the possibility of a rival labor federation based on the UAW and the Teamsters—without Hoffa, of course. Without concretely endorsing such an idea, Reuther has stimulated some imaginations with the idea of an "independent" UAW leading a great crusade to organize the poor and unorganized. Already, for some time now, the UAW, or rather, Reuther, has been pouring moderate amounts of money into various antipoverty organizing attempts, such as the UAW-NAACP campaign to organize farm workers in Florida and to a lesser extent to the Poverty Rights Action Center, a Washington centered organization concerned with coordinating the welfare rights movement. In itself, of course, this is not new, for the past three years Reuther has made various attempts to underwrite a broad based anti-poverty movement. Generally, Reuther's conception of such a movement is a coalition of "responsible" civil rights, church and liberal groups, such as the Crusade Against Poverty which was composed of the UAW officialdom, the NAACP, the National Council of Churches, ADA, and, for the most part, like-minded organizations. What is new in Reuther's pitch is the vision of serious trade union commitment to such a liberal coalition. In addition, Reuther's mid-March conference with Bobby Kennedy seems to portend the active political involvement of this coalition in a "fresh, new" liberal force within the Democratic Party that can act as an alternative to the extreme ugliness—and electoral unattractiveness—of Johnson.

No one really knows, and Reuther isn't telling, why, after 11 years of participation in the "undemocratic administration of AFL-CIO" he picked this moment to drop his "bombshell." It may be significant that this is a year

that everyone agrees will be one of large scale labor unrest. Contracts covering 3.1 million workers expire in 1967 and inflation dictates that the pressure of significant wage increases will be great. In recognition of this fact, even Johnson and Wirtz were forced to drop their wage guidelines—although not their pressure against labor. UAW contracts covering over 600,000 workers expire in September and, as we shall see, Reuther has good reason to want to deliver something. If Reuther's attack on Meany is meant to rally pro-Reuther support among UAW members, he has certainly gone about it in a strange way. In Detroit, workers in the shops seem to have no idea what Reuther is trying to do. Even District level UAW officials confess ignorance as to the significance of this move. In fact, this whole "crusade for democracy" is being engineered at the top level of the bureaucracy in a manner that "prevents meaningful participation in its decision making process." For the members of the UAW, Reuther has put forth a separate flourish of "social unionism"—the guaranteed annual wage.

## the guaranteed annual wage

The details of the UAW bargaining program will not be officially worked out until the April Convention, but Reuther and the International has already presented the outlines of what they are interested in. At the Conference of professional and technical UAW members in early March, Reuther and his administrative assistant, Irving Bluestone, announced that the guaranteed annual wage would be an annual salary at which all UAW members would be contracted, probably for one year periods. This would mean that even if workers were laid off they would still receive the same income for the contracted year. Reuther later termed this the UAW's "single most important" demand

## New Politics

in the current issue:

**FOCUS ON THE UNION ESTABLISHMENT**  
**Unions & the War in Vietnam**/Ann P. Draper  
**Behind the Reuther/Meany Split**/Stanley Weir  
**Painters & Dictators**/Burton Hall  
**Rebel Voices in the NMU**/M. A. Vericke  
**SIU: The Shortchange Artists**/John Cole

**MacBird! Satire or Symptom**/Harvey Swados  
**Is Oligarchy Inevitable**/Hal Draper  
**The Souls of White Folks: Atlanta, Georgia 1964-1966**/Miriam Wasserman  
**An Open Letter to the Party (conclusion)**/  
Jacek Kuron & Karol Modzelewski

cover rate 90c, subscription \$3.50 for one year  
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for 1967. On the face of it, this would seem to be a good demand. Auto sales for March, 1967, were down 25% from the March, 1966 level and, according to Ford vice-president Donald Frey the auto industry's projected annual sales for 1967 will be about 8.3 to 8.5 million as compared to 9 million in 1966. Large scale lay-offs began in December and have continued ever since. In December, American Motors announced the layoff of 4,100 workers in the Milwaukee-Kenosha area, and Chrysler announced 18,000 temporary lay-offs. In January, Chrysler shut down four plants laying off 13,900 workers and GM shut three plants effecting 1,900 workers. This trend continued in February when Chrysler laid off 4,800 workers for a week and 1,000 permanently. Short-shift and short work-weeks (for short pay) continued in February effecting about 10,000 workers in February. Figures for March are confused as many of the massive March lay-offs were the result of the Mansfield strike, but it is clear that unless auto sales pick up lay-offs will continue through 1967. Obviously, such lay-offs can be crushing to a family with bills to pay, even when they are temporary. In a situation like this, the guaranteed annual wage seems to speak to the needs of the workers. But the problem is not this simple. As it stands now, UAW workers receive Supplementary Unemployment Benefits, paid by the corporations, in addition to state unemployment insurance, in the event of a production lay-off. Irving Bluestone stated that the guaranteed wage would actually raise the income of a laid-off worker by about 10% above what it is now. This is an improvement, but hardly a milestone in labor relations. Bluestone also stated that this guaranteed wage would probably only be applicable to those with more than five years seniority. This is the catch, for it is precisely those with the lowest seniority who are laid-off first. In fact, the guaranteed annual wage would only be effective in the face of massive lay-offs among production workers. But even here, there is a way out for the corporations—who, by the way, approve of the plan.

### job recycling and automation

In 1958, 582,000 workers produced a "value"\* ("Value Added") of \$6,781,000,000 for the auto and truck producing corporations, mostly the Big Three; in 1964, 607,000 workers produced a "value" of \$13,677,000,000. With the addition of only about 18,000 workers the motor vehicle industry was able to nearly double the "value" added in production. This is the result of automation and technology, of course, but its meaning on the production line is often lost in the statistics. When auto plants are closed, like Studebaker in South Bend in 1964, or when a new automated plant replaces an old one, it makes the papers, and everyone understands "it's a shame." But the process of permanent lay-off goes on all the time in all auto production plants, particularly assembly plants. This process does not necessarily involve the introduction of new machinery of computers, rather it involves "job recycling," the most prevalent form of what is usually called the speed-up. The job cycle is the number of physical movements made by a worker that are necessary to complete his job in a period of time. When the corporation

\*"VALUE" or "Value Added," as used here, should not be confused with the Marxian concept of value. It is the term used by bourgeois economists to denote corporate gross profits plus wages. Other figures, e.g., of production increases, are not available. These figures give a fairly accurate idea of the increase in production which has taken place, however.

decides it wants to get more work out of its men, which is often, a time-study man is sent to stand over a worker with a stop watch. He may decide the worker can complete the cycle at a faster rate, thus the speed-up for assembly workers. Since it is always concluded that the worker can work faster, fewer workers turn out more cars and employment is restricted. Another related technique, involves bringing an industrial engineer into a shop to figure out which jobs can be combined. This, of course, means that one man may find himself doing jobs formerly done by two or more. Obviously, this practice creates permanent lay-offs. The reclassification of jobs effects skilled workers as well as production workers. In addition to the threat and reality of unemployment which hangs over the auto workers, these company practices are extremely annoying to the workers under study. Countless wild cat and quickie strikes have occurred over these issues. At any rate, it is clear that Reuther's guaranteed annual wage does not even speak to these problems. Several militant locals in the Cleveland, Ohio area attacked the plan on this basis, stating that the real fight ought to be over job security.

### divide and . . .

The UAW always makes some gains in its auto contracts. Reuther is smart enough to know that in a union as turbulent as the UAW he has to deliver something. His way of doing this is to appease one group within the union at the expense of the demands of the other groups. In the 1964 contract, for instance, the UAW won substantial increases in pensions, satisfying a large number of older workers and pensioners, who have voting rights in the UAW. This was a fine gain, but it was won at the expense of a really substantial wage increase (the whole package, including pensions and benefits came to about 4.7% increase), thousands of local grievances, and the paramount question of job security. Which group Reuther is likely to try to appease this year and what the issues the UAW members are most concerned about can best be understood by seeing what has been going on in the UAW for the past few months.

The past few months have seen an unusual number of local and wildcat strikes—unusual even for the UAW. Auto workers work in a number of different kinds of plants and situations. Those that have been most important in the recent strikes and insurgencies have been the assembly line plants, the body stamping plants and the skilled trades (tool and die makers, machinists, electricians, tool repair men, etc.) who work in all kinds of plants but under similar conditions—more about the skilled trades revolt later. In July, 1966, 8,700 UAW men struck Ford engine and foundry plants in the Cleveland, Ohio area. The primary issues here were safety standards, job assignments, and production standards. It should be understood, that under the UAW contract it is legal to strike over safety and production standards—the speed at which work is done. So, often strikes will be called in the name of these issues even when they are not the precise issue that sent the men out of the plants at that moment. Nonetheless, production standards are a real key issue. Ford let it be known that 30,000 workers in dependent assembly and parts plants would be laid off if the strike did not cease. When an important plant is shut down, other plants must be shut down for lack of parts. However, the corporations have learned how to use this fact as a weapon.

On September 30, 4,200 UAW men struck the Chrysler stamping plant in Twinsburg, Ohio, over 14 unsettled

grievances related to safety and production standards. Within five days Chrysler laid off over 8,000 men and threatened to lay-off a total of 40,000—a promise they kept within three days. Furthermore, Chrysler sent out a letter threatening “permanent loss of jobs” if the strike did not stop to 100,000 Chrysler workers. After eight days, on October 7, Local 122 members voted to accept a compromise agreement worked out by the UAW International. Twinsburg, Local 122, has long been a seat of opposition and insurgency. The president of the local, Sherwood “Bob” Weisman, is a college graduate who was fired from Chrysler about 5 years ago. The UAW tried to expel him, but he won an appeal to the Public Review Board and eventually managed to get elected president of the local.

In September and October, there were other strikes over production standards and the speed-up. On September 19, 3,500 members of Local 75 in Milwaukee struck the American Motors plant when several workers were dismissed during negotiations over production standards. This strike lasted 5 days. On October 5, 4,000 UAW workers struck the GM-Chevrolet plant in St. Louis, Mo., over the “work load.” Immediately, GM laid off 3,000 Fisher Body workers. This strike went on for several days. Two similar strikes occurred in Ford and American Motor’s plants in Canada, one of which continued even after a Court injunction. In November, the workers at GM-Detroit Diesel Engine, members of Local 163, pulled off a three-day wildcat before the UAW forced them back to work. After returning to work, 78 union leaders and activists were suspended and shortly after that, Local 163 was on strike again until the men were reinstated. Although strikes usually occur over issues like production standards, UAW men have a strong tradition of sticking up for their own. Detroit Diesel was not the only place where workers refused to end a strike, even after the grievances were won, until all disciplined men were reinstated. This happened about a year ago at a Chrysler stamping plant in Sterling Township, Michigan, when the workers refused to return to work after a settlement had been made until four men who had been fired during a different strike two years ago were re-hired. In Pontiac, Michigan, when 2 men were fired from a Pontiac plant, 20,000 men from that plant and a neighboring Fisher Body plant “hit the bricks.”

### organized opposition

The strikes discussed above involved primarily production workers and their grievances. Another, perhaps even more significant, source of rebellion has come from the rather well paid skilled workers. The shop problems of skilled workers are quite different from those of production workers. Rather than production standards or speed-up, skilled workers face the possibility of permanent lay-offs due to sub-contracting by the auto companies to smaller, often non-union, companies. In addition to this, the corporations often attempt to stretch out the job duties of various skilled workers. For instance, a tool repair man working on a giant body stamping machine will be asked to work on the hydraulic system, thus making the pipe-fitter redundant. As a result, skilled workers are concerned with negotiating stick job assignments. This issue can often be handled on the local level, but the sub-contracting issue clearly requires a national solution. The most famous strike around the sub-contracting issue was the Mansfield, Ohio, wildcat.

### the mansfield strike

UAW, Local 549 in Mansfield has a long history of militancy and the recent wildcat strike, unlike many such strikes in the UAW, was planned. The Fisher Body plant in Mansfield had been sub-contracting work to outside contractors and other divisions of GM and men had lost jobs. On February 15, some of the men refused to load body part dies (moulds) that were bound for Pontiac. Two workers were immediately suspended and Local 549, with the endorsement of its president, Robert Hall, went on strike. For several days Hall and shop committee chairman Frank Petty led the strike successfully. But soon the pressure of GM and the UAW International began to build. The gradual elimination of jobs at Fisher Body in Mansfield had already been a problem, now GM began to threaten a total “phase out” of the entire Mansfield operation. Lay-offs among UAW workers in other areas mounted, reaching 216,000 by the end of the strike, providing extra pressure and an important tool for Reuther. The UAW bureaucracy didn’t wait long to denounce the strike as illegal, but there wasn’t much they could do about it by phone or letter. Then, just after 17 Local 549 leaders were suspended by GM, Reuther summoned Hall and Petty to Detroit. Petty refused to go, but Hall went and by the time he returned to Mansfield he had “fallen in line.” Even before Hall returned, he urged the men to end the strike. Defiantly, Petty called a meeting at which the men voted to continue their strike. Hall, the UAW, and GM couldn’t stop the strike, at least not so simply. After three weeks striking and enormous pressure, Petty finally yielded and went to Detroit. Before he left, he urged the men to continue to strike. That night, March 8, only 61 out of 400 men showed up for the night shift. The end came the next morning, when only 300 out of 1200 honored the strike. As the *Detroit Free Press* put it,

“Petty wasn’t around to see his strike fail on Thursday. He was in Detroit, being bounced off the walls of Solidarity House, and Charles Ballard was on his way to Mansfield.” (*Detroit Free Press*, March 12, 1967)

Ballard, a UAW Regional Director, was appointed trustee of Local 549. It should be noted that this action by International was done with the approval of an emergency conference of local leaders which voted 600 to 2 against the Mansfield strike. The reason Reuther could muster such support among secondary leaders is obvious, the lay-offs of 216,000 of their men. When Ballard arrived in Mansfield to take sole control of the Local, the flag over Local 549 was lowered to half mast. The rebellious mood

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of the workers continued. Ballard opened his first meeting of Local 549 with the statement:

"There will be no vote at this meeting. There is only one vote in this local and I have it." (*Detroit Free Press*, March 13, 1967)

Behind Ballard stood Reuther and the UAW power structure and General Motors. The strike was over. Nonetheless, a week after Ballard established his fiefdom for Reuther, the mood of the Mansfield auto workers was still defiant. One skilled worker told a *New York Times* reporter on March 21,

"If you are an experienced journeyman in the industry, you have your pride and your interests. You protest when the company undercuts you. But try to fight General Motors! They run to the country and the state to make life hard for you. Your own union lets you down. Guys are thrown out of the plant. That's what has been happening here. But we'll fight again every time the corporation violates the contract." (*NYT*, March 23, 1967)

Local 549 had appealed to the UAW for years to help them fight the conditions at Mansfield Fisher Body, and the UAW had ignored them. These grievances affected more than just the skilled workers. The overall contentions were described well by an apprentice:

"Working for General Motors is like you are in the Army. They penalize you for everything, and everytime the punishment gets worse. First you get a written reprimand, then you are laid off for a couple of days, and so forth." (*NYT*, March 23, 1967)

At Mansfield, the strike was led by skilled workers, Petty himself was a tool and die maker, but it involved unskilled workers as well. This strike was an important example of the militant direction that the present skilled trades revolt can play in the UAW.

A somewhat different example of skilled trades militancy is the Lear-Siegler strike in December, 1966. On December 2, 1966, the workers at Lear-Siegler in Detroit went on strike for a new contract. 1,500 UAW men struck until December 12, when the company granted them a two-year contract with an 11c an hour increase, plus a 3c cost of living increase for December, 1967. The production workers accepted this contract. The skilled workers, 140 out of the 1,500, used their constitutional right to veto the settlement, and continued the strike until December 18. They went back to work when they had won an additional 10-20c increase for the first year and 9c for the second year. In addition to other benefits they also won a strict definition of the content and scope of skilled job titles. Skilled trades militancy paid off.

### skilled trades unrest

Although dissatisfaction and insurgency are widespread in the UAW, it is generally disorganized and often inarticulate. There are, however, a few important opposition groups. Most of these groups are part of the skilled trades rebellion. As most of the strikes discussed above show, skilled trades militancy has the potential to spread. For the most part, the skilled trades are not concerned with winning special privileges or gains so much as they are about simply winning gains. Demands for tight definitions of job assignments are designed to save their jobs, not eliminate others. The demand for a dollar an hour raise did not originate in a comparison with unskilled wages, but with the wages of skilled building trades workers doing contract work in the auto factories at nearly a dollar an hour more than the skilled auto workers. The

possibility that the skilled workers will lead the fight against Reuther must be considered. At the same time the reactionary potential of craft consciousness cannot be overlooked.

The skilled trades rebellion has been going on for some time. It's first victory was at the May, 1966, UAW Convention when the skilled workers won the right to veto any contract settlement. Shortly after this an organization known as the International Society of Skilled Trades (ISST) began to make some gains among skilled workers in the UAW. The ISST has been around Detroit for about ten years. It is a craft organization that claims to have the goal of organizing all craftsmen into "one big craft union." It is not a union, in that it has no locals, shops, or contracts, but in 1966, it announced that it would file for an NLRB election against the UAW. The NLRB has barred its petition, but the ISST has maintained its activities. The ISST represents a reactionary threat to industrial unionism, and, although militant in tactics, is right wing in its political outlook. Its president is Joe Dunnebeck, who was Goldwater's labor advisor in 1964. The likelihood of the ISST actually splitting the UAW is very slight, but it does have some support. Over 2,500 people attended an ISST rally last September, and the ISST frequently leaflets the skilled shops (one ISST leaflet pictured an erect finger with the caption, "Brother Reuther sends his greetings"). Many who have joined the ISST

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### reagan's fantasy

"MOST of California's civil service workers [more than 99%] ignored today Gov. Ronald Reagan's call for a voluntary working holiday designed to help cure the state's financial problems. . . .

"Governor Reagan asked employees to report for work voluntarily—without extra pay or compensatory time off—for the Lincoln's and Washington's Birthday holidays. . . .

"The Union of State Employees had about 50 pickets stationed at state buildings in Sacramento, San Francisco and Los Angeles. They carried signs reading: 'Slavery is dead,' 'No work, no pay,' 'Save our holidays' and 'Don't be a slave.'" (*NY Times*, Feb 14, '67.)

### and a chinese tale

"RECENT issues of the (Communist Chinese) party newspaper, *Jenmin Jih Pao*, (tell of)

"Tang Chen-i, a worker in the No. 1 Shanghai Iron and Steel Works, wrote: 'One evening I unexpectedly received a sum in so-called back wages amounting to 496 yuan' (about \$225 at the nominal but unrealistic rate). . . .

"Mr. Tang said the windfall left him in a 'deeply disturbed state of mind.' . . .

"Mr. Tang slowly became suspicious. Why, he wanted to know, did 'these people suddenly become so concerned about our well-being and so generous in paying out wages by tens of thousands and even millions of yuan.'

"The more I thought about it,' he said, 'the more I sensed that something sinister was in the offing.'

"He finally realized . . . that 'this small handful of bad guys' in the local party organization was using 'odious money to buy over workers in an attempt to soften up the fighting will of our workers and change the general direction of the struggle' . . .

"Mr. Tang (announced his intention to return the 'odious' sum and) echoed the Maoist principle that 'material incentives' are the wrong way to spur production and that wages are already too high." (*NY Times*, 4 February 1967.)

Apparently both Reagan and Mao agree that "man lives not by bread alone."

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have done so only to defy Reuther. Most UAW craftsmen well understand the potential strength the UAW gives them.

The other primary manifestation of skilled trades discontent was the "Dollar an Hour Now Committee." This movement favored industrial unionism and initially rejected Reuther's proposal for a 50c an hour raise. The Dollar an Hour Now Committee was headed by Chris Manning, president of Local 160 at the GM Technical Center, who threatened about reopening negotiations for the raise, "Even if we're not successful in reopening, the price of peace in 1967 is going to be pretty high." The Committee also led two plants on a wildcat and a march to GM's headquarters in Detroit. Yet, Manning is basically no more than a militant Reutherite. Perhaps as a result of this the Committee has failed to develop into a real organization and is now all but non-existent.

### **committee for militant unionism**

The most hopeful development among the skilled workers is the recent formation of the Committee for Militant Unionism (CMU). Based among the skilled workers at Ford Local 600, the largest local in the world, the CMU hopes to organize skilled discontent into a general caucus, with production workers, to oppose Reuther. The CMU grew out of the campaigns of tool and die maker Art Fox for shop committeeman and delegate to the Skilled Trades Convention at Atlantic City in March, 1967. Fox has consistently fought the sell-out policies of Reuther and Walter Dorosh, pro-Reuther president of Local 600. In March, 1966, before CMU was founded, Fox carried on a very high level educational campaign for committeeman and Convention delegates, exposing the conservative arguments of the incumbents and calling for the reopening of negotiations. After the May Convention he continued his leaflet campaign, by reporting what went on at the Convention and exposing the "official" report made by Dorosh. In this educational campaign Fox made an important connection between union issues and politics. In relation to wage increases, one of his leaflets said:

And yet the Johnson Administration, which has an open-ended policy on profits, and which has already agreed informally to let prices take their course, is still trying to apply pressure on labor to keep within the ridiculous 3.2% guide lines. Sometimes one has to wonder whether Reuther is tied so tightly to the Democratic Party that he wouldn't dare go too far beyond the line.

It is for these reasons that I warned of the increasing difficulty the labor movement would confront in attempting to mobilize massive citizen participation within the existing two party structure, a difficulty which has little to do with voter apathy as such. I stated that we might well find it necessary to develop a real choice for the American people—to follow the road proposed many times by our local union, and which is beginning to be put in practice by our brothers in the Canadian AFL-CIO, the road of independent political action.

It would be absurd to say that this sort of thinking is any more widespread than the Goldwaterism of the ISST leadership, but the fact is that the CMU is beginning to grow. The leadership of CMU seems to be competent and respected. Its response to Reuther's attack on Meany was to quote Reuther and turn his criticisms against him in a pamphlet distributed at the Skilled Trades Convention in March, 1967. In fact, at this convention, Fox and the

few CMU people present were the only delegates who actively opposed Reuther. Both the ISST and the Dollar an Hour Now Committee delegates collapsed in the face of Reuther's skilled manipulation of the convention.

Outside of the skilled trades, though including skilled men, there is only one organization that poses any potential threat to Reuther at this time: the "Four Points for Progress" caucus. Four Points is composed of local leaders from some of the more militant areas, such as Twinsburg, Ohio, Cleveland, and Flint, Michigan. The leaders affiliated with this group claim to represent 300,000 UAW members, though this figure is no indication of any real participation or strength. The Four Points which compose the program of this are: 1) a shorter work week; 2) a substantial wage increase; 3) retirement after 30 years service, regardless of age; 4) auto insurance paid by the companies. So far, the primary purpose of this group is to push for these and other points, rather than actually opposing Reuther as such. Many of the secondary leaders involved in Four Points have militant fighting records at the local level, but the real test of this group, which lies in the future, depends on their ability to translate this militancy into a national anti-Reuther formation with a more developed program. The CMU is in contact with Four Points, which could provide a way to channel skilled trades militancy into a general movement of auto workers.

One thing is clear, Reuther is confronted by a great deal of discontent among skilled and production workers. The wildcats and the growth of insurgent organizations will certainly narrow Reuther's (downward) "flexibility" in bargaining. There will most likely be a fairly long auto strike in September. Given the primary center of opposition to Reuther, at least at this time, he will undoubtedly try to appease the skilled workers—at the expense of the production workers. Nonetheless, on those shop issues discussed earlier there is no evidence that Reuther intends to do very much, or that he even can do much. And, so long as the shortage of skilled workers continues in this country, it is even doubtful if Reuther can satisfy the skilled workers for long.

### **reuther's rue**

Militancy and discontent among production workers in auto has been with the UAW since its birth, now the voice of the skilled workers has been added. The fight between workers and bosses over the speed-up, job assignments, and the whole degrading life at the point of production is much older and more persistent than the UAW itself. The fact is that Reuther, given his ideas and politics, can do very little to alleviate this situation. Clearly, his forays against Meany and his coalitionist "social vision" projects will do nothing for the auto workers—and probably very little for the poor. Furthermore, his inability to do much for "his own people," will continue to foster actions, like Mansfield, that embarrass Reuther among his liberal friends. If Reuther's activities should lead to a real shake up in labor and an attempt to organize the poor, fine. But it is not with Reuther that the hope for a social and political alternative to Johnson and Meany lies, it is with the Art Foxes, Frank Pettys and tens of thousands of shop leaders who struggle daily and concretely against the conditions imposed on them by capitalist society.

**KIM MOODY**



# powell and black power

ON March 1st, the House of Representatives excluded Adam Clayton Powell from its ranks. The action came as a stinging reminder that years of militant Negro struggle had failed to dent the racist substructure of America. A reminder that the call for Black Power is still a call and far from an accomplished fact.

Congress claimed to exclude Powell because of his procrastination in complying with court decisions concerning a defamation of character suit and alleged misuse of government funds. Even a cursory glance at Drew Pearson's daily guidebook to asceticism in Washington shows that Powell's escapades were nothing extraordinary for an American statesman. Powell distinguished himself from the general run of Potomac pickpockets by virtue of flamboyance and race. The combination projected Powell into the headlines as an "uppity Negro," a ready target for a resurgent Southern racism joined by a Northern "white backlash." And while Powell was attacked by the conservative Congress, those liberals who "supported" him did so feebly as to be a practical aid to his assailants.

The overwhelming vote of 307 to 116, 134 Democrats and 173 Republicans against 105 Democrats and 11 Republicans, indicates the narrow dimensions of his "supporters." But this only begins to tell the story. The bulk of these "supporters" favored his elimination from the Chairmanship of the Education and Labor Committee together with fines and humiliation. The Democratic Study Group, Congress's liberal caucus, dropped even its original slight attempt to exclude the notorious Mississippi racist, William Colmer, from the Chairmanship of the all-powerful House Rules Committee, together with Powell. The minority "defended" Powell by pointing to the action's unconstitutionality and arguing against rashness in stirring racial tensions. That is, by avoiding any mention of the thinly veiled racist intent of the majority and pointing to the "danger" of Negro unrest.

Reporters freely indicated that the Northern liberal participation in the Powell affair was conditioned by the pressures stemming from the "white backlash." That well known liberal, Lyndon Johnson, who proclaimed "We shall overcome" a few years ago, refrained from intervention although he undoubtedly had the political muscle to prevent the exclusion. A few liberal newspapers condemned the act for its rashness but piously indicated that Congress could re-win its reputation for purity by going on to drop a few of the more malodorous grafters still in its ranks.

Even if the present "allies" of the Negro people, the liberal Democrats, had not been so deeply involved in the move against Powell, they would still have to bear the burden for much of the responsibility. A coalition has been created and maintained on a national basis consisting of the Negroes, the official Labor movement, the liberals, church groups and the like. At the center of the loose program of this coalition has been loyalty to the Democratic Party as the vehicle for attainment of Negro demands. The Negro has been a catalytic force in the

coalition while remaining clearly the junior partner. The other groups in the grand alliance have become socially conservative in the sense that they project very little in the way of a social program which would make any basic alterations in the American socio-economic fabric. They have favored changes in the legal structure to alter the juridical restraints under which the Negro suffers. They are incapable of launching a struggle for the sharp economic changes without which legal rights lose much of their meaning. As long as the Negro is poor and relegated to the bottom of the job heap, his position in society will not be dramatically altered. Apprenticeship programs, poverty programs, and the like have little impact without structural changes commensurate with the real needs of Negroes today. The picture for the bulk of Negroes has actually worsened since the beginning of the civil rights struggle. The coalition program has satisfied some of the important needs of the upper strata of the Negro community by opening positions and status opportunities to them. But for the vast majority of Negroes it remains a travesty.

## the "coalition" fails

The lack of an overall and radical social program has fed the growth of the Northern "white backlash." The inhuman blight and atomization of the cities; the potentially liberating force of automation instead acting as a threat to jobs, status and security; the fantastic industrial speed-up taxing the work capacity of the labor force; the impact of Vietnam and spiralling inflation; all these have created tremendous frustrations among the American people. In the absence of a social program that mobilizes people to fight against these dangers and that offers a realistic hope for an alternative, the advent of a demanding Negro group (given its high visibility and the historical prejudices) is viewed as either a or the danger to an already restless and fearful populace. Without a serious alternative to the status quo, people accept the present reality as unchangeable and seek to hold on to what they have already attained. If another group seems to want part of the already threatened pie, it can only be viewed as an enemy.

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The liberal-Labor-Negro coalition, by failing to erect a program to advance the condition of all, has set up a situation in which the "white backlash" can only flourish.

The Negro community as well is ridden by frustration over jobs, slum conditions, housing and discrimination. The initial reaction to the civil rights movement was hope; hope that at last real changes in their life situations would materialize. With these hopes opened up and then dashed by the failure of the promises made, the Negro ghettos boiled over and the string of summer riots occurred. This became an added factor in the alienation of those segments of the white community who have in common with the Negro a need for better jobs, housing, education, etc. The riots became a further reason to attribute their frustrations to the Negro "who is getting everything."

Both the "white backlash" and the Negro riots are implicit attacks against the failure of the present liberal coalition. The "white backlash" is not a result of the liberal Democrats having gone "too far," but of their failure to even approach a fundamental solution to the problems which exist. This coalition is incapable of making the structural changes necessary for the mass of American workers, Negroes and poor because it is dominated by the very interests who must oppose such changes. These changes, such as full employment, require billions of dollars and it is the corporations alone which have the funds to finance such a program. A coalition consisting of real estate dominated Northern Democratic machines, corporations, et al. together with a conservative labor bureaucracy and Negroes can hardly deliver on such a program.

### the south

The coalition which has been erected in the South serves to point up all the contradictions of this approach. Here the pivotal bloc is even more conservative than the official labor bureaucracy. The Southern Negro revolt coincided with a decisive economic shift of power. The South has gone through an immense economic revolution since the 1930's, accelerated by World War II and the Post-War boom. The South today is predominantly urban; while 34.1% of its population was in cities in 1930, in 1960 the figure was 57.7%. The South has grown relatively to every other part of the U.S. in every aspect of industrial production since 1930. Factories and assembly plants have spread out over much of the former cotton kingdom. At the same time, the importance of agriculture has receded and the migration of farm workers to the cities has added to the urban swell. This industrial and urban revolution produced a new class configuration in the cities and the South as a whole. The rising new urban upper and middle classes of the South are both aggressive and *nouveau riche* in their outlook.

These social changes reflect themselves in a change in political power. In the South, political power has traditionally rested in the rural and small town areas, frequently in the black belt. The Democratic Party was in the hands of plantation owners, small town lawyers and businessmen. The political apparatus served as their business operation; construction companies who hired cheap Negro labor, Texan based extractive industries and the like. In many border states, the shift in political power to the urban upper and middle classes—finance, realty, merchant and other, professional based, groups—came early. The new urban classes rejected their former junior partner relationship to the predominantly rural interest. Through reapportionment and other mechanisms they became the senior partner. For a variety of reasons, such

### wirtz on the draft

"SECRETARY of Labor, Willard Wirtz said today that youths who failed to meet educational or physical standards for the draft ought to be compelled to remedy their defects. . . .

"It has to be recognized that any military service system which sends a boy who has developed himself to a battlefield, and sends another boy who has wasted his life back to gang warfare in a slum or ghetto is wrong. . . . It wastes an opportunity to take someone who needs it by the shoulder and straighten him up—if this is possible. . . .

"He said some form of compulsion was necessary, because statistics showed that youths who failed mental or educational tests for the draft were not responding to offers of help to remedy their shortcomings. . . .

"Mr. Wirtz said the major reason for the failure of the voluntary remedial education program was that many of the youths were 'hard cases' who 'just don't want to come because they don't want to go into the armed services.' These young men, he said, would have to be taken 'by the scruff of their neck.' . . .

"Senator Jacob K. Javits praised Mr. Wirtz for making the suggestion and criticized 'mawkish liberals' who oppose compulsion. . . ." (NY Times, Mar 22, '67.)

One must offer a resounding second to the Secretary's condemnation of these truly immoral youth who contrived, in the womb no doubt, to be born of poor or Negro parents. After entering inferior schools they plotted from a very early age, six or seven, to take full advantage of their situation and learn as little as possible. Plotting all along to avoid the draft! To top it all off, when offered an opportunity for remedial education, they refuse. And what incentive is offered to them! Not a mere job (there are very few jobs for the graduates of these remedial programs)! Instead of a job they are offered the opportunity to go to Vietnam and kill. But instead of engaging in this civilized activity they prefer to stay home and, instead of improving themselves, engage in, of all things, "gang warfare(!)" Doubtless, this is just the way the good secretary sees it.

changes lagged in the deeper South. The Negro upsurge in the late 1950's spurred the urban bourgeoisie to take political power—often against its will. Portions of the urban upper classes were peculiarly subject to pressure from Negroes. Their livelihood and aspirations could only be maintained by racial peace and racial peace could only be obtained through tokenist or "moderate" means. That is, by pacifying both the Negro upsurge and the segregationist reaction. New industry, a boon to those concerned with finance, real estate, commerce, etc., gravitates towards stable conditions, not tensions. Boycotts induced those merchants largely dependent upon Negro trade to press for moderate Negro demands. Northeastern finance, to which the South is still tributary, pressed for "pacification" on a new level by advocating selective and careful reforms for Negroes. Lastly, the Federal Government consciously encouraged businessmen to enter into relationships with Negro groups in order to assure moderation. The business community in the South became the Negro's major "ally." In city after city, the Chamber of Commerce became the chief "moderate" force. In Atlanta, for example, the "pro-Civil Rights" Mayor is the former head of the Chamber of Commerce and the Vice-Mayor is the former leader of the city's realty organization.

Such forces, stretching from business liberal Democrats to Goldwaterite Republicans, have hardly pushed a program for social change in the South. Instead, the hesitating advance and lack of serious economic alterations, have created a situation in which the Wallaces, Maddoxes and others, could stage a powerful comeback feeding upon the discontent of large sectors of the white plebian population.





The limiting nature of the liberal "coalitions," ostensibly erected to "aid" the Negro, have instead created the conditions whereby a resurgent Southern racist movement could develop and a Northern "backlash" prosper. The political center of this hub has been the national Democratic Party and its liberal labor wing. These forces have held reign over their Negro friends to ensure moderation and prevent any development from occurring which might endanger the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. Their national consensus has been built at the expense of the Negro.

The Powell affair proclaimed the complete bankruptcy of the Negro-liberal "coalition." That coalition which has failed to prevent the economic position of Negroes relative to whites from worsening since the days of the Southern sit-ins is not even capable of ensuring the right of Negroes in Harlem, let alone the South, to choose their own representatives. Those liberals who capitulated to the "white backlash," surrendered to an atmosphere which the bankruptcy of their policies had fostered.

The Negro community immediately recognized the Congressional exclusion of the Harlem Democrat as an anti-black measure. Practically all Civil Rights leaders endorsed Powell for re-election in his own, 18th, Congressional District in Harlem, in the special election called by Governor Rockefeller. Powell's exclusion has placed Negro leaders in a peculiar position. It is no secret that the Harlem Minister-Congressman is not one of their favorite people. The more conservative have always been irritated by his failure to win "respect" from whites. Powell's in-

volvement in libel suits, alleged misuse of public funds, income tax problems and kickback scandals together with his flamboyant behavior give his career a flavor which they do not appreciate. High absenteeism, a mediocre Congressional record and attacks against white domination of the NAACP do not endear him to the Black Bourgeoisie. Of course, his failure to exercise real leadership and totally commit himself to the Civil Rights cause have alienated the left militant elements as well. Powell's liking for Lyndon Johnson and Stuart Symington in the 1960 Democratic contest for the Presidential nomination indicate the extent of his militancy. In fact, Powell is a man whom even his friends describe as an opportunist. Andrew Kopkind, in a perceptive article in the January 21st issue of the *New Republic* quotes a buddy of Powell's to the effect that, "Adam didn't give a damn about black power or green power or any kind of power except Powell power."

In spite of this record, the Negro leadership has endorsed Powell with virtual unanimity. The reasons are fairly clear. Re-election of Powell would be a slap in the face of the white power structure which did him in. The blow was against the Negro people and Powell was merely a convenient symbol. Secondly, despite their criticism, Powell is frequently defended on the grounds that his seniority position in Congress had enabled him to channel sizable amounts of federal funds into the Harlem community and Black ghettos in general. Thirdly, and crucially, Powell has overwhelming grassroots support that the Civil Rights movement lacks especially in the North. The Civil Rights organizations have been trying to establish themselves in the ghettos for years. While they have frequently won popular Black esteem, they have not generally been able to dig real and permanent roots. By close identification with the popular and now martyred Harlemite, they hope to be able to translate his victory into a solid base for the movement.

### black power or powell power

By merely endorsing Powell, however, the civil rights leaders have left the power strings entirely in his hands. Black Power support of a Powell-Democratic Party victory will not lead to greater grassroots organization. The maintenance of Democratic Party machine rule in the Northern ghettos is one of the major barriers to the development of a popular Black movement. The type of political consciousness it develops among Negroes is antithetical to organized struggle and independence. At first sight, the independence exercised by Negro Democratic politicians looks impressive. The white Daly machine in Chicago relies very heavily upon the Black Dawson apparatus for a dependable source of votes. Therefore, Congressman William Dawson and his friends receive a sizable amount of patronage. In New York, the Negro machines provided the winning margin for the last Democratic Mayor, Wagner, over his intra-party opponents. Their significant role has given Negro politicians the Manhattan Borough Presidency and they recently held the county leadership of the party. But the costs are heavy for the Negro people. In exchange for minor posts and services, the Negro gives his vote to a party which finds its chief financial support in urban construction and realty interests. In short, the Negro maintains the political power which ensures the maintenance of the slumlord and the slum.

Despite Powell's occasional verbal militancy in the Negro cause, while Dawson practically ignores race issues, the differences between their machines are not great. In Chicago, the unity of the city-wide Daly machine reflects

itself in the unified and comparatively smooth Dawson operation. In Harlem, the opposite condition prevails. The disorganized character of the New York Democratic Party reflects itself in the internecine warfare in the Black Democratic Party. Where unity prevails, Negro machines universally ignore race questions. Where disunity prevails, race issues are used to line up mass votes. This is in direct contrast to the needs of the Negro people, unity in order to promote race politics, i.e., the needs of the Negro community. The enhancement of Powell's position within the Democratic Party of Harlem is a move in the direction of long run de-emphasis of rights and race issues.

It has been said that the Powell machine, whatever its faults, is much superior to the old style of Negro Democratic politics. In the old style, Black leaders were virtually Uncle Toms with little or no independence from their white political masters who they were forced to approach hat in hand for small favors. Adam Powell holds his hat to no man and tells the whites where to get off; he wheels and deals but licks no boots, etc. By comparison to earlier forms of political development, this is certainly true. The trouble with the comparison is that it is the wrong one. Powell's machine has to be compared to the real needs of the Negro people, an independent grass roots movement.

### **the con game**

It has been claimed that Powell retains a deep rapport with the Harlem masses on the basis of his ability to stand up to the white man and to put him down. The fact that Powell operates by wheel and deal, cons and manipulates and lives the life of Riley, thumbing his nose at society, does not alienate him from the grassroots but sets up a sympathetic reaction. And there is little doubt that the more the whites attack his conduct, the more support he gets. Undoubtedly, this is a more human reaction than that of the Uncle Tom and represents more of a consciousness on the part of Negroes. What is wrong with it may be demonstrated by an analogy to the Welfare system. Here the client is supposed to gratefully accept the dole handed out to him by society. One of the few areas of human conduct left open to the welfare recipient is to lie and cheat in order to obtain more cash. This is valuable to him not only for the money but as a way of asserting his human dignity. He hits back at the condescending paternal system which tries to operate in such a way as to obliterate his humanity. The problem with the response is that it teaches only individual forms of response. It militates against what is needed, independent organization of the clients to fight the welfare system as a whole and destroy it as it is presently constituted. The con game accepts the world as it is; it doesn't change it. It is another form of subtle incorporation into the dominant system of potential opponents. The same obtains with Powell. The Powell machine teaches people what they already know from the streets. Survival and advance come from the con game. A good deal of Harlem street life is spent in essentially con type operations. Powell demonstrates to the Negro that the high and mighty white man can be conned and manipulated too. Unfortunately, the price of entering the manipulation game is the acceptance of the system as it is. Movements come from a collective consciousness and direct political confrontation. If a movement among the grass roots is to be built, it will not be done so long as the Powell type of consciousness remains.

It is clear than any attempt on the part of more militant Black organizations to put up another more revolutionary candidate instead of Powell would have backfired. The

Negro people would have interpreted such an action as complicity with Jim Crowism. However, there is one thing that Black Power militants could have done which would have crucially altered the situation and pointed a way for the future. They could have demanded that Powell run on a third party line, a Black Power ticket, instead of in the Democratic Party. Indeed, Powell himself has called for the creation of a third force as an independent political weapon for the Negro struggle. While Powell's third force has little in common with the kind of grass roots independent organization that is necessary, his pronouncement at this time gave militants the opportunity to put him on the spot. If Powell had refused, as he probably would, the issue should have been taken to the grass roots level—the Harlem community. Door to door organizers could have confronted the Black community with the fact that Powell was running as a member of the very political organization, the Democratic Party, which had been instrumental in his "lynching, Northern style."

In not demanding a new party, in not pressing Powell to a new role, in not beginning the task of education, of showing the Negro masses that Powell was the victim of a Jim Crow act largely attributable to the Democratic Party, Black Power militants have failed to take advantage of the situation to advance political consciousness. Powell's coming victory will slap the Congress down but will also be a reendorsement of the fact that political reality so far as the Negro is concerned lies within the system and within the Democratic Party.

The failure of the Black militants to utilize the Powell campaign to erect a third party embryo can only have had effects. Instead of utilizing the exclusion of the Harlem Congressman as a tremendous opportunity for grass roots independent organization, his reelection will serve merely to reenforce the Negro commitment to a political machine which can make no meaningful changes in the lives of Negroes. The tremendous discontent manifested in ghetto riots, the coming of another "long, hot summer," could have been preceded by a radical April election campaign. The seeds can be sown for a fruitful summer of radical political organization. The lessons to be drawn from the Powell affair can still be brought to force in the Negro community. As long as Negro leaders merely endorse Powell, the tremendous possibilities will be lost. The Congressional exclusion of Powell can be used towards the creation of a real Black Power movement whether Powell would like it or not.

### **black party impact**

The creation of a Negro party in Harlem would have an immediate impact on the rest of the American Black community. It would be an important step in the direction of upsetting the present disastrous alliance policy; a concrete manifestation of Black Power and a step towards creating a meaningful radical program and movement. After centuries of suppression, the American image of the inferiority of Negroes pervades not only the white community but Afro-Americans themselves. A self-organized, confident Black political movement can go a long way toward proving the strength and power that lies within the ghetto. Only with such a development can a new meaningful alliance be created with those who truly share the common needs of jobs and better living conditions. Such an alliance can only be created by recognizing the strength and capacity of each part.

Rank and file insurgencies against not only the corporations but the union bureaucracies as well; a threat-



ened strike wave confronted by a federal government demanding peace at home in order to prosecute its War abroad; these movements among American workers can culminate in increased political awareness. When coupled with a rising Black Power movement, the tremendous possibilities of an alliance of these and peace and student groups offer magnificent possibilities for a radical social program commensurate with the needs of American workers, Negroes and poor. Whether the issues raised by Powell's Congressional exclusion will be used to move in these directions is up to the Negro militants themselves.

If they merely aid Powell in his bid for reelection on his own terms, they have failed to make a significant contribution. The best slap in the face of the white power structure will not be merely returning Adam Powell to Congress but creating the kind of radical Black Power movement which did not exist before Powell was expelled.

**SY LANDY**

This article was written before the special election called for the 18th congressional district. As expected, Powell won by an overwhelming majority.

## the "communist party of poland"

In the first issue of **Independent Socialist**, we reprinted selections from the "Open Letter to the Party" by the Polish revolutionary socialists, Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski. Their document stands as an incisive criticism of the Gomulka "Central Political Bureaucracy." It is a reaffirmation of the struggle for revolutionary socialist democracy in the chains of bureaucratic class rule. For their courage, the authors are in prison.

In stark contrast to this revolutionary document stands that "criticism" which replaces the struggle for workers' democracy with reactionary appeals to racial "purity." The selections printed below from the Pro-Maoist Polish underground shed a revealing light on the "revolutionary" nature of the splits among the ruling classes of the Communist world. The Maoists were among the most fervent opponents of the Hungarian Revolution and of the aborted attempts by Polish workers for self-liberation in 1956. In Poland today, their opposition can not center on the real cause of workers' discontent — class oppression — but must appeal instead to racist demagoguery. They are opposed to working class struggle and seek but a shift in the ruling class. **ED.**

"We can no longer tolerate and pass over in silence the fact that a Zionist, Trotskyite group of Jewish nationalists has been established, which under the pretext of equal rights aims at domination of 30 millions of Poles by the Jewish national minority. This group emerged from the circles of the Jewish bourgeoisie and Jewish middle class, and is the most reliable agency of imperialism in our country. It enjoys not only the support of Israel but also of American imperialism and of Radio Free Europe.

"The Jewish nationalists through favoritist machinations and national solidarity mastered and subordinated to themselves the circles of intellectuals, scientists, writers and artists. They deeply penetrated the economic apparatus as well as the party and the governmental power apparatuses. They poisoned the culture of the Polish nation by the contents of corruption and decay which are alien to its spirit. The Polish creative and academic intelligentsia has been overwhelmed and pushed

away by them. We need to liberate and purify those circles from their influence in order to let the talents of Polish intelligentsia develop freely and restore its magnificent humanistic traditions which are so widely known in the world."

**TRANSLATOR'S NOTE:** The Communist Party of Poland is a pro-Maoist group recently founded by Kazimierz Mijal after his sensational defection from Poland to Albania and subsequently to China. The group is believed to operate mainly outside of Poland, namely among the Polish miners in France and Belgium. But it has some influence in Poland as demonstrated by the 1965 trial of six men accused and convicted in Warsaw for dissemination of previous writings of Mijal.

Kazimierz Mijal was a member of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party from 1944 to 1957. He was a Mayor of the city of Lodz and subsequently became the Minister of local Governments. In 1956 he led the most intransigent wing of the so-called Natolin faction, which, unlike the bulk of this faction, has never got reconciled with the Gomulka regime. In 1957, he was ousted from the Central Committee for delivering a speech in which he accused Gomulka and his supporters of betrayal of Communism. From 1957 on he led a half-clandestine existence, producing a number of illegal pamphlets. In all these pamphlets he violently attacked the regimes of Khrushchov in the USSR and Gomulka in Poland for betrayal and for restoration of capitalism, defended the memory of "good Marxist-Leninist" Stalin against the "slanders" of "drunken" Khrushchov, praised the achievements in the "construction of socialism" during the Stalin era, and bitterly complained about the fate of "good old loyal communists" persecuted and discriminated against under the new regime, which preferred to rely on "technocrats" instead. All these pamphlets also contained the critique of existing social injustices and inequalities, made with the assumption that these injustices and inequalities did not exist prior to 1953. Also the anti-Jewish prejudice was present in all these pamphlets, although perhaps not in so extreme a form as in the quote above.

Mijal is believed to be an author of the quoted manifesto.

The text of the Manifesto was published in Polish by the **Institut Litteraire**, Paris 1966 under the title **Schizmy (The Schisms)**.

# hands off the university of california

THE following is the text of a leaflet first published by the Independent Socialist Club of Berkeley, California, and distributed on the UC campus in the wake of Clark Kerr's pre-emptory dismissal by the Board of Regents. The single-sheet offset or mimeographed leaflet has been a mainstay of the Berkeley movement since the days of the FSM—a modern adaptation of the popular broadsides and broadsheets that played such an important role in the revolutionary movements of the past.

FOR two years the University of California has been under attack. It is being attacked by an aggressive and growing right wing. It has also been attacked by the vested interests of corporate capitalism which are concentrated on the Board of Regents, and are violently opposed to an expanding, militant student movement which fights against the war in Vietnam and supports the struggle for Negro equality and the strike of farm workers.

Clark Kerr and the University Administration have, for two years, tried to meet these pressures by appeasing them. The Liberal Kerr would keep the right wing from disciplining the campus by doing it himself—in a Liberal way, of course. But like most Liberal attempts to appease a militant right wing, it did not work. It did not work because students refused to sacrifice their rights of free political activity. It did not work because our right wing Governor knows that he doesn't need a liberal to be his hatchetman at UC.

Kerr fell victim to a climate which he helped to create. It was he who stoked the fires of red-baiting by claiming that 49% of the "trouble-makers" were Castroite-Maoists. It was his administration which tried to convince the people of this state that all student unrest was due to a handful of non-student agitators.

Kerr consistently refused to defend the University from outside pressures. He refused to defend the right of students to mount political and social action. He refused to fight the T.A. cutback, the Mulford Act, the cut in out-of-state tuition waivers and other reprisals against the FSM. He refused to fight to keep the University from becoming a political football in state politics. Kerr was willing to use the ploy of resignation during the "filthy speech" incident, but was never willing to do the same on a real question of principle. When Reagan demanded an investigation, Kerr said that he would not oppose it.

Nevertheless, we oppose the firing of Kerr by the Board of Regents because it was a capitulation to pressures outside the University. But, we would have been quite happy had he been fired by the students and faculty of this University, who refused to buy his vision of the Uni-

versity as a factory turning out intellectual flunkies for the corporate Establishment.

The job of defending the University from outside attack must be undertaken NOW; every minute is precious. The faculty and students have unfortunately been neglectful in this, allowing the Administration to speak for the University. This is now, not only incorrect, but impossible. The faculty is in a position to play an independent role by declaring that it will not cooperate with an unacceptable president. If the Academic Senate, on Tuesday, passed such a resolution it would be enough to scare away most of the candidates for the job. All the faculty needs is courage. The faculty and students must undertake a militant campaign to rally support throughout the state by mobilizing all who will be affected by the imposition of tuition. Last November, the State College Council of the California Federation of Teachers stated that an attack on the University was an attack on them. They have called for a march on Sacramento. Let us help build this demonstration and the fight that goes with it, and unite it with the demand that the University no longer be used as a football in California politics. We can fight the Reagan investigation if the faculty and students boldly proclaim that they will not cooperate by testifying at a witch-hunt. Only a militant and aggressive fight can save this University. The way to battle the right wing is by fighting it, not appeasing it, as the failure of Clark Kerr clearly proves.

JOEL GEIER

## International Socialism 28 winter 1967

quarterly journal for socialist theory

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# SSEU

## problems and prospects

ONE of the chief arguments used by opponents of democracy and struggle-from-below is that there is an Iron Law of Bureaucracy: no movement can long be controlled by its rank-and-file; the officers will gradually centralize power and control in their hands to disenfranchise the members. Socialists have generally countered such arguments by referring to people's permanent capacity to struggle, viz. when the union representing welfare workers was, through bureaucratic immobility and corruption, unable to win any gains for them, they were able to form a new union (the SSEU) which through militant action defeated the boss and enforced its contract through radical techniques.

Now the Social Service Employees Union is casting off this heritage of militancy and entering a phase of bureaucratization and conservatism. In the negotiations for a new contract which was to improve upon the great breakthrough made in the 28-day strike of 1965, hesitancy and fear replaced anger and discontent to produce a contract which reflected a series of trades where one gain was swapped for another. Despite an abortive 3-day strike the membership of the union never expressed its will freely. Instead, they found themselves supporting officers who bamboozled them by pointing to a shorter probationary period and more prompt payment of trainees (new workers in the Welfare Dept. generally have not received their first pay for 6-8 weeks) without telling them that this had been traded for an increase in workload from 10 to 15 cases per month. In the same way, a better grievance procedure was 'won,' but . . . a no-strike clause was signed, making ultimate resolution of grievances more problematical.

This process, whereby union rights are traded about like checkers in a game where the members of the union sit as spectators, pits two conceptions of unionism against each other. Instead of a radical direct action group aiming at independent political existence outside the status quo, the SSEU is turning into a benefit machine exclusively concerned with the economic betterment of its members. The political quietism of the union's leaders causes them to look about for allies like DeLury's Sanitationmen, whose negotiators then make policy for the union behind the backs of elected negotiators. The union's executive board and membership must then be manipulated into acceptance of agreements in which they had no part. Erosion of democracy compromises the member's faith in the union and his willingness to fight, making questionable political alliances all the more necessary for leaders whose support is daily dwindling.

### decline & fall

How did this incredible decay of the union's spirit take place under the leadership of the long-time head of the union's left wing, Judy Mage? As president, she has faced a crisis-ridden year conditioned (1) by Lindsay's anti-labor strategy and (2) the split in the Welfare Dept. between SSEU and Local 371 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, which

still holds bargaining rights for clerks and supervisors, while SSEU represents caseworkers. All through the summer of 1966, SSEU waged a largely successful campaign of recruiting supervisors with a petition for a collective bargaining election. Indeed, after the promotion of several hundred SSEU caseworkers into supervisory positions, SSEU had more supervisors on dues check-off than Local 371. However, in order to keep Welfare workers divided, the city was quick to seize on a stupid blunder in the wording of the petition. While technicalities were waved aside to allow AFSCME to challenge titles held by SSEU and by Local 237, IBT (Teamsters), the city refused to accept new petitions signed by supervisors designating SSEU as their bargaining agent but stuck to a rigid interpretation of the rules. At this point, Judy Mage borrowed a radical technique from the New Left: for the first time since the 1930's, a labor union made use of direct action. For 6 days, a group of militants sat in at the NYC Dept. of Labor to force a collective bargaining election for supervisors. The action, although radical in its form, failed to budge the city because it did nothing to organize supervisors to demand that the city allow them to choose SSEU. In what proved to be a chilling preview of the 1967 strike, the supervisors remained passive, a prize to be fought over. They never became individuals with needs that drove them to SSEU. Mage gave them no opportunity to create a movement that would express their desire for unity with caseworkers. Difficult as such a job may have been, given the apathy and conservatism of many supervisors, only such a movement would have been able to force an election out of the city. To substitute the activism of a few militants for the real job of organizing supervisors was to have disastrous consequences for the union.

### how not to succeed in labor

For Mage and the union, losing the supervisors' campaign meant retrenchment. Mage embarked on a strategy of stalling negotiations as long as possible in hopes of avoiding a strike altogether. In her view, 371 would drive to sign a contract quickly, to prevent SSEU from reopening its organizing campaign. The split between the two unions would make effective support from supervisors unlikely in event of a strike. SSEU could hope (1) to get more economic demands than 371 by trading on its radical reputation, and (2) beat back the city's attempts to write into the contract any provisions of the infamous tri-partite agreement which would integrate city unions into the city government. This theory repeats the same substitutionist error made in the supervisors' campaign: 'bargaining skills' of union officials will win a good contract, substituting for a strong and well-organized staff. The problem of organizing for a strike was made more difficult by the Mage leadership's refusal to identify the crucial issues of transfers, workload, and the planned destruction of the merit system which could have united supervisors and caseworkers. At the same time the union shied away from addressing itself to supervisors, it carefully played down any demands of interest to welfare

recipients and the black and Puerto Rican ghettos, on the grounds that such radical statements would "alienate" these selfsame conservative elements.

When an opposition movement to Mage's lack of perspective and stalling tactics developed on the SSEU Executive Board, Mage reacted with a confusing resolution, approved by a membership meeting, which appeared to call for a strike on Jan. 1 the contract expiration date, but provided for an extension if it were "purposeful" to continue negotiations beyond that point. Actually, Mage had no intention of calling a strike but needed more time to negotiate. The effect of her maneuver was to further confuse militant members and add credence to the hopes of those reluctant to strike, by lending an illusion of strength where she was dealing from weakness.

### **the modern mage generalship**

The lessons of Mage's stalling were not lost on the city, however. Within a week of the resolution allowing postponement, the city broke off negotiations in an elaborate charade following the presentation of its own 'demands.' It now became clear that the city had two main objectives in the negotiations: (1) to reward Victor Gotbaum, executive director of DC 37, AFSCME, for signing the tripartite agreement and (2) to undercut the SSEU by replacing caseworkers with low-paid high school graduates doing the clerical and investigatory job which degrades the caseworker into a policeman, while creating a few elite jobs for trained social workers at relatively high pay. Tied in with the destruction of seniority and promotional rights to create a gigantic patronage mill under the control of anti-poverty bureaucrats was a long-range plan to automate the entire welfare system, creating mass layoffs and an end to the minimal services and personal contacts that recipients can sometimes get from the present system.

To fight this juggernaut of bureaucracy would entail beginning to organize other city unions and the ghettos into an alliance that would directly attack the welfare system as a gigantic and corrupt boondoggle whereby shyster slumlords and ghetto credit gougers are kept in business, perpetrating filthy slums and poverty while keeping an exploitative social system going that cannot provide work for millions in the ghetto and excludes from power the workers who produce for it. Mage sought her allies closer to the seat of power, attempting to win through cleverness at negotiating what she was afraid to stage an open fight for.

However, the 'labor statesman' who substitutes slick-

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ness for militancy must soon face certain melancholy conclusions. Such 'skilled negotiations' develop a network of unofficial relationships which are maintained to exploit whatever divisions may appear in the city's position and maximize the union's gains. Therefore the membership cannot be told what is happening lest these contacts wither. The membership must be used as an instrument: just the right amount of militancy. More would frighten the city into tightening its stand; less would embolden it to stand firm. Questions of principle become subordinated to the tactics of bargaining; membership awareness, resentment and anger of the kind that leads to a willingness to strike must give way to confusion, apathy, resentment and 'faith in our leaders.' This situation is typical of labor unions in the US today: most unions have no-strike clauses, most unions have management rights clauses to condition the workers into feeling that 'management has rights too' and that the established property relations are inviolate. This is the ideological bribe offered to the leaders of America's working class. It is more durable than the continuance of imperialist 'super-profits.' Mage, in swallowing the bait, has sounded the knell for the SSEU: as a 'dual union,' it must offer militancy and a way out of the political impasse of American labor, or even its ability to gain economic benefits is threatened by the existence of Local 371.

One of the unbelievable facts of the SSEU negotiations was the secrecy in which they were conducted. Mage's famous labor alliance, top-to-top with the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, resulted in a virtual takeover of negotiations by Jack Bigel, USA official, Ernest Fleischman, one of the union's attorneys, Jack Reubens, a grievance officer not elected to the Negotiating Committee, Bart Cohen, 2nd VP, and Judy Mage. Elected members of the negotiating committee, including this writer, were informed of decisions after they had been made. What is worse, even Bernie Cacchione, 1st VP of the union and in charge of strike organization, has stated publicly that he had no knowledge of the details agreed to in negotiations until 20 minutes before the Executive Board voted to end the strike. Thus the chances for a militant action were played away. All the self-fulfilling prophecies of doom uttered by a disoriented and demoralized leadership after the supervisors campaign came to pass. The Mage leadership had not lifted a hand to prevent it. Cacchione, the one officer who tried to go against the drift was systematically shut out from leadership by a clique at the top, who sabotaged his efforts to mobilize the membership. That 84% of the caseworkers stayed out despite their lack of knowledge is a tribute to their militancy and his organizing ability. Supervisors, not having been offered any reason for staying out, crossed the line in droves. Clients jammed a few centers creating confusion for scabs and generating solidarity with workers. However, although a psychology was created out of desperation just before the strike that clients could use their numbers to rescue the strike, it was never made clear to clients why they should demonstrate for caseworkers. Instead, money was dangled in front of their eyes, but no explanation given of how they would have to organize to get it, or the goals of a client-caseworker alliance to destroy the welfare system.

### **spike in the strike**

That a strike ever occurred was clearly an accident. A strike vote had been taken on Thursday, Jan. 12. But the Negotiating Committee was summoned on Sunday,



Jan. 15, for the first time in weeks. It was handed agreements allowing the city to go ahead with its plans to hire cheap labor, concessions allowing the continuation of arbitrary transfers (one of the principal causes of the high turnover in caseworkers), and no-strike and management rights clauses. No reduction in caseload had been won and no demands for recipients had been agreed to. An unauthorized offer had been made drastically cutting the union's wage demands from \$1600 to \$975 for a worker with 1 year experience. However, the discovery of a 'bug' in the union's negotiating rooms—due to the crossing of some wires the bugged line got carried over the elevator intercom system allowing union officials' voices to be heard in the elevator halfway across the building—and the city's recognition that the union's offer still broke the 'established wage pattern,' set up to appease Gotbaum and AFSCME, led to a breakdown in negotiations. That had not been foreseen in Mage's calculations.

Now the strike was on, for the radical words of the Jan. 12 membership meeting, when the strike vote was taken, could not be simply forgotten. Even at this late date, however, Mage could have opted for an all-out fight by repudiating the concessions made in bargaining, especially using the pressure of the strike to get some real concessions on the vital issue of job reorganization. Instead, every effort was made to limit the strike to the wage dispute and promise a quick settlement. On both Monday and Tuesday nights, Mage tried to call membership meetings during working hours to effectively end the strike by taking the membership away from the picket lines. That the membership and the executive board were not as cowed as the clique around Mage is shown by the fact that they backed Cacchione both times when he opposed Mage and argued for one-day extensions. Finally, on Jan. 18, after 3 days of a strike which despite Local 371's scabbing, despite inadequate preparation, despite the panic of Mage, Cohen and certain members of the executive board, was still 84% solid, Mage printed up the results of pre-strike bargaining to make it appear this had been won during the strike and called for a back-to-work vote. The city had offered arbitration on all unresolved issues but had not budged one cent on its wage offer. To many members it must have seemed as though a settlement was very close, since they had no way of knowing that all this agreement had been reached before the strike. In a dark theatre no one could read the agreement for himself. A majority chose to trust Mage, perhaps wondering why they had struck only to accept arbitration which she had scorned before the strike. Although she painted a frightening picture of all the city's might being thrown against the union if it should continue to resist, the stand-up vote had to be repeated before anyone was sure it had won. Cacchione deferred to Mage's judgment, having seen the agreement himself only minutes before. Without a political basis for his opposition to Mage's sabotaging of his organizational efforts, Cacchione was unable to continue in opposition.

### **decay & delay**

The return to work brought with it increasing demoralization of militant caseworkers. As bargaining dragged on without selection of a fact-finder, an awareness of the union's weakness began to set in. At the Non-residence Welfare Center special eligibility rules for welfare applicants who are new to New York state exacerbated the overwork problem. The grim working conditions were an

impetus to continued militancy. But when non-residence workers resolved, about two weeks after the strike, on a work action in which they would refuse to process more than one new application ('pending') per week, Mage counseled the delegates, John Kailin and John Talbutt, to postpone the action. When this recommendation was turned down by the non-residence workers, Kailin and Talbutt swung back to support for the action. Emboldened by this hesitancy, the city reacted with immediate suspensions. Although Kailin and Talbutt brought the matter to the executive board Feb. 5, the evening of the first suspensions, Mage refused under heavy opposition to recommend anything stronger than a demonstration for the following Tuesday (later postponed until Wednesday by a blizzard). Only after 6 days' pay had been lost by the entire Non-residence staff of caseworkers, who had stopped work to protest the suspensions Feb. 6, and been locked out on Feb. 12, was Mage able to decide on city-wide work stoppage.

### **think-in & sink-in**

This action, dubbed in advance a 'think-in' by the press, captured the imagination of many welfare workers. It dramatized the gap between the liberal rhetoric of social work and the punitive reality of welfare. Workers were to spend their time in contemplation of their client's problems and discussing various plans for rehabilitation, following the Welfare Department's unworkable procedures to the letter. At non-residence, administrative personnel scurried to process the cash grants the workers could not be roused to do, while the union worked with client groups who sent organizers to insure that clients would not be intimidated out of money they were entitled to.

With the action scheduled for Feb. 16, Mage negotiated until 4 AM of Feb. 15 when a sleepy executive board approved her motion to call off the action. The city had agreed under pressure to hire more caseworkers until the overwork problem was solved but absolutely refused any meaningful easements to the non-residence workers who for six days had defied the city alone. By not paying the non-residence workers the city served notice on every caseworker not to risk suspension with radical actions in the future, or accept the loss in pay. Mage, by her vacillations, had made the cause of the non-residence workers harder and prepared for their defeat. After six days, the city was more confident than ever. Although back pay was not the primary issue of the action, the failure of the union to win back pay and to use its strength was a demoralizing blow for every caseworker, weakening their

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faith in their ability to defend their contract through direct action.

It was obvious that Mage's on-again, off-again style of misleadership would provoke resentment and opposition at election time. However, the formation of a real left wing was hindered by the sectarian opposition of the four "left wing" sects running candidates in the union. The election found all four groups backing different slates. Their unilateral concern with changing union policy keeps them from becoming relevant to a membership which has backed Mage on every crucial vote, regardless of whether her policy at the time was militant or non-militant. Mage has neatly foiled these self-styled radicals by turning their attention from the transformation of the union to her call for a membership referendum on the war in Vietnam. Whether or not the union takes a stand on the war will not remedy its basic weakness at this time. Only a strong left-wing caucus can assure that the SSEU remains free to protect its members' interests.

### significance vs sectarianism

None of the current left wing splinter slates have progressed beyond the election rhetoric to consider if they have a base to do differently than Mage if they were elected. If the membership has always backed Mage it is because it has no clearer conception of its own power than she does. It, too, believes generally in the rationality of 'talking to' the city and thinks that real gains can sometimes be won through collective bargaining without direct action. Only the failure of the present negotiations to bring real gains is beginning to awake members to the gap between her actions and her fits of militant rhetoric. Endless denunciations and cries of 'sellout' miss this point entirely. Executive board members who want a more militant policy are often unwilling to take the risk of organizing their centers against Mage's position.

The first task of a left wing caucus must be to organize an informed membership around concrete issues involving working conditions. In the traditional AFL-CIO unions and in Britain, where the official leadership is concerned only with money issues, workers' demands for more dignity and control of their jobs have devolved upon local leaders. In Britain, most pay agreements are also won by the shop stewards' movement while the official union leadership acts only to dampen militancy and enforce discipline. In this country, too, unions are almost entirely organs of discipline who seek to sell employers labor peace for a presumably suitable wage package. Under Mage this future beckons to the SSEU.

If workers in a group of centers are prepared to take action around their own issues, an unofficial movement of delegates can co-ordinate their actions and present the Mage leadership with a *fait accompli*: fight for our demands or we will go out without you. Such a caucus cannot be a sectarian political organization which proffers a daily line in its leaflets which no one reads. It must be relevant to each welfare center and build upon strong center organizations, whose members are informed of union policy and ready to back their delegates and pressure them to fight for their demands.

At a time when the Vietnam war is cutting at workers' living standards across the country and forcing workers to defend their living standards with increased militancy, the myth of the conservative working class is being dispelled in practice. A national left wing labor caucus could lead a fight for democratic, militant unionism, workers' control of industry, and independent political action. Wel-

fare workers, who have been among the first to revolt against the AFL-CIO business union philosophy, should not throw away their gains now but should join in the fight for such a caucus. Thus a left-wing caucus in the SSEU would not be organized solely around shop-floor issues but must put forward a political program based on immediate issues and working toward alliances with rank-and-file movements in other unions, unity of Welfare Dept. staff, and attacking the welfare system in an alliance with client organizations.

Although the concrete demands of a left wing caucus in the SSEU must necessarily arise out of the fights in which it is born, they would include the following:

- (1) Jobs for welfare clients—not perpetuating the degrading welfare system but rebuilding the ghettos according to democratic planning at union wages.
- (2) Higher welfare payments without investigations and restrictions but as a matter of right for all who cannot work.
- (3) A turnover tax on the businesses and banks who grow fat off the welfare system.
- (4) Allocation of priority to welfare and public works rather than armaments for wars of aggression.

Already some welfare workers have been meeting to form a Movement for Progressive Unionism. While the opposition slates were babbling about how the Condon-Wadlin revision 'must be fought' without making any concrete suggestions and Mage continues to rely on her friends in the legislature who did nothing effective to prevent passage of the bill, the MPU is planning a campaign to fight it.

The new bill provides in place of the old unworkable provisions, a workable way of preventing public employee strikes. Unions will be fined and lose check-off rights if they support strikes, slowdowns, or any form of work action. Unions will become mere appendages of government once again and will act to crush workers' militancy in order to preserve precious check-off rights. Starting from the realization that bureaucratic initiatives to punish only labor's "enemies" are doomed to failure, the MPU plans a petition campaign to demand:

- (1) a membership forum to discuss the new Condon-Wadlin law.
- (2) an immediate conference of all public employee unions to discuss ways of defeating the bill.
- (3) the AFL-CIO must give top priority to the right-to-strike bill at the state Constitutional Convention.
- (4) a one-day general strike of all public employees to protest the law.

Only if the SSEU membership is organized in such ways to respond to the issues facing it can the SSEU be prevented from succumbing to the pitfall of business unionism and be provided with militant leadership. Then it can play its role in rebuilding the labor movement to the point where it can become aware of workers' power—their right and their destiny to reshape society and put an end to all exploitation. The current degeneration of the Mage leadership is no footnote to some Iron Law of Bureaucracy. Just as inevitable as the tendency to bureaucracy is the drive of all workers to struggle against it and be free. The question is not, is the bureaucratization of the SSEU inevitable? but, now that it is happening, which side are you on?

**BARRY GORDEN**

THE author was an elected member of the SSEU Negotiating Committee, from which he resigned in protest against undemocratic negotiating procedures. **Ed.**



# new politics in california

ON April 15 hundreds of thousands marched against the war. They included sizeable numbers of trade unionists and Negro activists. The anti-war movement has more support and inspires more activity than ever before. It is closer than ever before to becoming linked to the struggle of Negroes, and the attempts of trade unionists to resist pressures of the war economy.

But in a very real sense these struggles are just as weak as ever, for they have no political party which they can oppose to those who now run America. Without such a party they cannot take power to implement their aims. Nor can they convince the population that they are a political force which must be taken seriously. Nor can they even budge the policies of the major parties, which stand for war, a thinly concealed racism, and pressure on workers in the plant to make bigger sacrifices in the "national" interest (read: the defense of tyrants like Marshal Ky). Lyndon Johnson, Bobby Kennedy and their Republican counterparts do not flinch before verbal attacks at anti-war rallies, militant speeches by Stokely Carmichael and on-the-job actions by auto workers, as long as these protests stop short of a challenge to their power.

As long as such a challenge is nonexistent politics will be polarized, as it is today, between different types of Establishment politicians, whose only difference is *how* reactionary American policies shall be (from Kennedy to Johnson to Reagan). If the April 15 marchers are to break out of their impotence they must transform that polarization into one in which the main contact will be between the Establishment on the one hand, and workers, Negroes and the anti-war movement on the other.

The "respectables" who populated the April 15 speakers' platform did not for the most part even begin to address themselves to these problems. Luckily, their elegant vacuities do not embody the latent power of the movement itself. Behind the leaders stand great numbers of newly activated people. Today the caution of the leaders mirrors uncertainty on the lower levels of the protest movement about the proper next step, fears about "going too far" which have been conditioned by many years of depending on the old political institutions. If the confidence of the movement continues to grow, those fears will recede before the simple truth that the timidity of the leaders is castrating the movement, and that the millions of votes which elect Democrats can be mobilized by the people themselves in their own interests.

## **schrade charade**

If we look *behind* the podiums at anti-war rallies we can observe this process developing right before our eyes. Paul Schrade is a West Coast representative of the United Automobile Workers who spoke at Kezar Stadium on April 15. Schrade did not, of course, speak one word about organizing opposition to the war parties (he gave a rather weak, Bobby Kennedy type speech on the war itself). Schrade is part of the Reuther leadership in the UAW which suppresses on-the-job actions by auto workers.

These actions are aimed against speedup and other production pressures which are encouraged by the Democratic Party and Administration in the interest of the cold war economy. Walter Reuther is aligned politically with that Party and that Administration—he is aligned, in other words, with the political forces which try to whip UAW workers into the service of a criminal war.

## **ranks versus tanks**

UAW rank and filers are now fighting Reuther's timid reaction to management's pressure. Because the economic issues with which the rank and filers are concerned relate so intimately to the war and the Administration, and because part of Reuther's timidity is his fear of embarrassing his political ally in the White House, the current rank and file struggles create the conditions in which opposition to the war and advocacy of a new political party can become popular causes in the lower echelons of the trade unions. There is more hope for the anti-war movement from these rank-and-filers (many of whom are not yet even committed on the war itself) who are actively fighting the Administration's domestic war program than there is from bureaucrats like Schrade who make anti-war statements but block resistance, in the plant and in politics, to the warmakers. Schrade's anti-war statements, however mild, are welcome and are today an important addition to the protest movement. But the greater significance of the participation of the labor leaders is to point to the signs of life shown by the more unruly members.

If Schrade does not typify the future of the movement he at least personifies its present leadership in the trade unions. Not the same can be said for another speaker. Gerald Hill is President of the California Democratic Clubs, which for some years was the nesting place for thousands of middle class individuals who sought liberal or radical change through the Democratic Party. Hill's accession to the Presidency of the CDC resulted from the deposing of Si Casady, a former head of that organization who was too vociferous in opposing the war to be tolerated by the Democratic leadership in California.

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The knifing of Casady was symptomatic of a fragmenting and decline of the CDC. It combined with the new self-confidence generated by welfare rights protests, anti-war demonstrations and the vigor of the Berkeley student movement to convince activists across the state that they needed a new type of organization, an organization independent of the old parties. Within the past year "Communities for New Politics" have been organized in a host of California cities. At a statewide conference in Los Angeles last fall more than two thousand activists urged rejection of both Republican Reagan and Democrat Brown. They voted also to set up a state coordinating committee.

### pending independence

Some of the New Politics groups got started in races against Democratic incumbents in the Democratic Party primaries last spring. But this spring they were locked in a struggle with the Democratic Establishment as such in municipal elections. (The participation of the Democratic Party, in Berkeley the Democratic Caucus, makes the nominal non-partisanship of these elections a mere formality.) At the time this is written the elections in Los Angeles and Berkeley are concluded, those in Oakland, Santa Barbara and other areas are still going on. It is in Berkeley where New Politics sentiment is strongest and where the CNP got one-third of the April 4th vote. The election in Berkeley, accordingly, best reveals the strengths and weaknesses of this fledgling movement. And the lessons of Berkeley are clear.

The defining characteristic of the CNP is its independence as a *political organization* from the Democratic and Republican parties. That independence is a property to which the CDC could never lay claim and on which the Reuthers and Schrades look disdainfully. But if the movement against the American Establishment is to have a hope of success it must wrest itself free from the political stranglehold of that Establishment. That is why the CNP, which has accomplished that task organizationally, is the future of the movement and Gerald Hill its past, just as in the trade unions (particularly in their relationship to the anti-war struggle), the rank-and-filers and not Schrade are the future. If we are to evaluate the meaning of April 15 intelligently, we will look not at the "respectables" on the podium but at those forces behind them whose activity holds the germ of future power. Small as it is, restricted as it is today to a middle-class constituency, the CNP is an example of that type of activity.

I said the CNP has achieved independence as an organization from the Democratic Party. The value of such an acquisition can hardly be undervalued in the swamp of American politics but in itself it is the barest of beginnings. The CNP must make that independence work for the goals it desires. It must justify itself in actual political activity. Masses of people will not be drawn to the New Politics movement merely because it is independent of the Democrats. A climate must be built up in which that independence is made attractive to them and in which they feel the strength to break from the Establishment parties and the wisdom of doing so.

Only in part—by its nomination of three independent city council candidates and a candidate for auditor—did the CNP live up to these obligations. In other respects it showed a startling inclination to draw back from the implications of its own existence. It is worth mentioning briefly some of the ways in which the CNP, by not sufficiently differentiating itself in the community and oppos-

ing itself as a force to the Establishment, actually undermined the independent climate which allows it to exist:

■ The CNP failed to run a candidate for Mayor against the conservative incumbent. But running a candidate for Mayor would have served notice that the CNP was not another of the pressure groups or factions which just wanted "a little more" but a real contender for political power.

■ The Berkeley public school system has a not-so-subtle system of racist discrimination known as "tracking." This is a brutal deterrent to the educational aspirations of poor Negro children but it has, at the same time, the support of many Berkeley liberals. The CNP could have made this into a major issue in the Negro community and into an illustration of the antagonism of Establishment liberals to Negro interests, but it failed to take a stand on the issue. This failure was rationalized by the "complicated" nature of the issue, an excuse redolent of an "older" type of politics than the CNP is supposed to typify.

■ In the name of "Black Power" the CNP endorsed Ron Dellums, Negro candidate for City Council. Dellums was not chosen by a grass roots Negro movement—he was selected through a compromise with old-line Negro politicians (Councilman Sweeney and ex-State Senator Rumford—their eastern equivalent is ex-Tammany leader Ray Jones), the same Negro politicians who also supported an incumbent Mayor who opposes fair housing laws.

This kind of "Black Power" is no different from the old White Power which made the program of Black Power necessary in the first place. It is precisely these old-line Negro politicians who have been the lever through which the white community exercises its power over the ghetto. They share responsibility for the suppression of Negro identity and to support a candidate like Dellums, who derives a large part of his strength from them, is to work against the real self-mobilization of the Negro people. (Dellums himself coveted the CNP support he received but regarded questions from CNPers about his relationship to Sweeney and Rumford as illegitimate. He refused to answer such questions, declaring instead that the questioner had "better get off my back or I will get you off." Dellums is, allegedly, providing a focus for the struggle of his people against an oppressive status quo. When he cannot react to a discussion of his political relationship to that status quo except by intimidation is it not time that the CNP reevaluated the perspective which permitted it to endorse him?)

■ Finally, the CNP voted down a programmatic plank advocating a break from the Democratic Party and the formation of a new party based on workers, Negroes and the anti-war movement. The CNP cannot today declare itself such a party but it can devote itself to making a new party possible. The obstacle to such a party is nothing more and nothing less than the conditioned resistance of masses of people to entering political activity on their own behalf. The CNP can aid in breaking down this resistance. To campaign on this issue would have been to win supporters to the anti-Establishment mood which permits the CNP to exist in the first place.

### on the old tracking

The CNP suffered in several ways from its reticence to act like the independent organization it is. Many CNP precinct workers reported that the voters they canvassed seemed apathetic, uninterested in the election. This was,



of course, only a municipal election. But the ability of the CNP to make itself interesting to the voters depended on its ability to convince them that this was not an ordinary city election because the CNP was not an ordinary "old" political faction. To the degree that the CNP retreated from the facts of its own independence, to that degree it allowed the electorate to remain apathetic.

The CNP bore the brunt, moreover, of all the disadvantages that come from radicalism without many of its corresponding advantages. The CNP was rebaited furiously by the local press. More important, the liberal Establishment (leaders of the Berkeley Democratic Caucus) supported the opponents of the CNP—*despite* the failure of the CNP to attack tracking and advocate independent political action, and despite the CNP's endorsement of a liberal favorite, Negro candidate Dellums. Moderation could not save the CNP from liberal attack. The status quo politics recognized the dangerous potential of the CNP's independence even to an extent that CNPers themselves did not. The only means of counteracting these politicians is to win the people away from the assumptions which permit them to follow such leaders. Only a vigorous radical campaign can do this.

The support given by liberals to conservatives in this election raises another problem for the CNP. It is obvious now that in times of severe crisis the liberal "left-wing" of the Establishment caves into the reactionary right-wing of the Establishment whose solution is to suppress domestic and foreign opposition to the system. Where there is an active radical opposition, as in Berkeley, the liberals support conservative candidates. Where there is no independent opposition which threatens to take power, the Lyndon Johnsons will merely adopt the policies of their Goldwaterite electoral opposition.

The New Politics movement sought to deal with this last November by refusing its support to either Brown or Reagan. As a result, many liberals blamed the radicals for Reagan's election. To the extent that the New Politics movement limits itself to refusing passively to endorse candidates like Brown and does nothing to construct a new political party that can really offer an alternative to the Reagans and Goldwaters, *to that extent* the liberal critics are right in saying that the radicals are responsible for Reaganism—right of course, for the wrong reasons. A systematic and determined effort to win people in the community away from the Democrats is a precondition for that new party.

### break or brake

These problems all indicate why the pie-in-the-sky declaration of CNP leaders that they want to build a "third force" and shelve the question of a new party, is so dangerous to the very existence of the CNP itself. Their argument does not come to grips with the reality of politics, the reality that unless a political movement offers its followers a means of putting its program into practice,

an instrument for gaining power, it will not, over the long run, be able to retain those adherents or gain new ones.

And that is why it is dangerous too, to repeat the experiment of running in the Democratic primaries in 1968. The argument for running in the primaries is that the CNP will get a bigger vote. But that bigger vote comes precisely at the expense of the very issue on which the New Politics movement will rise or fall—its ability to break its constituents from the Democrats and lay the groundwork for a new party.

### entrapment laws

Those who today endorse the third force idea, which includes the Democratic primaries, owe it to the very initial commitment they have made to political independence to ask if the course they propose is not in reality—and despite all of their intentions—one which leads back to the entrapment of the CDC in the Establishment. That entrapment occurred not because the CDCers were personally opportunistic nor because they lacked personal willpower, but because they did not commit themselves to the task of building an alternative to the Democrats to which they and their followers could realistically turn. It was that failure which came first, and the dominating personal ambition (which characterizes part of the CDC leadership) that came later.

The CNP has a golden opportunity to rectify its mistakes. The CNP must be the force in the community which from the beginning calls for an opposition to the two parties in the next Presidential and Congressional elections. Together with other activist groups it must demand of the "respectable" leaders of the April 15 mobilization, men like Martin Luther King, Benjamin Spock, Paul Schrade and others, that they make good their words by taking the lead in electorally opposing Johnson in 1968. The CNP must demand that in both Presidential and Congressional elections the people be given a real choice, that the fight not be turned back into the swamp of the Democratic Party.

The CNP's claim on the future is a tentative one, which depends upon its ability to forge a viable perspective for those it hopes to lead in a battle against the sicknesses of our society. Breaking from the Establishment parties is a task of singular difficulty, whose success is hardly certain. But to say that is merely to testify to the great entrenched power of those whose rule generates and sustains those sicknesses. And in turn, to comprehend the magnitude of that entrenched power is to acknowledge that accommodating ourselves to its institutions can end only in the cooptation and disintegration of a radical opposition. The very difficulty of creating the foundations for a new party is the foremost reason why beginning the job now is so important. It is a task which makes the first claim upon the energies of every activist in America today.

MICHAEL SHUTE

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# migrant labor

## new york



AS a result of the continuous efforts of liberal politicians in New York State, we who live here can live relaxed in the knowledge that we have some of the best anti-exploitation laws, in reference to migrant labor, in the country—that is, if we are not migrant workers. The fact of the matter is that New York probably has some of the worst living and working conditions in the country to go along with all of its laws.

Despite current efforts at organizing migrant labor throughout the country, there is one area in which little is known and nothing is done. In New York State, many migrant workers, for various reasons, find it necessary to “winter over” in this state instead of going back to Puerto Rico or back South. These people face hardships which make the summer picking time seem almost bearable by comparison.

### siberia in new york

There is not really very much work to do but it is work which must be done to ready the vines for the next year's harvest. The old vines must be trimmed off and pulled (“pulling brush”). The work is done during the bitter up-state New York winter with temperatures reaching down to around zero to 20 degrees and winds of sometimes 30, 40 or even 50 miles per hour. The worker is provided with no protective clothing, the growers don't even provide them with a fire to get warm by. Snow, up to 18 inches and higher, hamper work which is paid for on a piece work basis, and the constant danger of injury is present. When the old vines are ripped from the stock they snap back at the worker with the viciousness of a bull whip and the threat of losing an eye or getting seriously cut is always present. Some of the growers provide protective goggles of the cheapest variety and these, I personally saw, were worse than useless. If the worker wishes to protect himself he must purchase goggles himself. The worker must wear two pairs of gloves at all times—one pair worn next to the skin for warmth and a pair of work gloves over them to protect his hands. A worker will wear through these two sets of gloves in three or four days and have to buy new ones. Special heavy clothing is required as well as boots, which wear out from the extreme conditions rapidly. A worker will spend, on the average, about \$250 in equipment over a winter season in order to keep working. At 1½c per vine he can make about \$650 over that season. That figure is, of course, taken on the basis of a healthy, young male with years of experience at the work—an older man, woman or child could not hope to make that kind of money, nor could they hope to work for the hours necessary to make even the barest living.

One man working for only four hours under not at all atypical weather conditions for the area, lost most of the skin off his back and the back of his legs from the cold wind which whips across the fields. When I talked to him he took it in stride—that was not the worst of it. This man and his wife had gone on welfare rather than work in the fields at the slave wages paid by the growers. That, however, didn't last long. The grower went to the welfare department and they reported that they had work for both of them. They were thrown off relief and forced back into the fields. The Welfare Department in the area seems to serve as a mustering office for the growers.

### suburbia

The living conditions are frightening. The risk of fire is always present. Two men were burned to death and another suffered third degree burns over 90 per cent of his body. In one large barn, used as housing for summer workers, there is no fire escape at all. When the fire inspector pointed this out to the grower, he replied that those on the second floor of the barn could jump. This evidently satisfied the inspector. In one migrant camp the



workers live in a huge concrete block building divided with cheap quarter inch thick plywood. The grower claims that 180 to 200 workers live there during the summer months. Actually nearly 450 live there. This building was originally built as a chicken coop but, evidently, was declared unfit for those purposes. There are fire escapes in this building but one must be a pretty good athlete and be given plenty of time if he expects to use them. There is a 15-gallon hot water tank for the use of the 450 workers and the water is polluted with a black substance that stains your clothing.

Attempts by community people and some religious types have been less than useless. Their concept of improving the lot of these workers is to paint decrepid buildings and put new drapes on the windows. This sort of activity is viewed, naturally, by the workers as meaningless, and as certainly no substitute for organization. Only token efforts have been made in this area in terms of real union organization and, though many people now seem interested in the problems of the area right now, nothing real seems to be about to happen. Newspaper articles and the recent burnings raised a momentary uproar and even a work stoppage, but no plans of real substance were laid and it looks as if this new summer season will bring only more of the same. The one important and encouraging aspect of the situation is that many of the workers understand, to varied degrees, the importance of organization and, I believe, a concerted attempt at union organization could be successful.

It seems obvious that the area of migrant labor, once the forgotten stepchild of the labor movement, is readying itself for an explosion of some sort. It then becomes increasingly important for socialists and other radicals to understand what they can do about it. Union organization is going to take place but the question is, how effective will it be?

JOE PIERPONT

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## **california**

THE Delano grapeworkers' strike still continues. The latest action of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee is a nationwide consumer boycott of Perelli-Minetti wines, made near Delano.

The grape strike started in 1964, and the first winter was spent picketing about 30 ranches, certifying strikes, getting scabs out of the fields, and providing for the strikers. Many students and young adults volunteered their help, and the Union leadership decided to use them in a consumer boycott against Schenley. Student groups such as SDS joined the boycott. Pledge cards were given to trade unionists through their locals and at plant gates, over 50,000 of them in Los Angeles alone. In San Francisco, the Fairmont Hotel, one of the richest in town, gave in to pressure and removed Schenley products. An engineer switched a boxcar of Schenley onto a siding. Schenley's Delano operations were insignificant compared to its other production areas, and the giant corporation soon gave in.

The next national action was directed at DiGiorgio Corporation, owner of S&W and Treesweet. The Union sent boycott staffs to New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, St. Louis, and other cities. The merger between the National Farm Workers Association (Ind) and the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO) led to even greater union cooperation than in the Schenley boycott. In many areas Retail Clerks went to stores with Delano boycott workers to persuade owners to remove DiGiorgio products. In San Jose, Cal., for example, over 100 stores eliminated S&W. Throughout the country over 3600 stores cancelled orders. Each store is expected to sell an average of \$600 weekly of DiGiorgio products, so the boycott at its height was costing the company about \$2 million weekly in sales (annual sales about \$300 million). When the boycott was called off, the Union was getting ready to move against big institutional buyers such as hospitals and shipping lines.

The break came through the governor's office. Pat Brown needed the support of the middle-class Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA), but the NFWA pressured MAPA to withhold its endorsement (usually a sure thing) until Brown promised an election for representation. It was a face-saving and money-saving way for DiGiorgio to get out from under. The AFL-CIO sent in organizers to help in the election campaign, and the Union won easily. Since then DiGiorgio has started selling off its land.

### **the little old boycotters**

The latest union-wide activity is the Perelli-Minetti boycott. The boycott staffs around the country have withered away, so a team of 20 to 30 farm workers has been formed. Their first stop was Los Angeles, where they virtually eliminated Perelli-Minetti's market. Then on to San Francisco, where the products were removed from about 90% of the liquor outlets. After the team finishes in the

East Bay (Berkeley-Oakland), they are expected to go East.

A major target is Tribuno Vermouth, bottled by Perelli-Minetti near Delano but owned by Vermouth Industries of America in New York. Its major sales areas are New York, Chicago, Miami, and Los Angeles. Los Angeles has been taken care of. If the boycott can force Tribuno to cancel their deal with Perelli-Minetti, the company will probably give in.

There are new developments in organizing, too. Many of the young strikers who showed their ability on the Sacramento march a year ago are being trained as organizers. Fred Ross, an associate of Saul Alinsky (whose Community Service Organization trained Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerto, and Gil Padilla), is in charge of the training program. The young organizers are now in charge of the Delano picket lines and are helping with the boycott. The monseigneur in Chicago and the AFL-CIO are supporting the training program. Worker-minister teams from the Migrant Ministry of the National Council of Churches are working in several key areas. In addition to the strike in the Rio Grand Valley of Texas, organizing is going on in the Imperial Valley, the San Joaquin Valley, the Sacramento Valley, and the Salinas Valley, the heart of California's farm country.

### labor saver

The relationship of the UFW to the AFL-CIO bothers some of the Union's supporters outside the strike area. The organizing committee as such is subordinate to the AFL-CIO Executive Committee and has virtually no power. However, it can establish Directly Affiliated Locals (as in Delano) which have the same autonomy as any national or international union. Only the militancy of the rank and file farm workers gives the Union any strength. Money is raised by gate collections at factories throughout California. Many City Central Labor Councils throughout the state send regular food and clothing caravans to Delano and donate a good deal of money as well. In the first year of the strike money came from the unions and the churches about equally, but now the greatest amount is from the trade union movement. With organizing attempts spreading to Florida (by the building trades), Long Island, Wisconsin, and Oregon, more and more labor support can be expected.

A word on the structure of the grape industry in Delano. The Delano-Earlimart area, about 30 square miles, is the prime table grape area in the United States. Most Delano ranches average about 4000 acres of grapes. Most of the struck growers also pack and ship their own products, some through large commercial shippers in San Francisco and others through the marketing cooperative, the California Fruit Exchange. While some sell to 300 or 500 buyers throughout the country, others have two or three key buyers whom the Union will want to hit hard.

The UFW has not hesitated to go to Teamster locals to get the rank and file to pull their business agents out of Delano. It has picketed the railroad yards in Fresno, and oddly enough most of the engineers and switchmen were sick that evening and the cars of fruit leaving California were all snarled up. The Philadelphia Central Labor Council helped stop a car from Irving Goldberg, and the buyer cancelled all future orders. Teamsters have refused to unload trucks from struck growers in various produce markets.

Since many of the struck growers ship 1000 or more cars a season, stopping one or two is only harassment, even at \$2000 a car. Until the Perelli-Minetti boycott is won the other growers have to be left alone. To help the farm workers get back on the track of the other 30 struck growers, the boycott teams throughout the country need all the help they can get.

KEN BLUM

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