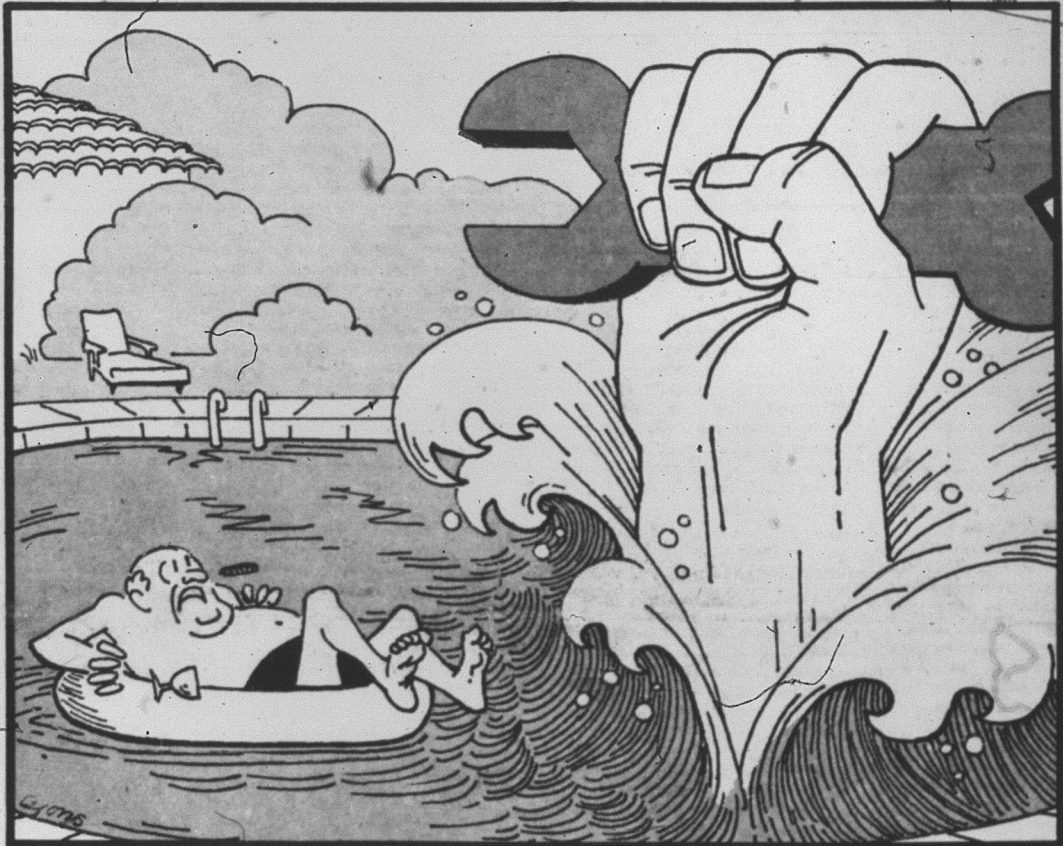


Workers' Power

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Summer Labor Offensive

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editorial

Summer Labor Offensive

The summer of 1971 is proving to be a hot one, not in terms of the number of riots this year, though there have been several of those, but in terms of the offensive being waged by the labor movement.

In the month of August, it is possible that over a million workers will be on strike throughout the US. This includes the current strikes in telephone, Western Union, copper, longshore, and railroad, the approaching steel strike, and a possible post office strike.

To many, this strike wave must appear paradoxical. After all, a good part of Nixon's economic policies have been aimed at preventing just such an occurrence. In the past it has been an accepted principle of economic policy that high unemployment tends to dampen labor militancy, as simply holding on to a job becomes more important than other concerns.

Unemployment has risen sharply, from around 3 percent nationally to over 6 percent. Some believe it may even reach 7 percent. Yet despite the massive layoffs that have occurred in industry after industry, militancy has remained high — for inflation has left workers no choice.

Though the rate of inflation did fall slightly when the recession first began, it has risen again to around 5 percent a year, and is still going up. Thus workers have been faced with a situation where they have had to struggle militantly just to maintain their present standard of living, let alone make any gains.

Moreover, at the same time that inflation has been attacking workers' wages, employers have been attacking their working conditions, through greater discipline on the job, speed-up, changes in work rules, etc.

Since unemployment has failed to halt the labor movement, the government has been forced to look for other alternatives. Already, in steel, Nixon has turned to "jawboning," the attempt to persuade unions not to fight. And direct government intervention in the steel strike remains a threat.

Even before this, last spring, Nixon clamped wage controls on the construction industry. More and more, politicians and government officials in both major parties are arguing that this should be extended to cover the entire labor movement.

Unfortunately they are not alone. George Meany has recently stated that the AFL-CIO will also support wage controls. Such a position represents a stab in the back to the increasingly militant struggles of American workers.

Of course, Meany claims that what he is really for is wage and price controls,

that he only wishes to "equalize the sacrifice."

This position is absurd, and Meany knows it. Meany has had experience with wage-price boards before — during the Second World War. Then, as now, wage-price controls in practice meant that *only wages are controlled*, not prices.

During the period 1941-1944, when such boards were in power, hourly wages for manufacturing workers rose only 23 percent, while prices (computed in the cost of living) rose 43.5 percent — and profits rose an astronomical 225 percent. That's some equality of sacrifice!

In 1944, Meany himself was forced to denounce the fraud being perpetrated. Today we must denounce the fraud and treachery that Meany is perpetrating on the labor movement.

Even if both prices and wages were actually controlled, such control would be unjust. Workers share no responsibility for the problems of inflation; their wage demands are wholly justified. The causes of inflation lie elsewhere, notably in the dynamics of the arms economy (see the article elsewhere in this issue).

The whole idea of wage-price controls implies acceptance of the current distribution of wealth in this country — a distribution where the top 20 percent own 80 percent of the wealth, and the bottom 20 percent own 5 percent of the wealth. Wage-price controls imply that the labor movement should no longer struggle to improve the standard of living of its members.

Meany is only the most notable example of the bankruptcy of the current

union leadership. Time and again they have proven themselves incapable of meeting the tasks before them.

Indeed, it is generally *not* with the union leaders that the credit for the summer strike wave lies. In most industries, the strikes have come on the crest of a rising tide of unorganized rank and file militancy which pressures the leaders to act tougher.

This tide of militancy has been strong enough to force action by the leaders. But the leaders retain the initiative so long as the ranks; however angry, are unorganized.

The leaders can come back with a bad contract. If it is rejected, they can come back two weeks later with one little better, which the ranks will feel forced by hardship to accept. The leaders can avoid even taking up issues such as shop conditions, not to mention the larger social issues which they claim are not "union business," yet which affect every union member.

As a result, some gains will be made by the present strike wave, but many of them will be eaten away by future inflation and worsening working conditions.

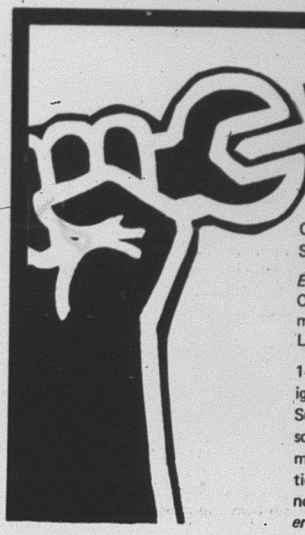
The key to success over the long run is for the existing rank and file anger to organize itself. The ranks should organize to fight for control over the strikes; their leaders wage; to fight for more democracy in their unions; to take action when the leaders won't. In the process, they must put forward programs with more vision than the leaders' stodge pork-chop programs.

For example: *programs to defend wages and fight inflation through cost-of-living protection; to fight unemployment through lowering the work-week; to fight for better working conditions through regaining the right to strike over local conditions and during the life of the contract; and many more.* Such programs can weld the unformed ranks into an effective fighting force.

The unorganizing of this unformed militancy is the key to turning this summer's strike wave, and the next wave as well, from holding actions against inflation and unemployment, into the beginning of a new working-class offensive. ■



George Meany



Workers' Power 39

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CWA President Biere announces phone strike

Phone Strike Sold Out

Brian Mackenzie



CWA President Biere orders phone workers to go back

A lot of telephone workers expected Communications Workers of America (CWA) President Joe Biere to sell out in the end, but few expected it to come so fast and be so complete. After a 6-day national strike of 500,000 phone workers, Biere announced settlement for a total wage and benefits package or just 33.5% -- only 2.5% more than Bell Systems pre-strike offer.

Going against his previous stand, Biere ordered everyone back to work before ratification by the membership. All Biere's talk about a national strike to bring the Bell System to its knees, and to fight for a 25% wage increase in the first year, were just talk.

Fraud

The tentative agreement signed by Biere will leave most phone workers with lower real wages than they had three years ago. Urban telephone workers have lost 18% due to inflation in the past three years, yet the first year wage increases for those who have reached top wage levels for their job classification ranges from 13% to about 15% for craftsmen and about 16% for operators and various clerical titles.

The increases for the second and third years of the contract are 3.5%. There was an additional 9% "breakthrough" increase for the major cities, but this hardly covers the higher costs of urban living.

Biere, in his "Task Force Report", admits that the wage increase for three years is about 23% - as opposed to 25% for the first year. The increases for

workers with less than 5 years in the Bell System are even lower than those cited above.

Before the strike, Biere declared he was going to narrow the unjust wage differences between various occupations. Yet the percentage increases for top crafts - such as Switchman and Deskman - are larger than those for lower paid Framemen and Building and Service workers.

In most larger cities this, in effect, means a growing differential between the majority of black and Latin workers, on the one hand, and white workers, on the other.

Appealing to growing militancy among women workers, Biere had pledged to break through the traditional differential between "male" and "female" jobs (craftsmen and Operators). No one can "accuse" Joe Biere of supporting the liberation of women, but he did promise to raise the differential from a proportion of 60% of men's wages to 80%. In fact, however, the proportion rose to only 61-63% of craft wages.

The CWA bureaucracy is claiming that the problems of inflation have been solved by their history-making "uncapped" Cost-of-living clause. This too, is a fraud.

While there is no cap on the COL, it is based on a formula of \$1 for each yearly percent increase in the national Consumer Price Index (CPI). This means that most telephone workers will receive only 50-75% of actual inflation. Those living in cities where the CPI is higher than the national level will get even less. The benefits package is even more crim-

inal. The only improvement in the pension is a slight increase for years of service from age 55 to 65.

This pension plan still precludes early retirement and amounts to less than 40% of what the worker earned before retirement. Changes in vacation, medical benefits, and holidays are a pitiful insult.

Local issues were crassly sold out too. Biere reported to his Task Force that, "in the closing hours of negotiations, literally hundreds of Local Critical Items were resolved." In other words, swept under the rug.

This means that the infamous Absence and Lateness Control Plans remain in full force. It also means that the companies shiney new Production Control Plans will be fully introduced with no resistance from the International.

The International and the Company are united in refusing to let the locals bargain on these and other local items. To make matters worse, the new contract, like the last one, will have a no-strike clause but, unlike the last one, will have no re-opener clause.

In short, unless this contract is rejected by the ranks, telephone workers will be stuck with this disastrous contract and the production speed-up implied in it - for three years.

Vote No

Biere got what he wanted in this contract - the so-called "modified agency shop." This plan requires all Bell System employees in CWA bargaining units to pay dues whether or not they are in the union.

It is a cynical combination of AT&T's traditional open shop attitude toward unions and compulsory check-off.

Unlike the union shop, it in no way strengthens the ranks of the union. The CWA bureaucracy does not seem to care if anyone belongs to the union, just so long as they fill its coffers. Its pretty clear that the company's acceptance of the "modified agency shop" is why Biere settled for so little so fast.

Opposition to this miserable contract is building. A number of cities refused to return to work (including all of New York State; Akron and Cleveland, Ohio; San Francisco; and Miami).

CWA members in Kansas City have initiated an "Impeach Joe Biere" petition. Most recently, a number of Local Presidents have started circulating a petition for a special bargaining convention.

If rank and file members vote in the mail ballot to accept this contract it will only be because they are demoralized and don't believe Biere will do anything the second time around either. The fact is, however, telephone workers cannot afford to be demoralized.

We must reject this settlement and force our Local leaders to fight, even if Biere won't, by initiating walkouts when the contract is rejected. Organize demonstrations at the International office in your District and start up your own petition to impeach Biere.

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

New York Operators - Join CWA, To Change It

Rose Veviaka

In the wake of a national sellout by the leadership of the Communications Workers of America, the CWA is conducting a bargaining election for the representation of downstate New York Traffic. Mail ballots will be sent out beginning August 2 and the results will be announced August 26.

What was initially a pretty sure victory is now a lot more risky because of the scandalous way that President Biere and the rest of the CWA International terminated the national strike, accepting a package that was little more than what was initially offered before the strike.

In New York, operators in significant numbers supported the strike. This was the first time that craftsmen and operators walked picket lines together in large numbers. New York Traffic supported

CWA lines because we understood that the strike would determine what we will get no matter who wins the election. New York Traffic now feels as sold out as New York craftsmen.

Many operators may begin to feel that CWA is no better than the TTU (Telephone Traffic Union), a company union which now represents us. Some could decide to stick with TTU because the dues are cheaper or to vote for no union at all. Although these feelings are understandable, to vote against CWA would be to doom all New York telephone workers to many more years of losing struggles against the company.

One of the major reasons we are weak now is that we are divided. One of the first steps that must be taken to break out of our own impotence is to get all

telephone workers into the same union. The CWA, which already represents over 60 percent of all telephone workers nationally, is that union.

The second step will be to rid the CWA of the kind of leadership that sells out its ranks. New York operators should vote for the CWA, not to join with Biere and his type, but to join with the hundreds of thousands of operators, craftsmen, commercial workers, accounting workers, etc., who already are in the CWA and don't like being sold out either.

We can begin to organize now to get rid of the current rotten CWA leaders by joining and working in rank and file groups like United Action. New York operators should join CWA to build a strong union of all telephone workers -- and this means joining it to change it.

CWA Local 1101 Stays Out, But...

When Joe Bieme ordered 500,000 Bell System workers back to work without a chance to ratify or reject the tentative settlement, New York State Locals, covering operating companies and Western Electric, refused to return. But this was no thanks to the leaders of Local 1101, representing New York City craftsmen.

Under pressure from the International — in the form of nothing more than a phone call — the 1101 Executive Board reversed its earlier decision to stay out and voted to order the men back. In fact, they could not pull off this cowardly act, because the Western Local (1190) refused to go back and 1101 could not cross their lines. Also, on Tuesday, July 20, the New York State Local Presidents, with Ricky Carnivale of 1101 dissenting, voted to stay out as a group.

There was no question that last week the ranks of 1101, enraged by the national settlement, wanted to stay out. Calls coming into the Local were 9 to 1 in favor of staying out. Members of United Action, a rank and file group in 1101, descended on the union office to express this anger and to demand that New York take the lead in calling the rest of the country out.

Carnivale and the Executive Board, however, have refused to do this. In fact, they have refused to use our continuing strike to pressure the International in any way.

Again and Again Carnivale has tried to convince 1190 and other New York

State Locals to go back to work. To cover themselves they have recommended that the members reject the contract, but when they sent out the recommendation they included the International's glowing analysis without even a critical remark.

Elected only two months ago on a wave of opposition to the old 1101 leadership, Carnivale and crew have already proved themselves useless. Preparation for the strike was pitiful.

Forced by United Action, the Bell Workers Action Committee (BWAC), and the ranks to give full support to any Operator who supported the strike, (see last issue of *Workers' Power*), the local did nothing to organize the operators to strike and stay out. Most of that work was done by Operators themselves, in some cases with the help of United Action and BWAC members — some of whom are

operators.

In spite of equivocation and inaction on the part of both the Local leaders and the International, large numbers of Operators did stay out in the first few days of the strike — nearly 50% city wide. In those buildings where organizing had been done by Operators before the strike, significant numbers of Operators continue to stay out. This was the first time craftsmen and Operators struck together, and it paid off in the early deterioration of phone service.

The leaders of Local 1101 refused to see how this power could be used. Instead, they crippled the Local with petty factionalism. United only in their fear of Joe Bieme, these leaders have confused and demoralized New York telephone workers.

For all practical purposes they have

fully endorsed the Company's back to work program. Their example, along with the International's sell-out, has imperiled the up-coming election for the Operators, who before the strike were overwhelmingly for CWA.

These phonies have neither the ability nor the intention to build the kind of Local that can enforce a new contract in a way favorable to the workers. This task will fall to the ranks and to the stewards, and that requires organization.

Militants should join groups like United Action. They should organize in their buildings and garages to clean the stewards organizations of dead weight. Stewards must be elected, not appointed, with the awareness that the stewards organization is going to have to fight the local leadership to get anything done.

If the majority of the Executive Board and Carnivale gets their way, 1101 will be back to work on Monday, July 26. At that point, the only way to fight Bieme's sell-out is to vote to reject.

But the mail ballot allows no way to show Bieme that New York is rejecting as a body. That requires a membership meeting. And in fact, the fight for a membership meeting has already started, although, under the dubious sponsorship of Ed Dempsey, Vice President from Northern and Western Districts.

Whether or not Dempsey caves in to Carnivale, the ranks should demand such a meeting, and at that meeting should vote NO as a body. ■



Ricky Carnivale, Pres., Local 1101, CWA

Detroit: T-shirt Wildcat Bugs Bell

On July 8, some four days before the nationwide strike of telephone workers against the Bell System began, 15 people came to work at a Michigan Bell central office in Detroit dressed in a unique manner. They arrived that morning wearing T-shirts bearing a message for their bosses: "Ma Bell is a Cheap Mother."

The workers — a mixed group of repairmen, operators, installers, and others — were told by their supervisors that they couldn't work in the shirts. When they collectively refused to take them off, they were all sent home for the day.

Instead of going home, they began an informal picket line outside their office. They also started selling other shirts they had brought to other Bell workers. By midday, the original group of 15 had grown to nearly 40.

News of the incident spread that day, through press reports and the usual grapevine. The next day, three Bell installations on Detroit's west side and four more in different suburbs were hit by wildcat walkouts led by Bell workers wearing the now-famous T-shirts.

The main grievance which sparked the strikes — in addition to a desire to build support for Bell workers' national contract demands for more money, a cost-of-living clause, an agency shop, etc. — was the issue of compulsory overtime. Many Bell workers are forced to work 10 and 11 hour days, and in most cases are simply told to do so by foremen.

This practice is especially common with operators and installers. Many peo-

ple on the picket lines expressed concern that this issue would be fudged over by the CWA leadership in the national negotiations, and thus not dealt with.

The idea of the T-shirts as a way to build support for the approaching strike was developed by two Bell workers: Bob Flannery, a union steward, and Vic Whit-

more, a Bell repairman. Both work at Bell's Vinewood St. installation on Detroit's west side.

"We got the idea from some Bell workers in Boston," said Flannery. "They brought some shirts like this to the CWA National Convention earlier this year." "We don't know why our supervisors reacted to the shirts the way they did,"

added Whitmore with a smile. "They must be reading something into them."

The shirts soon spread among Bell workers over the entire city. When the national strike against Bell began, pickets in every part of Detroit and suburbs wmm walked the lines wearing their shirts. In addition, the slogan "Ma Bell is a Cheap Mother" became something of a rallying cry for Bell workers in Detroit; the slogan appeared on signs all over the city.

Looking past immediate events, the main issue in the wildcats — compulsory overtime — remains a major grievance for telephone workers and for workers in many other industries as well. The use of systematic forced overtime by employers to reduce their work force to a bare minimum is a common practice throughout the country.

The fact that most union contracts permit employers to get away with this has contributed greatly to the unemployment rolls; when economic conditions turn for the worse, as they have in the past year, companies systematically lay off large numbers of workers and fill the gaps through the use of overtime.

Most union leaders have looked the other way at this practice unless forced to fight over the issue by an aroused union membership (as in the recent garbage workers' strike in Detroit over enforced overtime and layoffs). Until more workers begin to launch battles over this issue, the use of overtime will continue to drive the living conditions of all workers downward. ■



Bob Flannery and Vic Whitmore



The Israeli regime — already facing the threat of a militant civil rights movement among the Sephardic Jewish population and increasing disaffection among youth — now faces a direct revolt of the Jewish working class. In June the government cracked down on a series of strikes in public services — hospitals, docks, and electrical utilities.

What makes these events significant is their implications for the Zionist myth of social stability and equality in Israel.

Because this myth is so crucial to the existence of the state of Israel, any domestic social strife automatically becomes an implicit challenge to the legitimacy of the whole Zionist structure.

What may become an even more ominous problem for the regime was reported on June 9. The inflation generated by Israel's \$400 million military budget, and the economic expansionist programs undertaken in the occupied Arab territories, have caused a serious labor shortage

in Israel.

There is now pressure on the government to permit Arab workers from Gaza and the West Bank to work in Israel to overcome this shortage and enable this expansion to continue (there are already 30,000 such Arabs working in Israel). But this threatens to create an *Arab proletariat within Israel itself* — not only ripping apart the moral fabric of Zionism which supports a 100 percent Jewish state and claims to oppose exploiting the labor of non-Jews, but also posing the long-term prospect of creating a class struggle in Israel directly linked to the Palestinian liberation movement.

The potential implications of this question cannot be overemphasized. It is relevant to point out that a similar "labor problem" has emerged in the Republic of South Africa, as the regime has been forced to admit an African (black) labor force into the traditionally all-white construction industry — thus placing in the hands of blacks more potential economic and social power than is safe for the apartheid system. (See *Workers' Power* no. 21.)

Zionist Apartheid?

For Israel to do the same with Arab workers within its enlarged borders would mark a transition from the "heroic" period of Zionism, defined by the expropriation and exclusion of the Arabs from economic life, to a system showing signs of convergence with the South African system based on the brutal exploitation of black workers. In order to maintain control over masses of Arab workers, the Israeli regime would be forced to resort to even sharper discrimination and political repression than is already practiced under the present "liberal" occupa-

tion policy.

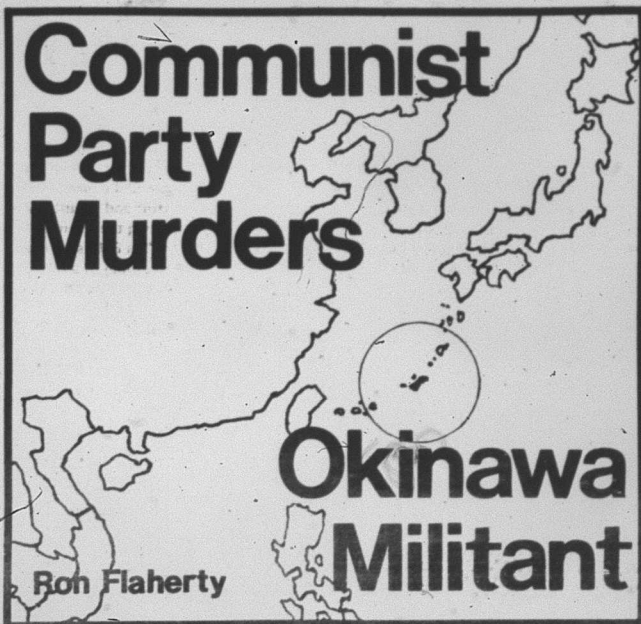
Even more than this, the Israeli regime must now ponder the implications of formally annexing the territories seized in 1967, which would create a situation in which Arabs made up close to 40 percent of the population. It would be impossible to allow these Arabs political rights enjoyed by the Jews; the logic of the situation would drive Zionism toward a policy of apartheid, if not the mass expulsion or extermination of the Arabs. Such possibilities will become more and more realistic so long as a revolutionary solution is not achieved.

For a revolutionary solution

The present developments in Israel by no means point to an imminent revolutionary crisis. In fact, they occur at a time when the Palestine liberation movement has suffered severe military and political defeats since the confrontation with Jordan's King Hussein and international imperialism in the fall of 1970.

These developments demonstrate, however, that Israel is no more exempt than any other capitalist or class society from the laws of class struggle. They also point in the long run toward the possible emergence of explosive social contradictions, not only between the Zionist state and the working class but also within the working class itself (inter-ethnic warfare among Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Arab workers in Israel).

The strengthening of a revolutionary socialist movement in Israel — basing itself on opposition to the Zionist state and establishment of self-determination for both Arabs and Jews and other minorities, within a Middle East Socialist Federation — is even more critical than previously. ■



Early in the morning of June 19, an Okinawan student militant, Machida Munehide, was brutally murdered by members of the Okinawa People's Party, which is associated with the Japanese Communist Party.

About 100 members of the OPP youth group, armed with steel pipes and wooden clubs, entered a dormitory building at Ryukyū University and attacked 14 students. Machida was seized on the sec-

ond floor of the building, his skull crushed and his whole body viciously beaten with a steel pipe, then thrown out of the second-storey window.

The thugs then continued their attacks against 13 other students who had barricaded themselves inside a room on the fourth floor. All 13 were injured, some very seriously.

These were political attacks against members and sympathizers of the Okina-

wa Marxist League, which is associated with the Japanese Revolutionary Marxists (Kakumarū). The attacks on revolutionary socialists came at a time when the traditional hold of the Communist Party on left-wing politics is beginning to be broken in Japan.

The Okinawa Marxist League has led the struggles of the young workers in the communications and teachers' unions, who played a major role in the May 19 Okinawa general strike against the "Reversion Agreement" sell-out. Five of the six student self-governments in Okinawan universities have established revolutionary executives friendly to the Revolutionary Marxists.

"Anti-Trotskyist" Campaign

As militant young workers and students reject the milktoast leadership, sell-out tactics, and reactionary politics of the Communist Party, the CP in desperation has begun an "anti-Trotskyist" campaign. In the July issue of the CP journal *Zen'ei*, CP leaders stated that revolutionaries must be "expelled from the united front," and for this purpose "violent struggles must be undertaken."

At a rally on June 17, the Okinawa People's Party leadership stated that "in the future we must be prepared for violent confrontations to shut off the provocations of the Kakumarū." Machida's murder shows that this was not just empty talk.

When it became known that Machida was near death, the CP was somewhat taken aback and issued a series of statements trying to hide their guilt. They first denied anything had happened, saying that the "dormitory students repelled

an armed attack by the Kakumarū," and that "Machida fell to the ground." Later they stated: "Machida was wearing only underpants and probably fell down to the ground in his sleep."

When these ludicrous statements were proven false by a doctor's report, which showed that Machida's injuries could not have come from the fall, the CP admitted it was involved in his death, but said they had killed him in self-defense! Presumably Machida had attacked them while wearing only his underpants.

4,000 Rally in Tokyo

The Kakumarū and Zengakuren (a student organization) in Tokyo immediately mobilized for a protest rally, which was held in front of Waseda University and attended by 4,000 students from all over Tokyo. 2,000 of them then marched to the headquarters of the Communist Party, where they held a sit-down rally. The CP called in the police, and some fighting ensued as the students moved on to another rally at Shinjuku station.

While all this was going on, the Japanese Communist Party announced that it was removing the phrases "dictatorship of the proletariat" and "revolution by force" from its platform and documents. This was done in order to promote the image of a "lovable" Communist Party.

A funeral rally was held for Machida Munehide. Statements of solidarity with the Kakumarū came from all over Japan. A statement was also read from the American International Socialists. It read in part: "We are convinced that this crime will not prevent, but rather hasten the defeat of the Communist Party in the worker and student movements."

To Peking, With Love



James Coleman

July's biggest international news was the visit of President Nixon's envoy, Henry Kissinger, to Peking. The visit was carried out in spy-story fashion, complete with forged passports and secret trips in curtained limousines. Once the visit was revealed, however, there was no secret about Nixon's hopes.

In addition to the agreement for Nixon to visit China by next May, Nixon is hoping at the maximum for Chinese help in getting a favorable settlement of the Vietnam war — at the minimum for a diplomatic triumph to hold up as a consolation prize. And all this is to be prettily wrapped for delivery just before

next year's presidential campaign.

Can Nixon get a favorable settlement to the war? As we have pointed out previously, the failure of the Laos invasion last winter meant the end of Nixon's hopes that the South Vietnamese army, with US aid, could hold off the North Vietnamese and pro-Communist South Vietnamese.

For Nixon to realize this is to open the possibility of settlement with China. For reasons unconnected with revolutionary principle, China does not want US combat troops close to its borders. But if Nixon has assured China that combat troops will go, other compromises are

possible.

Already in 1954, when the first Indo-China war was being settled, China helped pressure the Vietnamese into removing their armies from certain important areas. In 1971-1972, China may well think a settlement with the US important enough to put pressure on North Vietnam to make political compromises — for example, in negotiating an interim government for Vietnam acceptable to the US.

Details cannot be predicted; but the existence of this possibility has not escaped North Vietnam. In a statement issued July 20, the newspaper of the North Vietnamese Communist Party accused Nixon of "trying to achieve a compromise between the big powers in an attempt to make smaller countries bow to their arrangement." (The statement did not directly mention China.)

What will China get in her side of the horse-trading? Aside from trade agreements — which were already being planned previously — and international respectability, the biggest items at the auction are the United Nations and Taiwan, and the two are tied together.

The Peking regime wants entry into the UN as the sole representative of China. On July 24, the State Department leaked news of a new policy: the US will no longer try to block China's entry, though it will work to retain a seat for Chiang Kai-shek's "Republic of China" if Chiang asks. But no doubt Kissinger has already assured Chou En-lai that the US will not really mind losing on this point.

Beyond a UN seat, China wants to regain control of Taiwan. The press — not controlled by the President but usually responsive to his moods — has suddenly begun treating this idea with cautious respect.

Seymour Topping, a senior writer for

The New York Times, refers to Taiwan in a recent article as "a Chinese province" — factually true, but more significantly, the precise phrase Peking has always used to justify its claim to the territory. Other writers have pointed out that Chiang Kai-shek is 84, and that his son, who is certain to take over the government when he dies, is reportedly friendly to some sort of settlement with China.

Again the details can't be predicted — but one thing is certain. No one will ask the people of Taiwan what they want. All sides oppose any kind of referendum. The Chiang regime has never allowed democracy on any question; the Peking regime insists that the question of the political identity of Taiwan must be settled, not by the people of the island, but by the geographers — Peking's geographers, of course.

And Washington — after insisting for 20 years on the right to risk world war to protect the Taiwanese (but not from their local despot Chiang) — can barely conceal its eagerness, as soon as a deal between the giants looks possible, to see Chiang in his grave and his more pliable son at the helm!

The impending settlement will be as imperialist as the preceding rivalry. Although the questions of Vietnam and Taiwan will be critical in the coming months, they are only the latest in a series of maneuvers in which South Asia's major imperialist powers have sought to strengthen themselves at the expense of popular forces — notably in China's approval of the massacres in Bengal and Ceylon.

It will be left for the peoples of Taiwan, South Vietnam, and the rest of Asia to fight for their birthright of independence and dignity against the "peace" of the imperialist giants and the oppression of their own rulers. ■

Women Strike Fotomat

Nancy Brewster

On June 23, women sales clerks for the Fotomat Corporation in Detroit went on strike, backed by their new union, Local 876 of the Retail Clerks International Association, AFL-CIO.

Fotomat, a nationwide franchise corporation, employs 49 women in Detroit, who work alone in 20 small booths in area shopping centers. The booths are places where customers drop off film for processing. Photographic equipment is sold as well.

The women are responsible for sales, ordering stock, bookkeeping, accounting, washing the floors and dusting, and after working hours, depositing money in the bank. They perform these tasks in woolen uniforms, winter and summer, and are given instructions in "good grooming."

The women work a five-hour shift with one 15-minute break, six days a week. Smoking, eating, reading, and telephone calls in the booth are all prohibited. Robberies have occurred, but the booths are too small for more than one worker.

Last December, the RCIA won an election as the bargaining agent for the women, and began negotiations for a contract. They are demanding a wage increase, paid sick days and holidays, a seniority system, and a union shop, plus insurance and hospitalization plans. The company has dropped the starting wage from \$1.90 last December to \$1.65 this

May. The union is demanding an immediate 20% raise plus 60¢ over three years; the company has offered 10¢.

Fotomat is hiring scab labor to open the booths, which the striking women and their union are picketing. Early in July the strikers decided to "call women's lib" for support. The result was a demonstration July 9 of about 50 Fotomat workers and members of local women's liberation groups in front of Fotomat's Detroit headquarters.

According to one of the women, the idea of calling women's liberation was only half-serious at first. She added, however, that the women resent the grooming tips, the uniforms, and the idea that they don't need good wages or working conditions because they are "only waiting to get married."

The Fotomat strike is a demonstration of the power that women, organized at the workplace, have to fight for their rights both as women and as workers. Women must see that their fight for liberation cannot be won without the active participation of women workers around issues that affect them as women who work, both at the workplace and in the larger society.

Hopefully, this strike, in which a struggle by women workers linked up with the struggle for women's liberation, is a sign of the direction these movements will take in the future. ■



Where Has All The Money Gone?

Walter Daum

The Pentagon is the world's biggest business. Every year the federal government spends about \$100 billion on the military and in related areas such as space research and interest on the national debt, which has accumulated largely from military spending in past years.

This total comes to about one-tenth of our gross national product. Since World War II over a trillion dollars has gone to the Defense Department.

The military budget is a great drain on our national resources, particularly manpower. At the beginning of 1968, for example, 3½ million men were in military service, and at least another 5 million workers were employed in military production. The size and the distribution of defense funds have a tremendous impact on the national economy. Military spending has stabilized the American economy for the past 30 years. It was World War II, not the peacetime New Deal, that got the country out of the Great Depression.

Unemployment was as high as 17% in 1939 and 10% in 1941, but was only 1% in 1944. After the war it went back up to 6%, and then went down again during the Korean War.

President Kennedy's increase in the arms budget brought the unemployment level down from nearly 7% in 1961, and the Vietnam war got it down below 5% for the first time in the sixties. The problem we have now -- high unemployment during a major war -- is a brand new one.

Who Profits?

The real beneficiaries of the military budget are the corporations that get the arms contracts -- like the aircraft companies, General Electric, AT&T, and General Motors. Huge cost-plus contracts (where the Defense Department pays a price that includes all costs plus a fixed percentage for profit) encourage the businesses to squander money.

Profits in the arms industry are unusually high because large amounts of investment capital that the arms industries benefit from are supplied by the government, so the stockholders gain a profit from the money that isn't their own. Federal investment runs as high as 90%, according to an estimate by a spokesman for the major defense corporation General Dynamics.

Government funds can also be used by the contracting corporations to lower expenses in other areas. Moreover, the market for new military equipment is open-ended; weapons that aren't used up in warfare rapidly become obsolete.

Who pays for the massive military budget? The bulk of it comes out of federal taxes, and the largest portion of taxes is paid by working people. The

corporations' share of taxes has been decreasing and is now around 30%.

Some of the arms budget is financed by deficit spending; that is, the government borrows money. But since this money must be repaid sooner or later, it has to come out of taxation in the future.

While most of us have no alternative but to pay our taxes, the dominant corporations are able to pass on their share by raising prices. Prices are also forced up because the defense industries absorb skilled labor and materials that are needed in the civilian economy. The result is inflation, which cuts into workers' wages in order to pay for war production and to protect corporate profits.

Inflation is a sharp wage-cutting tool, much subtler than the traditional methods of raising taxes and lowering paychecks directly. It's less visible, and people are slower to react to it. It also directs people's attention away from the corporations and the government that are its primary cause.

One of the first victims of inflation, outside of working people's standard of living, is the non-military part of government budgets. Politicians who are looking for something to eliminate from government spending have a soft spot in their hearts for the Defense Department. Frills like transportation, housing, health, and education can wait.

The benefits that the corporations gain from the defense funds would be hard to match anywhere else. Putting the \$80 billion arms budget to productive use would endanger the leading corporations' monopoly position. Other businesses prefer spending for arms than facing government competition in domestic industry.

Military spending is also used to defend the corporations' interests overseas. And it feeds into the ideology that we are all working together to defend American freedom. These are the reasons why corporations cry "socialism" whenever it is suggested that the government spend our money for useful purposes.

It turns out that the rewards of military spending do not last forever. As weaponry becomes increasingly complex, the beneficial effects decrease. Jobs, for example: a billion dollars spent on missiles employs fewer workers than does the same amount spent on simpler weapons, and fewer still than the money spent on the upkeep of troops.

The number of production workers in the arms industry is declining, because of a shift to technical employment and the automation of many productive processes. But the inflationary effects of arms spending do not decline. And this is what led to the combination of inflation and growing unemployment that

we face today.

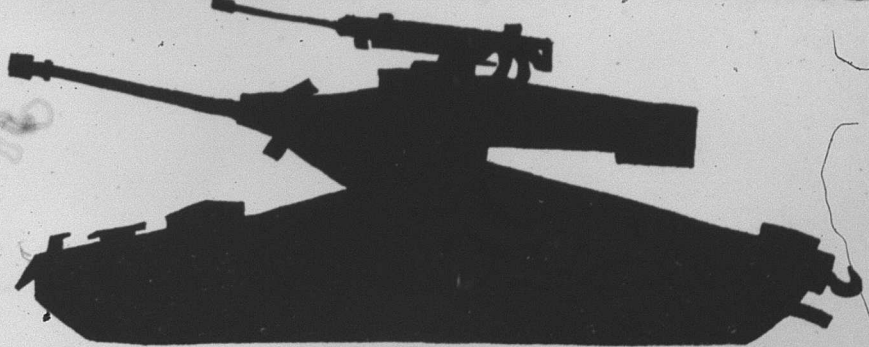
The war in Vietnam changed this picture temporarily. At the height of the American involvement in Vietnam, a good portion of defense spending went into the production of conventional equipment (like ammunition, food, and uniforms) and helped bring the unemployment rate down.

Of the \$28 billion spent on Vietnam in 1968, only \$2 billion went into the aerospace industry. At the same time, the level of total military spending was much higher, so that inflation moved ahead more rapidly.

The leading corporations will be little damaged by the winding down of the Vietnam war, and they will undoubtedly profit by the new missile systems like the ABM that are being developed. After two years of decreased armaments spending which failed to bring the inflation to a halt, the defense budget is going up again. Most of the new increase will be in highly sophisticated weapons systems, so its effect on unemployment will be small.

The American people are now blessed with a massive armaments industry (not to speak of the never-ending war in Southeast Asia), growing unemployment, and steadily mounting inflation. That is the result of twenty-five years of the Permanent Arms Economy. ■

LIGHT WAGES



HEAVY TANKS

THE PENTAGON PAPERS PART 2:

Kennedy's Secret War

Bruce Levine Shelley Levine

Introduction

In June and July, the *New York Times* (and others) published a series of articles based on the Pentagon's secret, 47-volume study of the Viet-Nam war.

The first of these articles covered the years of the Johnson Administration. They showed in detail how Lyndon Johnson deliberately escalated the war, specifically spurned negotiation attempts, and firmly set his sights on all-out military victory — and lied through his teeth about it all. (See *Workers' Power* 38) These articles brought on a storm of popular outrage directed at Johnson, already a deeply unpopular figure.

In the midst of this uproar, the second group of *Times* Pentagon-Papers articles have been pretty much ignored. These deal with the origins of the war and the presidency of John F. Kennedy — and in some ways are more important than the first.

Unlike Lyndon Johnson, after all, John Kennedy is still widely remembered as a kind of saint. He is thought of as a "true liberal" — warm-hearted, cool-headed, pledged to an international campaign of welfare and social reform. The calamities of the Johnson Administration, especially in Viet-Nam, are chalked up to LBJ's refusal to continue Kennedy's enlightened programs and methods.

An entire army of publicists today labor diligently to maintain that public image for JFK, and liberal politicians feverishly promote the line of thinking which the Kennedy Legend produces: "Let's get back to the good old days of Kennedy-style liberalism!"

The Pentagon Papers must be giving these people ulcers. In brutal contrast to the rosy legend they have created, the Papers reveal the true John F. Kennedy the man who:

Decided that a victory over the NLF was crucial for the security of the U.S.'s international position;

"Transformed", in the words of the Times, "the 'limited-risk gamble' of the Eisenhower Administration into a 'broad commitment' to prevent Communist domination of South Vietnam."

"Ordered the start of a campaign of clandestine warfare against North Viet-Nam, to be conducted by South Vietnamese agents directed and trained by the Central Intelligence Agency and some American Special Forces troops."

Increased the number of US troops in South Viet-Nam from a bare 700 to 16,000.

Boosted the US's role in the planning

direction, and control of South Vietnamese civilian and military operations from that of "adviser" to senior partner.

Finally decided that Ngo Dinh Diem "was unable to win the war against the NLF, and so gave the signal for the coup d'etat which removed and killed him.

Failed completely, even after stepping up US intervention in Viet-Nam, to achieve what he set out to do. Reports the Times, "President Kennedy left President Johnson a Vietnamese legacy of crisis, of political instability, and of military deterioration at least as alarming as the situation he had inherited from the Eisenhower Administration."

Naturally, this was not the kind of situation which Kennedy, a liberal, hoped to create. What went wrong?

The first thing to understand is just what John Kennedy did hope to do, specifically. What did he see his as his role? How did he plan to carry it out? Only after answering these questions will we be prepared to understand what went wrong with those plans.

1. The Test Case

The President of the United States is a tremendously powerful figure. But he also bears equally tremendous obligations. The most compelling of these is the responsibility to defend the interests of American capitalism, the system over which he presides. And because that system extends its power over much of the rest of the world, the President's watchdog duties are similarly international.

Carrying out this watchdog role presented John Kennedy with some very particular problems. In the early 1960's, when he entered the White House, the peoples of the third world were embarking on the first in a series of struggles aimed at challenging the worldwide power of American capitalism and at the local puppet governments which are on its payroll.

The most visible of these struggles was the war in Viet-Nam. It was because of its high visibility, as the Pentagon Papers make clear, that Kennedy attached so much significance to the struggle in that country.

Not because there was a great deal of US money tied up in Viet-Nam. There wasn't. Not even because Viet-Nam occupies a particularly strategic position geographically. It doesn't. John Kennedy jumped into Viet-Nam

with both feet because he knew Viet-Nam was a test case.

All over the third world, people were watching the Viet-Nam struggle, trying to gauge how easy it would be to topple other puppet regimes and how far the US would go to bale such a puppet regime out of trouble. In the same way, the puppet governments themselves all over Asia (and Latin America and Africa, too) eyed the Viet-Nam case as a reflection of their own possible futures.

So — as Kennedy's "guerrilla warfare expert", Roger Hilsman, recalls — while

President Kennedy grumbled occasionally about the United States being "overcommitted" in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, he could not refuse to give more of the same kind of assistance without disrupting the whole balance of power and fabric of the security structure of the region, where so many countries had based their policy on continued American involvement. (Hilsman, To Move A Nation, p. 420)

To make matters worse, the Communists were saying out loud that if the US was beaten in Vietnam, it could be beaten elsewhere as well. As

the Pentagon study notes, "It was a challenge that could hardly be ignored."

The task at hand, Kennedy realized, was to work out a strategy to defeat the Vietnamese revolution and to head off others like it elsewhere in the third world. And in attempting to do so, Kennedy put "enlightened liberalism" to the test.

2. Counter-Insurgency

Kennedy's Viet-Nam strategy was not to be based on the simple force of arms. As he had declared as early as 1954, "I am frankly of the opinion that no amount of military assistance in Indochina can conquer ... an 'enemy of the people' which has the sympathy and covert support of the people." What was needed, he decided, was a strategy which could win for the US and its puppet regimes — rather than for the guerrillas — the "sympathy and support of the people."

To accomplish this, Kennedy and his advisers mapped out a three-pronged program of "counter-insurgency":



(1) SOCIO-ECONOMIC REFORMS

The first task was to give the South Viet-Namese people a stake in the present order of things. Most importantly, in this connection, land reform would be instituted.

South Viet-Nam's fertile land was monopolized by a tiny class of landlords who soaked the peasant majority thoroughly through sky-high rents and taxes. The peasants' land-hunger was a prime source of revolutionary unrest in the countryside. To calm that unrest, therefore, "counter-insurgency" planned to redistribute the land to the peasant tillers.

(2) POLITICAL REFORMS.

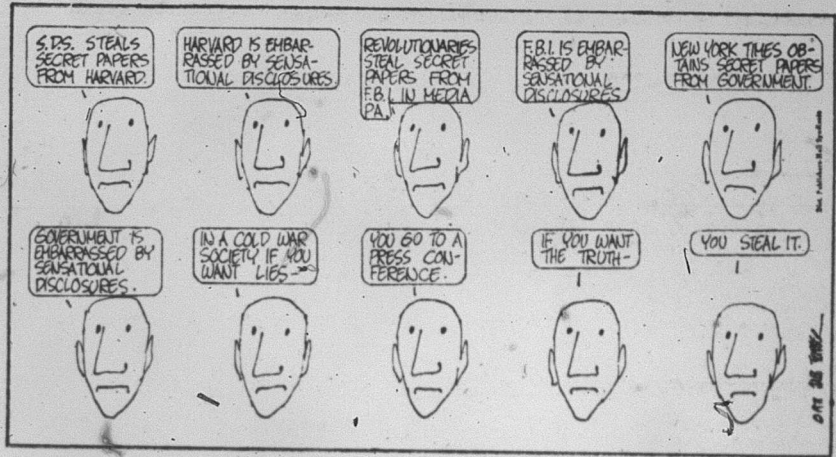
Having gained the loyalty of the people with economic-social reforms, the need for a police state would disappear. Kennedy began to exert pressure on Ngo Dinh Diem to liberalize his regime. "Allow free elections, a freer press, freedom of speech, opposition political parties. Draw the people into establishment politics and they will turn away from the guerrilla army."

(3) MILITARY REFORMS

Where it was necessary to use the force of arms — for example, to combat an already-existing NLF — we would do so only in the cleverest fashion. For one thing, the job would be done by local troops, rather than GI's, who would be familiar to the Vietnamese people.

For another thing, those troops would be carefully trained in the techniques of guerrilla warfare and in the need to respect the rights, lives, and property of the peasant population. To teach Saigon's army this lesson, Kennedy dispatched his "elite corps" to Viet-Nam, the Special Forces.

By carrying out this three-pronged "counter-insurgency" program, Kennedy expected, he would make American control over Viet-Nam more secure than ever. The result? On all three fronts, the counter-insurgency campaign proved a complete and utter flop.



3. Reform and Reaction

The heart of this over-all failure lay in the failure of the planned "social reforms." And the key failure in that department was the collapse of land reform. Only the smallest fraction of the country's land had changed hands under the Diem regime — and even that small fraction represented largely useless acreage.

What lay behind so total a collapse of plans? Very simply, as Kennedy "insider" Arthur Schlesinger recalls, "the resistance of the large landholders and leading elements in the Saigon government".

Now, the landlords' attitude was understandable. They were fighting the NLF, after all, precisely to protect their land monopoly, the source of their social power. Small likelihood, therefore, that they would cheerfully hand it all over to the first regime to ask for it.

But what about those "leading elements in the Saigon government"? What was the excuse for their obstructionism? That's what JFK and his advisors wanted to know. "If only Diem had supported land reform, if only he had enforced it, if only ..." Such thinking was widespread in Washington. It led to portraying Diem as an individual as the prime reason for "counter-insurgency's" failure — and ultimately to his removal.

Making Diem a scapegoat may have comforted US policy-makers somewhat; it was not of much practical value to them. Roger Hilsman sensibly points out that:

Actually, the issue was bigger than just the personality of Diem, his dictatorial regime, or his family. The issue was ... whether or not even the potential existed in South Vietnam to carry out the tightly disciplined, precisely coordinated political, social, and military program that would be needed to defeat the guerrillas. (Hilsman, p. 459)

And the sad fact (for Kennedy, Hilsman, and their elaborate plans) was that this potential did not exist at all. It did not exist because it was impossible to come up with any regime in Saigon that was not hopelessly tied up with the reactionary landlord class.

In South Viet-Nam the landlords

form the foundation — financially, politically, and in personnel — for the economy, the political apparatus, and the government bureaucracy. They form the native backbone for what little anti-NLF establishment there is in the country.

They are the only class, after all, which can be trusted to stand firm against the advances of the land-hungry peasantry led by the NLF. To alienate the landlord class would mean, for any Saigon politician, resigning himself to having no support whatever in the countryside.

Because the Diem regime could only be a landlord regime, the hope of land reform was nothing but an idle dream. And with land reform impossible, Kennedy's entire "liberal" counter-insurgency was bankrupt. The *New York Times* reports:

The (Pentagon) study concludes that the Kennedy strategy was fatally flawed from the outset for political as much as for military reasons. It depended, the study notes, on successfully prodding President Diem to undertake the kind of political, economic, and social reforms that would, in the slogan of the day, "win the hearts and minds of the people."

If, because of his position — the *Times* concludes — Diem was unable to make those reforms, then "the US plan to end the insurgency was foredoomed from its inception..."

4. Built-In Defeat

The implications of Kennedy's failure in Viet-Nam are tremendous, precisely because — as Kennedy saw — Viet-Nam was not unique. The same factors which (in the *Times*' accurate term) "foredoomed" counter-insurgency from the start are to be found throughout America's third-world empire.

In every case, US capitalism is inseparably tied to the most reactionary classes and social systems. No policy (or politician) which sets out to defend that capitalism can hope at the same time to relieve the peoples' principal social grievances.

Not too long ago, a remarkably clear-sighted analyst working for the government-sponsored RAND Corporation summed up the problem this way:

In many of these countries, those

people who run the government, who would be responsible for formulating and carrying out national development plans and negotiating for foreign assistance, are themselves very much attached to the existing social structure.

Even in those nations where the top political leadership is personally committed to basic structural alterations of their societies, ... their continued authority may rest on the support of those groups in the society who still command the bulk of the resources of the countryside, and who continue to staff the civil and military bureaucracies. These latter groups, for material and psychological reasons, may be reluctant to bring on the restructuring...

In political warfare against insurgents like the NLF, the US and American capitalism simply have no weapons. It is physically hamstringing and ideologically compromised by — if nothing else — its involvement with the local reactionaries. That is the reason why as John Kenneth Galbraith moaned early in the Kennedy years, in Viet-Nam as elsewhere, "we make revolutions so badly." (Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, p. 506)

5. Blood and Iron

In Viet-Nam, the penalty for "making the revolution so badly" was huge. We have already seen how land-reform was the lynch-pin of Kennedy's overall program of social-economic reforms. When land-reform fell through, so did the rest of that program. And with the collapse of the social-reform campaign, the entire structure of "counter-insurgency" came crashing down as well.

The projected political reforms, we recall, assumed a population already won over to the government's side. But having failed to "win the hearts and minds of the people," neither Diem nor the US could afford to place their fortunes in the people's hands. Free elections are fine and good, but only so long as a favorable outcome is assured in advance!

In the same way, the military effort fell apart. The army ranks, after all, were no more than peasant conscripts. The hatred of the landlords and their government which the peasants learned in their villages they carried with them

[continued on next page]

Kennedy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

into the army. Desertion rates soared.

The army brass was unhappy too. Reacting to its own growing unpopularity and insecurity, the Diem regime found it necessary to conduct periodic purges of the officer corps to weed out individuals of questionable loyalties. The *Times* explains:

...as the Pentagon account recalls... the South Vietnamese President had placed loyal favorites in sensitive posts commanding troops around Saigon, established a trusted network of military chiefs in all provinces and stripped potential challengers and malcontents of troop commands.

Inevitably, these measures — no matter how necessary — had to take their toll on the officers' effectiveness. They did. As the *Times* adds, "Over the years, secret intelligence reports had told of the corrosive effects of such methods on military morale."

The army of Saigon began quickly to fall to pieces. Now there was nothing to do but turn a greater and greater share in the responsibility for the actual combat over to an ever-growing US military garrison.

6. The Torch is Passed

Counter-insurgency had failed — the attempt to defend capitalism in the third world through "liberal" reformist means. All that was left was the return to blood and iron.

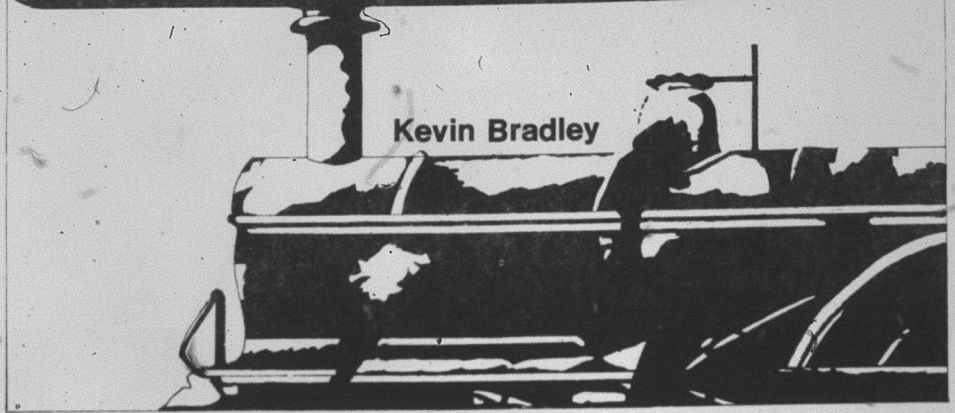
As it turned out, Kennedy was killed before the final bankruptcy of his policy became clear to the public. Had he lived, though, the Pentagon papers show clearly what he would have done:

Just before President Kennedy's assassination, his top aides held a Vietnam strategy conference at Honolulu.... The Honolulu conference, set up under President Kennedy, ordered planning for a stepped-up program of what the (Pentagon) account calls 'non-attributable hit-and-run' raids against North Vietnam."

The drift is clear. The *Times* itself draws the obvious conclusions:

The Pentagon account... presents a picture of an unbroken chain of decision-making from the final months of the Kennedy administration into the early months of the Johnson Administration, whether in terms of the political view of American stakes in Vietnam, the advisory build-up or the hidden growth of covert warfare against North Vietnam.■

Railroad Ranks Organize



The biggest railroad union in the country is the United Transportation Union, the result of a merger of four brotherhoods. It has 230,000 engine crew members. As in some other unions, notably the steelworkers, members of the UTU don't have the right to vote on their contracts. In October 1969, Local 1433 of Chicago set up the Right to Vote Committee.

The R.T.V.C. has since expanded all over the country and into Canada and is probably one of the largest caucuses in any North American union. It has won the endorsement of over a hundred local officers, trustees and legislative representatives. All funds are channeled through the Chicago local and a public financial statement is published to avoid charges of financial irregularities.

Union Democracy

The Right to Vote Committee says its concerns are limited to the right to vote:

"It is a non-exclusionary committee and is limited to the right to vote issue. The R.T.V.C. does not take an official position on other issues such as the war in Vietnam, pollution, civil rights, political candidates, etc. Although many of our members and members of the union in general do have disagreements and different opinions on many political questions, we have united together on the issue that we agree on, namely, the right to vote in our union. We have Republicans, independents, Democrats, Socialists, Wallace supporters, etc., active in this movement and all are welcome. United we can win the right to vote. Divided we will fail."

But rails (railroad workers) cannot afford to restrict their demands solely to the right to vote, important as that is. The Right to Vote Committee in fact has to, and does, talk about much more than the right to vote. To begin with, it talks about union democracy:

"A direct membership vote on contracts is basic to union democracy. A trade union cannot be truly democratic or 'free' unless the membership has the final and decisive word on contracts. The membership of the UTU must have the right to accept or reject any agreement with the carriers pertaining to wages, rules, or working conditions."

More than this, the fight for rank and file democracy is a means for

rails to reach the ends of better working conditions and an economically sound and secure job:

"For the past decade, our real wages as enginemen and trainmen have gone down due to the fantastic increase in the cost-of-living, railroad retirement rates, medical costs, income taxes, sales taxes, property taxes, etc. The carriers' attacks on our wages and working conditions can be halted only if the union membership has the right to reject rotten wage and work rule agreements that fail to meet our needs as railroad workers. The campaign of the Right to Vote Committee for a membership ratification vote on contracts is the first step in the fight for total rank and file control over union officers and union policy."

The R.T.V.C. Progress Report printed a resolution passed by a December 12th Right to Strike Rally. This resolution pointed out that the strike is the only weapon working people have to protect themselves and is a basic democratic right.

The resolution went on to attack the Nixon Administration and Congress, which continually votes to break railroad strikes. Since every railroad strike ties up the nation's economy, the capitalist class clamors for immediate action against it. Railroad workers, like public employees, are driven by the conditions of their work to oppose the Government and

politicians politically as well as to oppose their employers economically.

Other articles in the R.T.V.C. Progress Report support the Canadian Autonomy Movement for democracy for Canadian unionists in the North American union movement, and others deal with the whole question of rules changes and members' jobs. A letter is printed from a woman in the UTU Ladies Auxiliary of Dearborn Heights, Michigan. Another woman writes, "I am the wife of a member and I think your organization is the best thing to come along since television."

Workers' Control

The R.T.V.C. printed a long letter from a St. Paul railroad worker which concluded with the following words:

"George Meany and rail union presidents Luna and Dennis have suggested nationalization of the railroads. But the question remains: How is this good idea to be implemented? Who'll have the reins? The only people who really know how to operate a railroad are those who actually do operate it now. That's us! Nationalization under the control of politicians, lawyers and financial manipulators would solve nothing. The real solution is nationalization under workers' control — control by those who have the know-how and the incentive to make the major transportation facility of this continent a workable and serviceable operation that would also provide better working conditions for those who do the real work that makes the railroads run."

The R.T.V.C. prints after the signature the following remark: "The R.T.V.C. invites your comments and ideas on the above letter." Revolutionary socialists are excited to see this development on the railroads. The fight for democracy in our unions is crucial but all attempts to limit the struggle to this one issue must fail. Working conditions, the role of the politicians in stopping strikes and the very question of who should run industry and transportation are crucial questions for rank and file organizations.■

[Railroad workers and others who would like further information on the R.T.V.C. should write: The Right to Vote Committee, United Transportation Union, P.O. Box 475, Bensenville, Illinois 60106.]



[The huge General Electric Plant at Evendale, an industrial suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio, reflects many of the moods and problems of the American working class. Its five thousand factory workers are organized mainly into the UAW.

As at so many other plants across the nation, the workers at GE Evendale are beginning to come to grips with two fundamental problems facing American Labor: racial injustice and a union leadership that refuses to fight for its membership. In response to these two problems black UAW members at GE have formed an organization called JOB.

The following is an interview with the chairman of JOB, Louis Smith, conducted by members of the Cincinnati International Socialists.]



INTERVIEW:

BLACK WORKERS FIGHT G.E.

WP. What is JOB, how was it formed, and what does it stand for?

JOB. JOB is an organization for the total betterment of black workers. We were organized solely for the purpose of instituting fairness in hiring, to discourage discriminatory practices on the part of both the company and union, and to eliminate intimidation of black workers on the part of company or union.

We found that these practices were so important in the running of the company and union that black workers had nobody they could possibly turn to other than themselves, in order to find some relief from the pressure. So we formed an organization which is known as Justice, Opportunity, and Betterment, better known as JOB, to try to implement the Equal Opportunity Law of 1964, to make the company and union adhere to the law.

We have had an uphill fight and we have often been harassed as to our philosophy. The company and union have tried to eliminate us. That I, as chairman of JOB, have been investigated by the FBI and the Defense Department, simply shows me that when black workers try to achieve equal opportunity, the government will try to silence them.

Since we started JOB we have found out that the white worker is as much the victim of this harassment as the black worker and suffers from the same set of conditions. But the white worker has been reluctant to be outspoken simply because he feels through his racist indoctrination that he is better off than the black worker. And the company has made some alliance with the union officials to continue their racist philosophy in order to keep the workers in their present position.

We have a membership (card carrying) of 800. There are possibly 1200 black workers at the company. So I would say that we have a substantial amount of black participation in the philosophy of JOB. I would characterize this as meaning we have the support of the black worker.

In a lot of instances we also have the support of the white worker, because they are seeking leadership to openly and forcefully change their conditions as well.

Conspiracy

WP. What would you say are the major problems facing most workers out at GE?

JOB. The conditions that all of us face at the General Electric Evendale plant is that management has systematically done things to degrade the union and the philosophy of unionism.

We have seen the union officials in

some instances to be in accordance with the philosophy of top management, allowing management to implement any type of program that they so choose. This is detrimental to all of the workers.

As to speed-up etc., we have at the GE plant what is known as "efficiency and effectiveness". This means that the company tells you how much work you should do per day. The union is in complete agreement with this.

Here again you find a conspiracy. The union officials do not attack the company's dictating to us as to how much work we should do. If you do not put out as much work as they say you should put out, you are reprimanded. If you continue to follow this trend you will be discharged from GE.

The company can claim this is an excuse to eliminate anybody at will and the union will tell you "All I can do is file a grievance and we will try to fight it in the grievance procedure."

The percentage of grievances won on behalf of workers is so small that it cannot be calculated. And the grievance procedure is very drawn out in any case.

But the grievance procedure is the only tool that the union has agreed upon to use to get redress on the actions taken by management. The union officials continue to choose this avenue even though it is so very ineffective. I think the union knows its ineffective.

This is one of the reasons why I say that the union is conspiring with the company. Because if the union officials were completely sincere and concerned about

the workers' welfare, they would find other more effective ways of trying to resolve our grievances.

WP. What are the specific problems of black workers? We know that in the auto industry, for example, it's very common for a black worker to wind up in the foundry, the dirtiest, grimmest, most physically exhausting work possible. Could you draw any parallels to that at GE?

JOB. Yes, it's the same identical thing at GE. Blacks have the lowest paying jobs in the GE complex. Blacks are normally the last to be hired, first to be fired. They're denied promotion and advancement by a conspiracy on the part of both the union officials and the company.

As far as comparisons to a foundry, we have what is called a boiler house. That's where all the trash and dirt is dumped, burned, eliminated or discarded in some manner. Black workers have that particular job. It's a filthy, dirty job and we are trying to make inroads as to equipment, clothing, and heat during the winter months.

We have a job classification system which starts at R-12 and runs to R-25. 85% of the black workers are employed between the 12 classification and the 16 classification, from 17 to 19 you have 10% blacks, from 19 to 25 it's 98% white and 2% black. The union is doing nothing to rectify this situation because they have been indoctrinated by the power structure that this is the way things should be.

WP. What is the workers' attitude toward the union leadership at the Evendale plant?

JOB. The black workers' attitude is that he's not being properly represented and that the union is racist and that the union officials use racism any time there's going to be an election.

There are many white workers that are dissatisfied but they haven't been introduced to any form of leadership that would be any better, that would deal with the betterment of all workers, so they go along with just having a union. They're non-participants in union affairs, union meetings. I would say maybe 60% of the white workers are dissatisfied with the present union.

WP. It seems from your remarks that JOB, rather than setting itself in opposition to the labor movement, seeks to become a very important part of the labor movement and to change that movement. Would you comment on that?

JOB. The labor movement, as far as black workers are concerned, is the only avenue we have of achieving any economic or social betterment in this society. We recognize the fact that we are constantly bombarded by the bosses and labor officials telling us what kind of job we will have and that they both work together to keep us down.

Our philosophy of unionism is that we support all workers in their struggles against the bosses: if I'm denied an opportunity the bosses will deny them an opportunity later on down the line. See, bosses and managers know what the labor movement is capable of doing. They know that we, the workers, are the people.

There's a slogan "Power to the People". We intend to try to implement that philosophy. Because, whether black or white, we are all workers and we should decide what actions our society shall take.

This is why JOB is so determined to implement our philosophy. Some people have tried to categorize us as a racist type of organization, which is completely untrue. As an organization we do try to uplift the black worker, to help him understand that he is a worker, and of course, we try to implement the law of unionism throughout our total society. ■



NORTHERN IRELAND

Part One of Three Parts

Union And Reaction

Robert St.Cyr



Paisleyites burning the Irish republican flag

[The situation in Northern Ireland, or Ulster, is known to most Americans only from lurid television accounts of Catholic-Protestant violence. In the first of three articles, we analyze the political background to the continuing crisis.]

The last three months have brought a sharp upswing in the level and intensity of violence in Northern Ireland. Attacks against British occupation troops have increased and so have incidents directed against the Protestant population by nationalist terrorists. The response of the Army, the police, and Protestant mobs has been predictably outrageous.

The rising tide of terror was responsible for the March change of government which gave Northern Ireland its sixth prime minister (Brian Faulkner) in 50 years of existence as an autonomous province within the United Kingdom.

Although Northern Ireland has had the largest number of parties contesting parliamentary elections of any country in the English-speaking world, all six Prime Ministers have come from the "official" Unionist Party. This is very simply because the Unionists have won majorities in the N.I. Parliament (called Stormont) in every single election.

Until 1968 and the upsurge of the civil rights movement in Ulster, PM's could expect a long term of office. Only three men served between 1921 and 1963.

Since then the tenure has been shorter and very insecure, with Faulkner's two predecessors both being forced out by opposition within the Party. The monolith which was Ulster Unionism has split in at least four directions.

1. "Protestant Privilege"

Until recently, Unionism had united Protestants of all classes around the twin slogans "Union with Britain," and its corollary, "Protestant privilege."

"Union with Britain" means economic advantages (including British-level social welfare benefits), traditional ties, and symbolically most important, the perpetuation of Irish partition, which keeps most Irish Protestants free of domination by the Catholic majority of Ireland. "Protestant privilege" was all the landlord-capitalist leadership of Ireland could offer the Protestant

workers in the way of an economic "program."

What "Protestant privilege" means is: "For God's sake don't go raising any divisive issues with your Protestant employers about wages, etc. And don't blame us — your Protestant government — because of the permanent depression of the province. Just remember, one hint of a split in the seamless cloak of Unionism and 'them Papis' will be up and taking your jobs and houses, and making us all kiss the Pope's ass."

"Meanwhile, if any jobs or houses do turn up, we'll guarantee that Protestants get the first places in the queue."

Then, of course, there are the Protestant "national" holidays, such as the 12th of July, when Protestants are encouraged to march through Catholic neighborhoods with great pomp and ceremony, to remind the Catholics of how they were beaten back in 1690.

So much for "Protestant privilege." But it has worked for well over 50 years, despite periodic challenges from the Catholic minority and occasional resistance from Protestant as well as Catholic workers. The political sterility of Ulster has been based on the fact that the brief spells of working-class upsurge have always been "safely" (from the point of view of the local ruling class) channeled into sectarian warfare.

It is the hope and task of revolutionary socialists that, instead, the movement for Catholic liberation and the struggle for workers' power can be linked together. Furthermore, Marxists are convinced that only by linking the two can either

succeed.

This requires a political alliance of Protestant and Catholic workers, based not on one group conceding its religion or cultural orientation, or marginal "privileges," to the other — but on common class interests (as working people), with mutual respect for the differing religious and cultural roots of both groups.

2. The Crisis of Unionism

Meanwhile, Unionism today is under attack both from within and from without. It is shaken by its own internal contradictions.

Unionism is a part of British capitalism, even if a few of its leaders don't seem to want to recognize that fact. When Captain Terence (now Lord) O'Neill succeeded Lord Brookeborough as PM in 1963, there was a continuity of aristocratic, landed, elite Army officer corps backgrounds. Major Chichester-Clark, who succeeded his cousin Terry, shared these credentials.

An important part of Britain's officer corps has always been recruited from the Irish Protestant "Ascendancy" — the descendants of Ireland's 16th-17th century English conquerors. Indeed, the British military tradition of political neutrality, so different from that of France, Spain, etc., was seriously shaken only in 1912-1914, when the officers threatened to intervene against civilian authority on behalf of Irish Protestant interests (this

was the occasion of the "Curragh Mutiny" and related events).

Faulkner is the first PM in 30 years to come from the middle class. He has established a political record which is an opportunist's dream. On one side he is the loyal Orange bigot, and on the other the urbane businessman attracting foreign capital.

In the latter role he was associated — but only before O'Neill's ouster — with the ex-PM's "new face of Unionism." These people had decided that "kick the Pope" politics was out of date, especially when they were trying to attract foreign investment ("What would happen if a German or American Catholic manager...?")

They believed that Ulster's connection with Britain could best be secured — and with it, their Party's rule — by attracting some of the Catholic middle-class vote. They also expected their economic plan to increase the number of jobs, thus satisfying the Protestant workers.

Oddly enough, the "ignorant" Protestant masses did not get the message from their "natural" leaders. Instead of becoming nicely reconciled to "liberal" Unionism, many of them became increasingly terrified, fearing that all the horrible stories on which they had been nursed by the leadership and its Orange Lodge for generations were about to come true.

At the same time, the Catholics made the "mistake" of taking O'Neill seriously. It was to take quite a while before many of them learned the bitter lesson that reforms were to come only very slowly and even then, were not meant to apply to workers, but only to Catholic bourgeois.

The failure of O'Neill's "New Face" — the continuation of the civil rights crisis and the rise of an Orange backlash — precipitated the breakup of the Unionist monolith. Four distinct currents emerged: the Paisleyites, the "official" right wing, the "moderate" center, and the small Alliance Party of "modern unionists."

3. Four Faces

Stage front: Ian Paisley; self-ordained fanatic-preacher, brilliant demagogue, trying to make a career attacking ecumenicism. Suddenly his squabble with the religious establishment becomes an attack on the leadership of the Protestant Party.

To this cause he rallies many of the poorest Protestants and certain non-"with it" bourgeois supporters into the Protes-



William Craig and Brian Faulkner

NPAC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

resolutions, so the American people can only end the war by using their real power.

That power is in their hands at the workplace. Overwhelmingly, the 73 percent of Americans who oppose the war are working people. In countless strikes, they have gained what little dignity they possess by using their power — the power to stop production. So now, the American people can stop the war, if they use their power to stop the wheels from turning.

Several groups at the conference made arguments along this line. Most prominent were the proposals of the "Militant Action Caucus" (MAC).

NPAC-MAC

The MAC was hastily organized just before the conference. Its initial sponsors included John Watson (Chairman of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers), Edith Fox (a committeewoman in Detroit's Dodge Main plant and a longtime oppositionist within the UAW), the President of the New Rochelle, N.Y., Federation of Teachers, and the International Socialists.

The MAC called for NPAC to form a Trade Union Division which could draw in rank and file workers. It called for NPAC and the Trade Union Division to organize anti-war rallies on Labor Day and lunch-hour rallies at plant gates throughout the fall, and to have the November mass marches go through working class neighborhoods in the major cities.

These rallies would connect the war issue with the issues of inflation, unemployment, racism and social decay, which working people are already facing in their daily lives — and would begin raising the idea of work stoppages against the war.

In addition, the MAC proposal called for NPAC to organize a conference before Christmas to examine the possibility of political action in 1972 independent of the Democratic and Republican parties — political campaigns against the war and for the interests of labor and other struggling social groups such as blacks and women. This would provide the anti-war movement with a political expression which would prevent the "doves" from hitching the movement to their bandwagon.

The response of NPAC leader Jerry Gordon was that for NPAC to take up



Jerry Gordon

other issues, such as inflation and unemployment, would exclude some people. But as it stands now, the anti-war movement "excludes" 100 million Americans — those who are most concerned about inflation and unemployment — all those who oppose the war but have never taken action against it because the anti-war movement has never spoken to them about their daily struggles and shown how these are

tied to action against the war.

Gordon also argued that NPAC can't order workers to strike. But NPAC already contains trade-union leaders, who could begin to raise this idea with their members. These leaders (such as Victor Reuther) bear a part of the responsibility for continuing the war, because they have been unwilling to organize their ranks to use their huge potential power.

If NPAC can ask union leaders to grace its platforms, it can ask them to consider strike action. More important, to do so would provide the legitimacy for others in the union movement, who may be less hesitant than the top leaders, to raise this idea. But in reality, the NPAC leaders are as afraid to offend leaders like Victor Reuther as to offend a Hartke.

Predictably, the MAC and other opposition proposals were defeated. However, they received more support than expected. The MAC's "labor action" proposal received perhaps 20 percent of the vote, with somewhat more going to its proposal on independent political action, which was voted on separately.

Predictably also, the conference voted for mass marches in several cities on November 6, preceded by other actions throughout the fall. The conference also rightly rejected a call by one group to change the demand from "immediate withdrawal" to "set the date for withdrawal." The slogan "set the date" weakens the demand to get out of Southeast Asia now; and in effect, it provides a base for the "doves," whose slogan is also "set the date." But though the conference voted this down, NPAC itself will build the reputation and influence of these same "doves" by making them the major speakers at its actions.

Organize to Win

However, this undisguised commitment to supporting the "doves" has made it more possible than before to gain support for the alternative strategy proposed by groups like the Militant Action Caucus. People who support such a strategy can still fight for

king people toward opposition. This provides the basis for bringing the anti-war movement to the 100 million people who oppose the war but have never been mobilized. But this can be done only if the movement makes up its mind to do so.

And, since NPAC's local groups are free to act as they please, it is possible to organize actions like those proposed, which take the war issue to workers and tie it to the present economic crisis.

These actions can be built together with people who aren't now in NPAC. If successful, they provide a basis for coming back to the next NPAC conference and building a bigger opposition there.

In reality, the very continuation of the war, and of the economic crisis it has intensified, push America's wor-



Vance Hartke

king people toward opposition. This provides the basis for bringing the anti-war movement to the 100 million people who oppose the war but have never been mobilized. But this can be done only if the movement makes up its mind to do so.

[James Coleman is a member of the Militant Action Caucus in NPAC and of the International Socialists.]

Free The Camp McCoy Three Judy Barton

[To send a donation to help defend the Camp McCoy 3, or to obtain more information about the case, please write: Camp McCoy 3 Defense Committee, 306 N. Brooks St., Madison, Wisconsin 53715]

Every day in the life of a lower ranking enlisted man or woman in the U.S. military is like living in a police state. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year for two or more years, a GI lives the life of a slave with no time of his own, living and working under the dictatorial rule of the Brass, having no rights, and being thrown into a military stockade for the slightest infraction of any rule put down by the military.

The only strength that GI's have is their great numbers. They outnumber the Brass 10 to 1. And the Brass bosses of the Army are clearly frightened by any efforts to organize that strength. A good example of this fear is their latest attempt to frame up three GI's — Steve Geden, Tom Chase, and Dannie (Maynard) Kreps — who were organizing a chapter of the American Serviceman's Union (ASU) at Camp McCoy Wisconsin.

In the summer of 1970, Steve, Tom and Maynard were sent from Fort Carson, Colorado to Camp McCoy to assist the training of National Guard and Reservist troops. This training was in such things

as Riot Control, marksmanship, Communications, and the building and maintenance of portable Prisoner of War (Concentration) Camps — which can all be used against civilian demonstrators and workers on strike.

Steve and Maynard used their positions as instructors to educate GI's about the real nature of the war in Vietnam, and the fact that GI's have nothing to gain from it. Tom helped organize, speaking openly about uniting GI's to regain the constitutional rights illegally denied them by the military.

An ASU chapter was formed. As more and more men joined, the Brass running the base grew fearful, knowing that their power as officers dissolves when their troops stand together against them.

On July 26, 1970 three explosions rocked Camp McCoy, damaging water, power, and communications facilities. Steve, Maynard, and Tom were picked up, restricted to the barracks, and interrogated by MI, CID and FBI. They were refused military legal assistance because all the lawyers on the base were working on the prosecution! Their mail was cen-

sored.

The three notified the ASU, which supplied them with a lawyer, Dave Heitzman, who filed a writ of habeas corpus in Federal Court demanding that the Army justify its conduct toward the men. A hearing was set for August 19, but a few days before this all three men were released from confinement and sent back to Ft. Carson, since the Army had no evidence against them and didn't want this exposed in a hearing.

Seven months later, however, they were indicted by a federal grand jury. They are being tried in a federal court in Madison, Wisconsin instead of by court martial, in an attempt to remove them from their real base of support — their GI brothers.

In their eagerness to dampen the growing spirit of resistance among GI's, the Brass are trying to frame up these three to provide an example to rank and file GI's of what happens to organizers in the Army. The Brass knows that the Camp McCoy Three had nothing to do with the bombings, but they also know that organized GI's pose a far greater threat to boss power than any amount of explosives.

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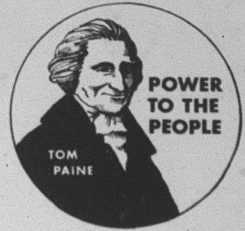
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Militant Action Caucus Formed in NPAC

James Coleman

The July 2-4 meeting of the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC), held at Hunter College in New York City, ended under the protection of a ring of college police. The local and national news media featured this aspect of the conference, while its call for massive anti-war demonstrations this fall went almost unnoticed.

The trouble grew from attempts by two groups — the Progressive Labor Party/Students for a Democratic Society, and the Spartacist League — to shout down Indiana Senator Vance Hartke and United Auto Workers Vice President Victor Reuther, both keynote speakers at the conference. When the two groups continued drowning the speakers out after the conference voted to hear them, marshals threw the disrupters out.

Later, members of the two groups tried to fight their way back in — and the conference leaders called the cops. Inside, in an atmosphere filled with hysteria, the delegates voted to endorse the marshals. So hostile was the atmosphere that, throughout the conference, opposition speakers trying to make points of order and procedure were hissed and jostled.

The debate about whether to commend the marshals missed the point, however. The people attending the conference had a right to hear anyone they wanted to, even if their decision was wrong. So they also had the right to throw out people who refused to let their decision stand.

But despite much talk about not allowing violence, the real violence done at the conference was the violence done to the politics of the anti-war movement by inviting Hartke — a Democratic Party "dove" who op-

poses the war in Vietnam, but supports US imperialism in every other way. The decision to invite Hartke was made by the leaders of NPAC, and the chief significance of this decision — as well as of the entire conference — is that they represent a further step in the degeneration of the policies which NPAC, under the political guidance of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), has pushed within the anti-war movement.

Bankrupt Strategy

The decision to invite Hartke is part of a strategy. But it isn't the strategy which NPAC advertises — building bigger and bigger mass marches which will finally end the war.

These marches are impressive and important as a show of sentiment. By themselves, however, they have no power. NPAC's National Coordinator, Jerry Gordon, has himself admitted in the last issue of the magazine *New Politics* that "mass marches alone" cannot end the war.

So something more is needed. NPAC's leaders have chosen to seek the support of liberal politicians for the marches, which gains respectability for them. In return, NPAC is providing these politicians with impressive, if superficial, anti-war credentials. Worse, it is providing these credentials to the party which most of the "doves" belong to — the Democratic Party.

These credentials come cheap: the "doves" must simply associate themselves with the demand for immediate withdrawal. This, however, does not stop them from campaigning to "set the date" for withdrawal, a compromise strategy.

Nor does NPAC ask them to drop their support for other American interventions around the world — or to repudiate their party, a party committed no less than the Republicans to defending American business and crushing its opponents both at home and abroad. At a time when these politicians and their party are searching desperately for a vote-catching "image," by honoring them NPAC is in effect going out to get them votes.

Even though NPAC's leaders are socialists, there's nothing accidental about this. The mass marches are carefully kept at the level of a show of sentiment. Thus they are only strong if they influence someone — such as Congress.

For this reason, they lead logically to the slogan which was in fact heard often at the last national mobilization April 24, "Only Congress can end the war" — this Congress of cowards, which after six years of full-scale war in Southeast Asia can't bring itself to use the one real power it has, the power to cut off funds for the war!

Just how closely NPAC's leaders have tied NPAC to these politicians was shown when Hartke made a statement at a news conference saying that the disrupters who interrupted him were just as responsible for the war as Nixon. Several groups at the conference put forward a motion to repudiate this statement. The NPAC leaders could not bear to criticize Hartke by name, however, and offered a substitute motion to "dissociate" NPAC from any such sentiments — without identifying the sentiments as having come from the lips of their own keynote speaker!

But if the NPAC leaders can't criti-

cize Hartke on this small question, how will they criticize him for his support of American imperialism in general? So when NPAC's leaders build a "non-exclusionary" campaign on the basis of not criticizing their respectable Congressional spokesmen, the result is that NPAC comes to be politically represented by the Hartkes.

In other respects the conference showed NPAC's identity as the spokesman, not for the whole anti-war movement as its leaders say, but for one particular strategy. Of more than 1,500 people attending, at least three-fourths arrived committed to NPAC's mass-march strategy. With the exception of several groups who came to make a fight over the strategy for building the movement, most people not already committed to NPAC's approach stayed away.

Nor was NPAC's claim to have broad support very visible at the conference. Many of the conference endorers, most of the members of the NPAC national steering committee, and practically all of its trade union supporters were absent.

Why this narrowness? Although formally the conference was a democratic one, open to all proposals, veterans of these affairs have learned to expect that they will merely rubber-stamp the decisions of the NPAC leadership. The leaders always mobilize enough committed votes to attend the conference, to make sure this happens.

More basically, the narrowness of the conference was a result of NPAC's political approach to building the anti-war movement — the approach of mobilizations twice a year on the lowest common denominator. The conference wasn't relevant to radical activists, who try to organize people against the war on the basis of relating the war to their continuing struggles. It wasn't relevant, either, to the lists of respectable supporters — their names are there for publicity but the NPAC leaders do not try to spur them to a more active role. And finally, the conference wasn't relevant to the mass of Americans who oppose the war, but see the marches as distant from the problems of their daily lives.

For Work Stoppages

Is there an alternative to the NPAC approach — a way to tie mass marches not to the promises and campaign hopes of "dove" Democrats, but to a real mobilization of the power of the American people to end the war?

The International Socialists have often pointed out in the past that the American people have in their hands the power to end the war. But just as Congress — if it dared — could end the war only by using its real power over funds, not by passing toothless

[continued on page 14]



Mass march, April 24, 1971. Enough to end the war?