

# The ORGANIZER

The Newspaper of the Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee



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January 1979

## Carter's Guidelines: Anti-Inflation or Anti-Worker?

by Jim Griffin

Meat prices are soaring upwards at an annual rate of 28%. Heating oil jumped 8% in two months, unleaded gasoline went up a nickel per gallon at the pump and housing costs are up over 18% from last year. Sound familiar? Yup, its double digit inflation time again. Consumer prices are percolating upwards at an annual rate of better than 10%. Wages are not keeping pace. The most recent round of price increases amounted to a 3.6% pay cut for the average worker.

### CARTER'S PROGRAM

On October 24 Jimmy Carter went on TV to announce his plan for controlling inflation to the American people. Like Nixon and Ford before him, Carter called for "sacrifice" and "restraint" from both business and labor and pledged his program would be "fair" to all. And, like Nixon and Ford's programs, Carter's plan, under the guise of "equality of sacrifice", is yet another attack on the working class.

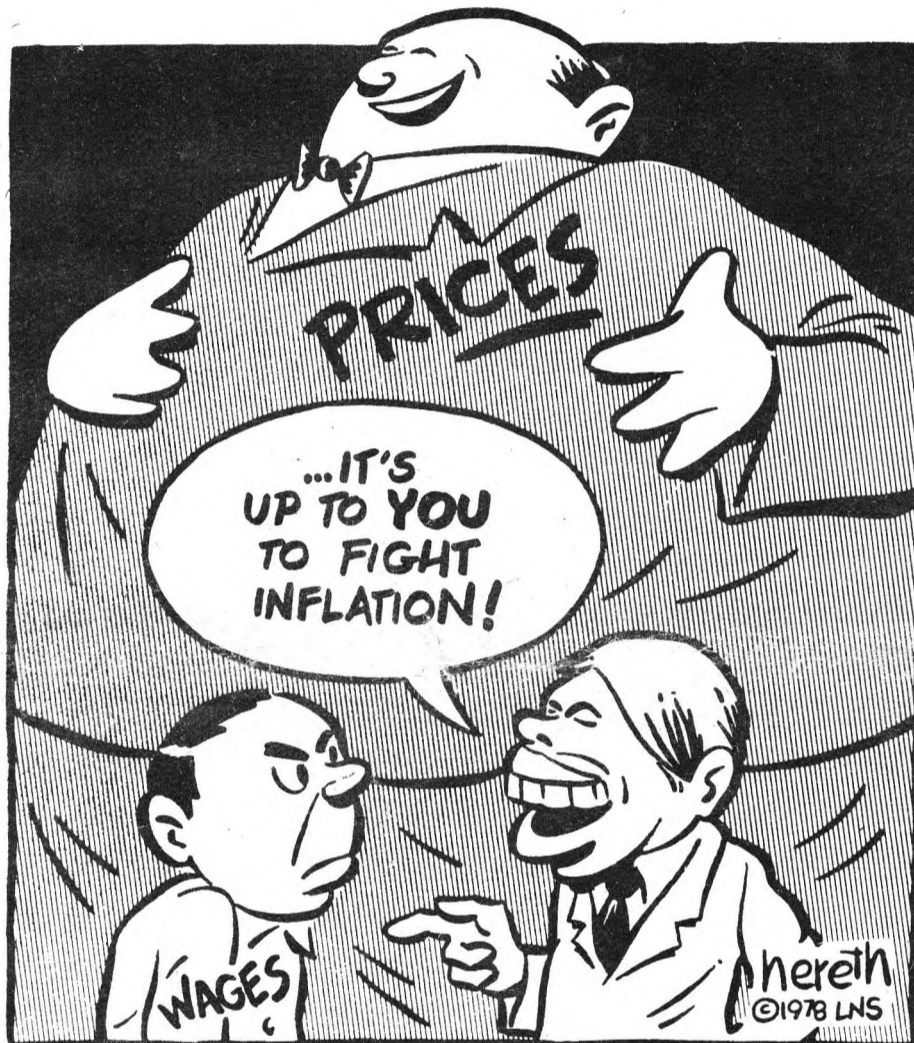
Carter's voluntary guidelines call for workers to limit wages to an annual increase of 7%. Originally this figure included benefits as well, but under pressure Carter has since retreated from this position. The supposed incentive for labor honoring these guidelines is Carter's plan for "real wage insurance".

Workers who show "restraint" will be rewarded with a tax credit or rebate designed to make up the difference between the rate of inflation and the increase in their wages. Workers who comply with the guidelines have no guarantee they will receive any compensation at this point because Congress has to adopt Carter's proposal before it becomes law. Already congressional and administration figures are talking about modifying the plan to place a \$50 to \$100 ceiling on the proposed tax rebates.

Carter's plan excludes workers making less than \$4.00 an hour from the 7% guideline in the name of "fairness" to those who presently make low wages. Since most workers in this category are unorganized, and thus in no position to take advantage of this exclusion, Carter's action is largely a meaningless gesture.

Meanwhile, the voluntary guidelines allow business to raise prices at an annual rate of 9.5%. Moreover, this figure is only an average. Under a whole series of loopholes employers are able to ignore the 9.5% guideline. For example one clause allows for price increases above the guideline if the company can show "hardship or gross inequity". The employers will automatically seek enforcement of wage guidelines. No such automatic mechanism exists to control prices and the government only plans to monitor the top 400 corporations.

Even should Carter's program succeed, which no one seriously expects, it would only achieve, by the administration's own admission, a reduction of inflation to an annual rate of 6-6.5%. His plan in effect calls for freezing the present level of the standard of living of US workers, asking them to forego any opportunity to improve it.



### BOOST FOR MONOPOLIES

These guidelines come at a convenient time for the monopoly corporations with contracts coming up in auto, trucking, electrical and other major industries covering two and a half million unionized workers. Clearly if these contracts hold wages to 7% it will be a big boon to the employers.

While the monopolists are the beneficiaries of Carter's plan, they are by no means happy about it. They dislike any government effort that interferes in what they see as their God-given right to fix

prices. What big business wants is not controls or guidelines but government policies which create a favorable climate for investment and for increasing productivity. A. Gilbert Heebner, Vice-President and economist for the Philadelphia National Bank, calls for "deregulating the dickens out of the American economy." Michael Wachter, an economist at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania adds, "We've been supporting consumption at the expense of investment. What we really need is a policy geared to investment."

Carter is by no means unsympathetic to these concerns of monopoly

capital. Almost simultaneously with his announcement of voluntary guidelines, Carter proclaimed his intention to cut \$15 billion worth of funding for social programs in the federal budget.

Reducing the federal deficit by slashing spending on social services is the heart of the Republican Party's "solution" to inflation. Now Carter has adopted it as his own.

An example of Carter's "inflation fighting" is the gutting of the CETA program. Remember, this was the guy who ran for President promising to put the unemployed back to work. Having quietly watched Congress butcher the Humphrey-Hawkins bill, Carter has now gotten out his own meat axe. The CETA program, which currently funds 625,000 adult jobs, is being cut back by 60%. In addition to eliminating 458,000 adult jobs, 500,000 summer jobs for youth will be eliminated. . . all this at a time when the government's own forecasts indicate rising unemployment.

While slashing programs that big business deems "wasteful", Carter simultaneously will increase the military budget by 3%. There is no money for jobs, but there is always a few billion more for the Pentagon. Since military spending is inherently inflationary, it is unclear how increasing it squares with fighting inflation. But again the monopoly corporations are pleased with this policy.

The clear effect of Carter's anti-inflation measures is a further erosion of the standard of living of the working class, with the heaviest burden falling on the oppressed nationalities. Should the unions adhere to the wage guidelines, the result will be a further decline in the real wages of their members. Tight credit and skyrocketing mortgage rates will hamstring small home buyers and consumers. Cutbacks in social programs will further undermine the already precarious position of Blacks, Latinos, and other national minorities, particularly minority youth.

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Millions demonstrate against the Shah in Tehran, Iran.

# FROM THE STAFF . . .

## Organizer begins fifth year

With this issue the *Organizer* begins its fifth year of publication. In our first issue in January, 1975 we identified the tasks of the *Organizer* in the following way:

"We want to make the *Organizer* a tool for building a new Communist Party...to develop our particular understanding of how the party is to be built and what kind of political line and program it requires... We see the *Organizer* as bringing a communist perspective to bear on the various questions that face the worker's movement... We will be reporting on these struggles with an eye on how to make them stronger — how to bring them together into a single powerful movement against the monopoly exploiters..."

Prior to the publication of the *Organizer*, the PWOC, regardless of its self conception, functioned in relation to the masses more as a grouping of left trade unionists than as a Communist organization. The *Organizer* provided the means for our organization to develop more all-sided work...to conduct Communist agitation and propaganda...to bring together conceptually our immediate practical activity and our long term aims. Aided by the *Organizer*, the PWOC has established itself as a visible and critical presence in the mass movements and accelerated the work of winning the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism.

In January of 1975 the PWOC was little known outside of Philadelphia and had little connection to the party-building movement. The publication of the *Organizer* was a major factor in establishing the PWOC as a distinct voice among

Marxist-Leninists, enabling the organization to participate in the struggles over party-building and political line that have been central to the development of our movement.

The *Organizer* has made an important contribution to the forging of a critique of dogmatism and ultra-leftism and has helped to lay the groundwork for the formation of the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center.

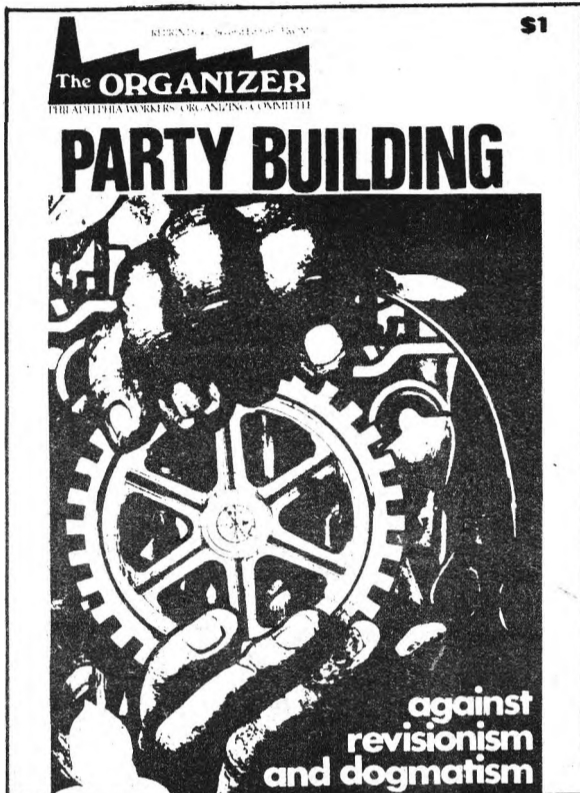
The *Organizer's* opposition to dogmatism has not simply been a matter of publishing polemics against the dogmatist line. By trying to develop a newspaper that is lively and popular and that is distinguished by concrete analysis of concrete events, we have sought to demonstrate that Marxism-Leninism is a living, relevant doctrine. We may not have always succeeded, but generally we believe that the *Organizer* has improved over the last four years...in the scope and depth of coverage, in the quality of design and in the clarity and sharpness of style.

Much room for improvement remains. There is too much unevenness in

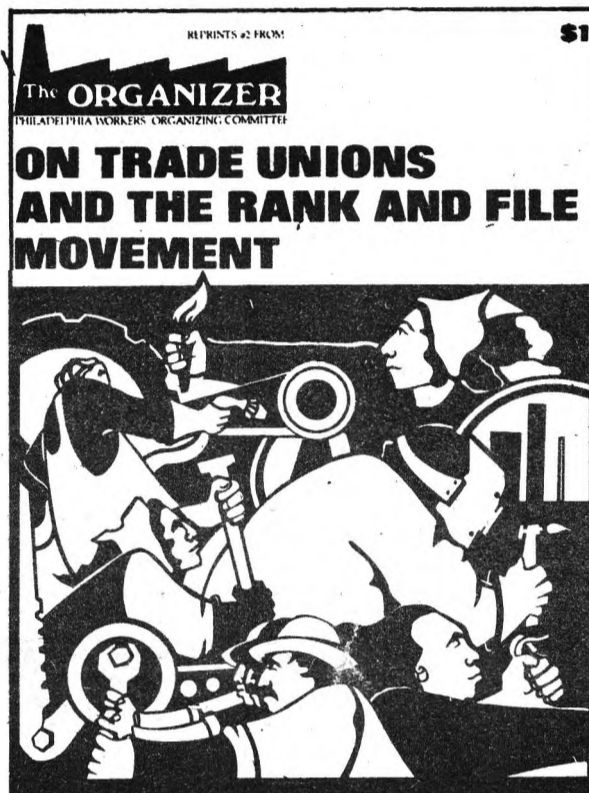
the quality of the paper's content. Production and distribution are plagued with organizational problems. Some of this is the inevitable consequence of the PWOC being a local organization short on resources and long on overworked cadre. Still much can be done to improve the newspaper even within these limitations.

At present we plan no major changes in the basic format of the paper. We will be concentrating on improving the quality of our coverage — articles that are better researched, more lively in style, and more probing in their analysis. Secondly, we are reorganizing our circulation apparatus to boost sales and subscriptions.

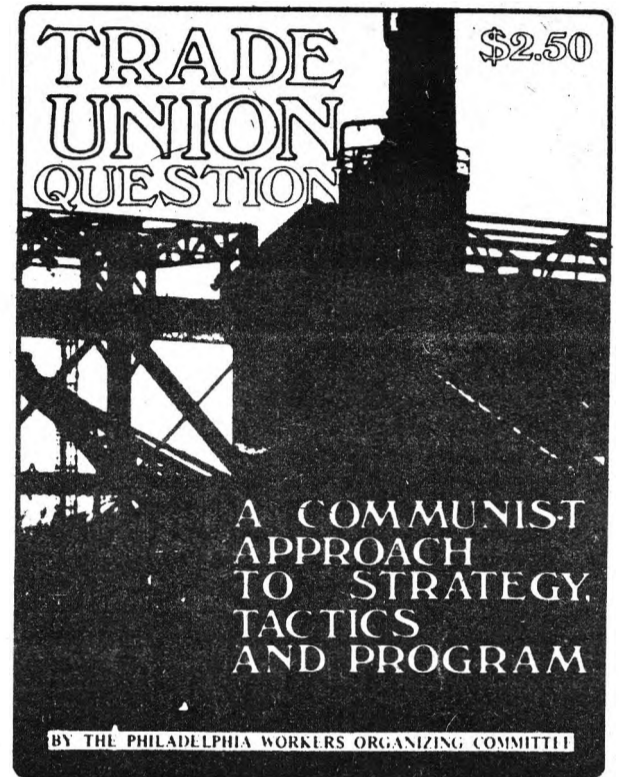
We want to thank you, our readers, for the material, moral and political support you have extended over the past four years. We have benefited from the criticisms and contributions of many readers around the country. Without the financial generosity and support of so many readers we would have been unable to make the *Organizer* a monthly newspaper. We are grateful for this support and hope that you think the *Organizer* continues to be worthy of it.



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## Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

# Who We Are



of the few — the handful of monopolists — by the rule of the many — the working people.

The masses of people in the US have always fought back against exploitation, and today the movements opposing the monopolists are growing rapidly in numbers and in intensity. What is lacking is the political leadership which can bring these movements together, deepen the consciousness of the people, and build today's struggles into a decisive and victorious revolutionary assault against Capital.

To answer this need we must have a vanguard party of the working class, based on its most conscious and committed partisans, rooted in the mass movements of all sectors of American people, and equipped with the political understanding capable of solving the strategic and tactical problems on the difficult road to revolution.

The PWOC seeks, along with like-minded organizations and individuals throughout the US, to build such a party, a genuine Communist Party. The formation of such a party will be an important step forward in the struggle of the working class and all oppressed people to build a new world on the ashes of the old.

The PWOC is a communist organization, basing itself on Marxism-Leninism, the principles of scientific socialism. We are an activist organization of Black and white, men and women workers who see the capitalist system itself as the root cause of the day-to-day problems of working people. We are committed to building a revolutionary working class movement that will overthrow the profit system and replace it with socialism.

We seek to replace the anarchy of capitalist production with a planned economy based on the needs of working people. We want to end the oppression of national minorities and women, and make equality a reality instead of the hypocritical slogan it has become in the mouths of the capitalist politicians. We work toward the replacement of the rule

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# Labor Round-up

Labor Round-Up is a regular feature of the Organizer. In this section we want to report on what's happening in different workplaces in Philadelphia. Too often workers in one shop or one local think that they are the only ones with their problems. We feel isolated when we try to deal with problems of discrimination against Black or women workers, threats of lay-offs, or harassment by management.

We aren't alone. No matter where you work, the company is trying to squeeze more profit out of you, and employers pull their tricks out of the same hat. What we need is information and communication between different industries and shops. We can learn from each other's successes and failures and aid one another when it's needed.

The Daily News and Inquirer don't find it important to report on working conditions, struggles around grievances, union elections or resistance to speed-up unless it involves a strike, and then they usually give the company side. If something very important to us as workers happens in another city — for instance a victory in a strike by nurses in Chicago or a defeat of municipal workers in San Francisco because they didn't build any coverage at all.

The Organizer thinks these things are important. We want and need reports on these issues from every workplace in Philadelphia, from federal offices to auto plants, clothing shops to SEPTA garages. And we need people from Philly's workplaces to write for us, or sit down with us and put something on paper together. Your participation will make Labor Round-Up useful in building a strong, united trade union movement in Philadelphia.

## Progressive Slate Scores Victory in AFSCME DC47

The rank and file movement in Philadelphia achieved a significant victory in late November when the entire slate of Local 2187 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME DC 47) — representing 1100 professional and technical city workers — was returned to office by a substantial margin.

The officers — Tom Cronin, President; Carol Rosenblatt, Vice-president; and Joan Horan, Secretary — were first elected in 1977 as part of the rank and file campaign which swept the do-nothing administration of Jay Kogan and company out of office. Their first year in office has been a turbulent one. City workers struck for the first time in 34 years and over 100 of their members have been laid off as part of the attack on public employees by the Rizzo administration.

These bitter struggles, led by a relatively inexperienced group of officers, serves to underscore the significance of their re-election. There are good reasons for this show of confidence by the membership of Local 2187.

As the strike coordinators for DC 47, Horan and Rosenblatt had to organize strike activity at over 250 workplaces

scattered throughout the city. As can be expected, many problems arose in the course of the strike, but Horan and Rosenblatt worked hard to maximize communication with the membership, and immediately after the strike developed a thorough evaluation of strike activities, including a self-criticism, which was disseminated and discussed by the rank and file. This approach not only built confidence in the leadership, but has brought forward new rank and file activists who are taking an active part in union affairs.

Local 2187 officers have worked hard to develop communication and real rank and file participation. They have aggressively taken up grievances which previous administrations simply tossed out.

Most important, the Progressive Action slate ran on a program to which all of their members are committed. Some of the main points are:

1. Increase communication with the membership.
2. Increase public support for city workers by expanding contacts with community groups and other unions.
3. Better strike preparation — begin preparations when demands are first formulated, not at contract deadline time. Earlier and better coordination with AFSCME DC 33.

4. Strengthen the shop steward system by increased training and education in the handling of grievances and members' political rights.

5. Work to prevent future layoffs and investigate funding alternatives, including reinstitution of the corporate net income

tax, collection of delinquent taxes from wealthy individuals, and support of the Transfer Amendment (transfer of military funds to public services at the federal level).

In addition, the slate went on record as opposing the charter change and called for "an end to the racist and anti-union tactics that are promulgated by the city administration."

The re-election of the Progressive Action slate shows that Local 2187's members know that their officers see this program not as mere campaign rhetoric, but as a real guide to action in the years to come.



The Progressive Action Slate. Top row: Ken Dow, Joan Horan, Judith Lucas, Russell Cardamore. Bottom row: Tom Paine Cronin, Carol Rosenblatt, Richard Hurd.

## Pulp & Paperworkers Fight Federal Wage Guidelines

First Carter comes out with a 7% a year wage increase guideline. Then he tells us not to fight for higher wages because oil prices are going up, but to tighten our belts instead. And now he's making sure that 15,000 striking paperworkers on the West Coast tighten their belts.

The strikers, members of the Association of Western Pulp and Paperworkers (AWPPW) from 31 mills in California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska, went on strike 5 months ago. At first several com-

panies settled quickly, the union winning their three key demands: a 2 year contract, a 21% wage increase over 2 years, and pension improvements. The union hoped this would set the pattern for the rest of the settlements. But four big companies are still holding out and the federal government is helping them.

After the strike began, Barry Bosworth, Director of the government's Council on Wage and Price Stability (COWPS), sent a letter stating that both

the union's demands and the companies counter-offer of 27% over three years, was inflationary. The union is clear that their demand is necessary for keeping its members' real wages even with inflation. Furthermore, the union said the government's action gives the companies the excuse and support they need to lower their offer and hold out longer.

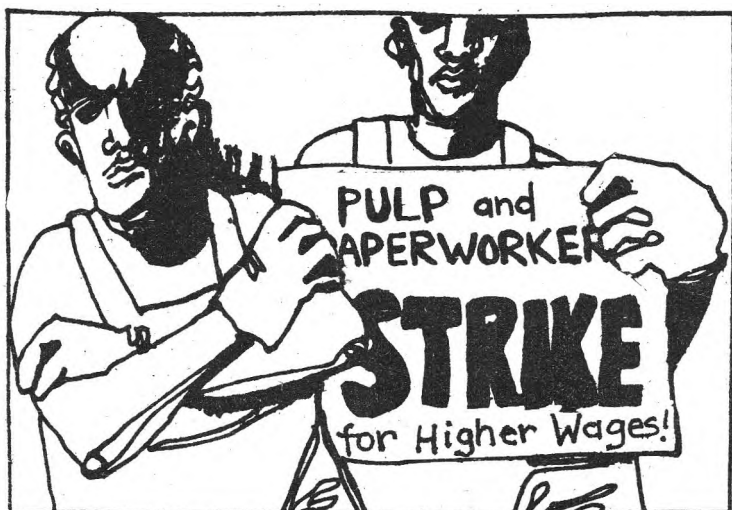
On November 14th, Bosworth sent another letter stating that the companies' last offer was the most that COWPS would approve, and that the settlements reached before Carter's "guideline" was announced could not be used to justify larger raises. This is giving the companies the ammunition they need to bust the strike and the union, a union with a militant history and a record of winning the highest standards in the industry.

The companies used to try to keep production going during strikes by using local management, but for the first time they have imported "supervisory personnel", or scabs as we commonly call them, from their non-union Southern mills. After three months on strike, the union gave up the demand for a 2 year contract. But the companies still won't agree to the 21% over 2 years wage demand. Mean-

while, in the paper industry, labor costs account for no more than 30% of production costs, so a 10% wage increase could be used to justify no more than a 3% price raise. But already, during the strike, several companies have announced price increases of 7-12%. COWPS has made no comment on this.

In response to the government's interference, the union has made the first legal challenge to the administration's wage guideline policy. They have filed a lawsuit charging that COWPS exceeded its authority and interfered in AWPPW members' right to free collective bargaining guaranteed by federal law. The suit asks the court to force COWPS to withdraw the Nov. 14th letter and prevent the government from enforcing it.

The outcome of this strike is important. First of all, as an International Woodworkers Association (IWA) staffer put it, "It's not just their struggle... if they get away with breaking the union, someone's next, and we bargain in 1980." And IWA locals and Longshoremen locals have made contributions to nearby AWPPW locals in support. Also, other contracts including the Teamsters and SEPTA are running out soon and you can bet the government is going to try to pull the same thing. This is a time when the government and companies together are trying to cut back workers' standard of living and bust unions. And the rank and file everywhere should support and take example from the militancy of the AWPPW. It is the union's hope that defying the government's intervention will set a precedent for all trade unionists.



# The Lament of a SEPTA Driver: "We're Not Mean, We're Just Human"



Who's got the world's dirtiest subways? Who has trolleys that belong in museums actually running out on the streets? Who operates more unsafe, decrepit buses than anyone else? Why SEPTA, of course! Some say SEPTA has the meanest drivers in the world too. I'm a SEPTA driver, and I don't think that's really true. We're not mean — we're just human. I know it's bad for the riders, but let me tell you a little story from the driver's point of view.

About 7 PM on your average Christmas shopping weeknight I'm driving the route 38 bus around 6th and Chestnut when I pass a bus, which is supposed to be down the street, broken down due to overheating. Since we run every half-hour, I know that many of my passengers have been waiting in the cold for an hour. At every stop, irate customers are asking me where the hell I have been. I can't help but overhear the conversations about crowded conditions, unsafe buses, late service and breakdowns. As the wind blows in through the hole in the floor, billowing my pantleg out like a parachute, I'm contemplating how improvements in our working conditions are directly related to poor service in Philly.

The bus is beginning to fill rapidly since there has been no service on this line for awhile. As I approach 18th and JFK, I have a decision to make. The bus is full to the yellow line. That means I must pass up those who have been waiting on the next two corners, possibly for an hour, unless I fill the stairs.

Everyone has been passed up by a bus that looks like it has room up front and wondered why. I always have to think about it because I have this vivid memory of a bus so crowded I had to ask people to move to see my right side mirror. As I was making a lane change, one of those passengers inadvertently blocked by vision and I inadvertently smashed a Philadelphia police car. The boss told me I exercised poor judgment in filling the bus that full. So if I used good judgment, I should pass up these people, however, I'm a slow learner.

Finally everyone is on the bus and on the way to the Schuylkill. Since I was extremely frustrated with traffic and SEPTA's inferior service, I just had to explain about the breakdowns. "Folks, the reason you all waited so long is because the 6:30 bus overheated. It overheated because most of the oil had

dripped out of the crankcase. To remedy this situation the mechanic brought more oil, refilled the crankcase and took the bus back to the depot. It will be out on the street again tomorrow without the crankcase fixed."

This situation continues to happen because SEPTA has continued to cut back on maintenance employees and spare parts funding. The effects of cutting 155 maintenance employees and 12% of the spare parts budget in 1975 are still being felt.

For instance, at the Allegheny depot we have five mechanics on the evening shift and three on the night shift to service approximately 200 buses. In addition, these workers must go out on the street and service broken down buses. To illustrate the impossible task facing these

workers, it takes one mechanic eight hours to put a set of brakes on two wheels of one bus.

It seems to this driver that the key in this upcoming contract struggle is for the operators and workers of SEPTA and the riding public to see our common goals. Together, we must focus our anger and frustration with poor service and working conditions on the Transit Authority and management where it belongs. Transit Workers Union local 234 has to recognize that every public workers' strike, by its very nature, is a political issue and must mobilize the community around a platform both the workers and the riding public can support.

Next time a bus passes you by after you've been waiting for an hour, think about it.

## Overtime ... What Happened to the 40 Hour Week?

by a paperworker

*The man slowly stumbles through the doorway as he enters the house. He gently eases himself into the soft chair in the middle of the living room, heaving a heavy sigh as he settles himself down. His face shows the deep lines of someone who has spent too many hours working. The vacant distant eyes look at the wall as he tries to forget what the day has been like. His wife who has just finished the dinner dishes, softly walks over to the man. "We ate hours ago," she says as a young child enters the room. The child walks over to the man, looks at him up and down, points a finger at him and says, "Mommy, who is that?" "That's your father," is all she replies.*

Is this a story of a hundred years ago, when workers put in 12, 14 and 16 hours

every day... when workers grew old at age 35 and their children didn't even know them for they went to the job before the kids woke up and returned home after the children had gone to sleep? No, this is not about another time. This is about OVERTIME!

### COSTS OF OVERTIME

I work at the Container Corporation of America (C.C.A.). We make paper. We get paid roughly six dollars an hour. Four or five years ago that was a good wage. These days it's not great. So people work overtime — all the overtime they want. Some people never take days off; they work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, every week. They have nice houses and real nice cars. Too bad they never get a chance to spend any time in those houses

or drive their cars. Some guys don't even get to drive their cars to work since they sleep in them in the parking lot.

Some people might think being able to make all that extra overtime money is a good deal and that C.C.A. is a great outfit. Well, I've got nothing against making a good living — working people deserve to live well. Without us nothing gets produced, nothing runs. We deserve nice homes and cars. But we should be able to make a living working 40 hours a week. The answer is higher wages, not overtime. Overtime is an individual solution and a big stumbling block to our getting what we really deserve. We deserve big paychecks. But we also deserve some leisure time in our lives.

Leisure time doesn't just mean getting out to bowl or watching the tube. A marriage, raising a family — these take time and energy. Friendships take time. Those extra hours in the plant take their toll on our human relationships. And there is no time to read, to think, to create. Making paper isn't the most challenging and exciting way to spend your hours. Few industrial jobs are. All the more reason why the time off the job becomes important. Overtime turns us into machines.

Overtime gets in the way of us seeing our common interests as workers. Instead of joining together, working collectively to win a higher wage, each worker individually puts in those extra hours. An "every man for himself" mentality develops. Our ability to win fights for better conditions is undermined across the board. Workers are too tired to organize. There is no time left for union meetings, putting out leaflets, getting together to discuss what to do about common problems.

We have a common interest not only as workers in a single plant, but as a class. Millions of workers are unemployed. If we stopped working all that overtime, C.C.A. would be forced to hire some of them. During the depression the unity that developed between employed and unemployed workers was one of the big reasons the working class managed to unionize basic industry and win a whole series of reforms like unemployment compensation from the government. Unemployed workers refused to scab when em-

ployed workers went on strike. Employed workers refused to work overtime, forcing the companies to hire the jobless.

If we stopped working all that overtime at C.C.A. and put our minds to winning a better contract, we could probably get a wage increase big enough to make much of that overtime unnecessary.

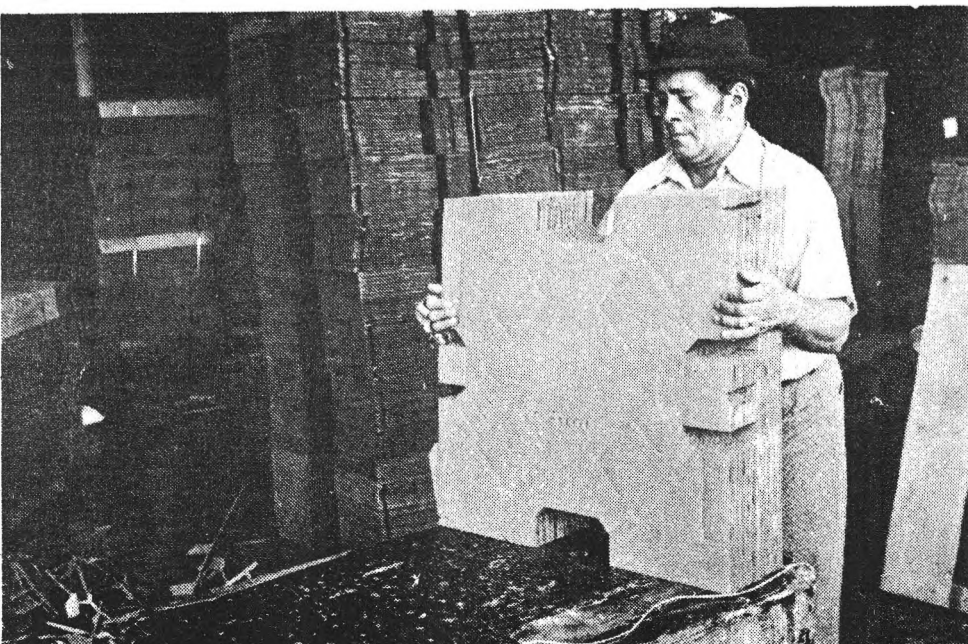
### GETTING TRAPPED

Most of the people at C.C.A. don't like having to work so much overtime. They've gotten themselves in a position where they don't have a choice. Say by working straight time you make \$13,000 a year. With the overtime you can make \$20,000 or even \$25,000. There's this car you want; there's this color TV you want; there's this new house you want. With the overtime you figure out that you can make the downpayment and handle the monthly charges. You buy, and you're trapped. You can only keep up with all those bills if you work the overtime.

Now you've got to be careful not to get on the foreman's bad side because he can take that overtime away. You've got to take the grief that he gives you. You're exhausted, but you don't dare call in sick. You can't afford it and the boss might get mad. You're caught on the treadmill — an overtime junkie.

And don't get the idea C.C.A. is losing money paying us time and a half. Most companies prefer to pay overtime rather than hire new workers. The main reason is that by hiring new workers the company would have to pay the additional benefits — life insurance, Blue Cross-Blue Shield, holidays, vacations, pensions, unemployment insurance, and so forth. The costs of these benefits is far greater than the costs of paying time and a half to the existing work force. Also at C.C.A. they get more than their money's worth out of you on overtime. I've heard foremen say: "You're getting paid at time and a half, so I expect you to work at time and a half."

On the surface it may look like workers a C.C.A. have a good thing going with the fattened paychecks. But the truth is that the workers are losing out in more ways than one and, as usual, the company is crying all the way to the bank.



# Detroit Conference . . . Autoworkers Map Contract Campaign

by Bruce Bodner

*Bruce Bodner is a skilled tradesman at the Red Lion Budd plant, a member of UAW No. 92, and a member of the Blue Ribbon Group, a rank and file caucus at the plant.*

In early December autoworkers from across the country met in Detroit to organize a fight for a decent contract in 1979. The conference drew more than 75 delegates, representing some 20 rank & file organizations, ranging from locally based caucuses to the Independent Skilled Trades Council, and included a number of elected local officials. In the course of hammering out the key demands of auto workers in the coming contract struggle, the delegates addressed the question of building a national organization and debated the central strategic questions facing the movement. Two distinct tendencies emerged at the conference, contending on all the major issues. Four main points divided the delegates.

## TWO PERSPECTIVES

First, there were two different views of the significance of the conference and the forces represented there. One point of view belittled the strength of the organizations represented and emphasized the importance of other forces, namely the Cost of Living for Retirees Group, the Short Work Week Committee and the Independent Skilled Trades Council.

The opponents of this view argued that the conference was the broadest single grouping of rank & file forces in the UAW. The influence of the organizations represented is indeed modest, but

is clearly growing. The other organizations cited, while certainly important, are all ill equipped to be the center of a national effort to mobilize all sections of the UAW membership. These groupings are all organized around a single issue or based only on one section of the membership. Because of these limitations, an all sided program capable of rallying the whole membership is unlikely to come from these quarters.

These differences naturally produced different accessions of how to go about building a national organization. The one tendency wanted to defer any discussion of this question until after the contract struggle and limit the role of conference participants to an ad hoc grouping around a contract program.

The other point of view urged the development of a plan for building a national organization now. This tendency saw utilizing the contract struggle as a means of laying the foundations for national organization. Many delegates spoke on the need for building strong regional organizations to enhance rank & file influence on contract negotiations.

Underlying these differences were two divergent views of the present character of the rank & file movement. Those who saw the conference as having a minimal significance see white skilled tradesmen as the most militant and leading element in the movement. The other side of this view is that production workers, particularly Black workers, are presently demoralized and largely inactive.

This characterization of the movement sharply contradicted the experience of most of the delegates. While

skilled tradesmen grouped in the Independent Skilled Trades Council have been an organized and militant force, in most locals the skilled trades have been a bulwark of conservatism. The impetus for a fighting, democratic policy in the UAW in most of the locals represented has come from the production workers. Black production workers have been most responsive to the call for class struggle unionism in the UAW and have provided much of the emerging leadership in this movement.

The final and most fundamental disagreement at the conference centered on the question of how to build unity between production workers and skilled tradesmen and between Black and white auto workers. It was this question, more than any other, which drew people toward one pole of the debate or the other:

One view opposed a contract demand that would call for equality in hiring and upgrading, seeking to bridge the historic division between Black and white by insuring equal access into the presently lily white skilled trades. The proponents of this view argued that to raise any demand for affirmative action, even one that in no way affected the seniority of those presently in the trades, would inevitably isolate the movement by alienating the white workers.

Those who supported affirmative action pointed out that the exclusion of Black workers from the trades is the single most glaring expression of the racism of the auto corporations. If white workers, particularly skilled tradesmen, remain silent in the face of this, how can a truly united movement expect to develop?

Those who have failed to take up the demand for equality, including those represented at the conference, have been unable, no matter how many years of experience they possess, to build lasting unity between Black & white. They have failed precisely because of this weakness. They have raised demands around jobs and wages that speak to the interests of all autoworkers but because they have failed to incorporate into their program the demand for equality, they have been unable to speak to the divisions within our union.

The notion that to raise the demand for affirmative action is a ticket to isolation rests on the defeatist view that the white workers are somehow unable to grasp their own class interests. Ironically those who opposed the demand for affirmative action saw themselves as the champions of the white workers. But in fact, all they championed was what is backward in the thinking of the white workers. The white workers, when presented with a clear and concrete analysis, can be won to taking up the struggle against racism as their own. The conference itself confirmed this as white and Black workers rallied to defeat the anti-affirmative action perspective.

## CONFERENCE A STEP FORWARD

At the conclusion of the debate a resolution was adopted calling on the movement, now designated, Autoworkers for a Better Contract, to focus on six basic points in its national work around the 1979 contract. The six point program would address itself to wages, jobs, the

(continued on page 18)

# Can Sun Ship Afford a Decent Contract ?

On January 4th the contract between Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Co. and Local 802 of the Boilermakers Union ran out. For the last year the company, echoed by the union leadership, has painted a bleak financial picture of the shipyard. The employers hope to black-mail the workers into accepting a lousy contract. They want to limit wage increases to 7%, cut back on days off, weaken union protection, shut down the dispensary and eliminate job classifications to open the door to unlimited speed up. Work harder for less pay — this is the company line. According to the employ-

ers, increases in productivity and labor-management harmony are the only ways to save the shipyard and its jobs.

## WHERE THE COMPANY GETS ITS FACTS

Is Sun Ship really tottering on the brink of bankruptcy? It is true that the shipbuilding industry has taken a downward turn and Sun Ship lost money in 1977. But the company distorts the meaning of these facts. First of all the main source of the company's informa-

tion, the American Council of Shipbuilders, can't be considered reliable. The Council is made up of shipyard owners and managers. Its sole purpose is to lobby for government handouts and favorable legislation from Congress. To justify these subsidies the owners naturally must show they are too broke to make it without them.

For example, two yards that have been portrayed as being in bad shape, Electric Boat of Groton, Conn. and Bethlehem Steel at Sparrows Point, Md. are both on the upswing. Electric Boat claims to have ten years of work and is so desperate for workers that they are offering to pay moving expenses and provide free housing for anyone who will relocate. Bethlehem Steel, rumored to be closing, is also advertising for more workers, has plenty of new jobs and recently signed a contract with the union which included wage increases and a cost of living clause.

The reports of an imminent death for Sun Ship are also exaggerated to say the least. While the company told the workers it lost \$40 million in 1977, in its annual report to stockholders, management put the figure at \$20 million. According to the report the deficit was "due to overruns on construction of tankers as well as the write-off of certain claims and write down of inventory values." Put in plain english — because it pushed production at the cost of quality, then failed to pass inspections or meet deadlines. The company then exaggerated its losses in order to get a big tax write-off.

Even if these deficits continued, Sun is unlikely to unload the yard. Aside from the recent large investment in the north yard, the company has \$43 million in new investments since the early '70's to think about. They want a return on this capital and can't afford to sustain the losses involved if they were to sell or shut down the yard. In addition, in 1975, management set up a subsidiary, Totem

Ocean Trailer Express, which depends on the ship yard for roll on, roll off, container ships. Clearly the Sun Co.'s plans have a place in the future for Sun Ship.

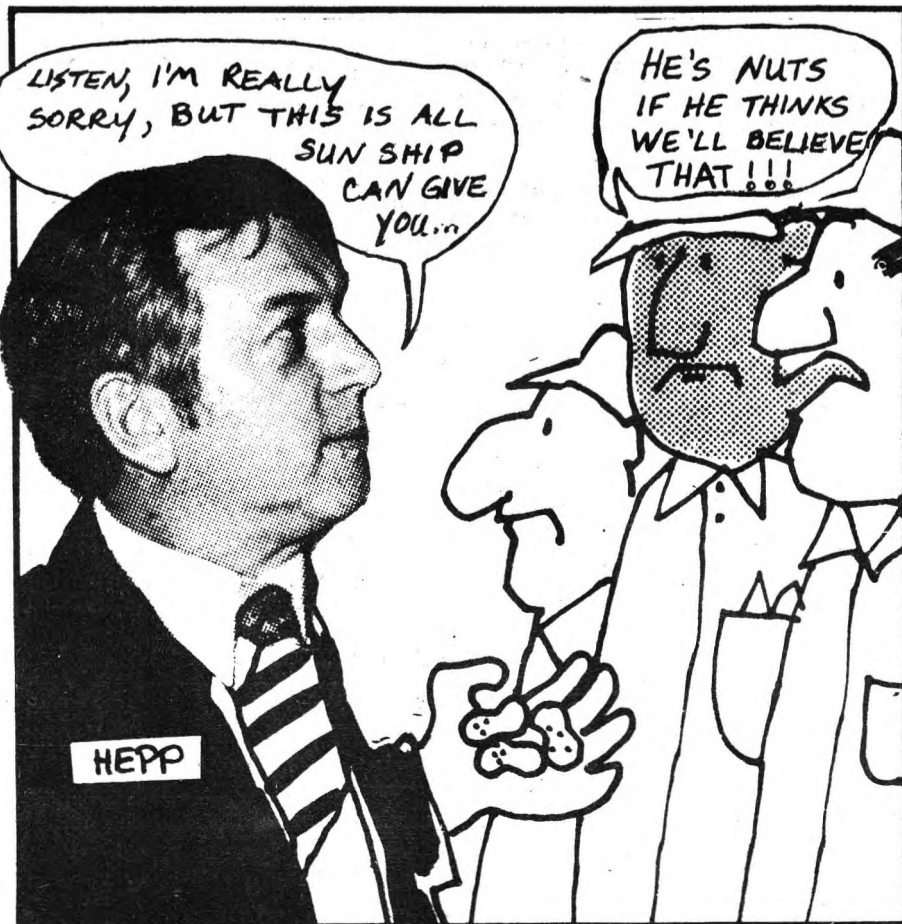
## PITY THE POOR SHIPYARD OWNER

Peter Hepp, management's top dog, talks about the finances of Sun Ship as if it were the local corner candy store. Sun Ship is completely owned and controlled by Sun Co. Inc. The parent company is a diversified, multi-national conglomerate. Sun is among the 13 largest oil companies in the US. In 1977, the year Sun Ship lost money, the parent company reported a profit of \$361.9 million. Its profit rate that year was a whopping 13.1%, well above the national average. In 1978 the company expects to do even better, having reported a 5% increase for its second quarter.

Each one of Sun Company's 28,000 workers made \$22,000 in profits for the company last year. The company's maximum offer of a 7% wage increase would not even amount to 5% of the profits the workers have made for the employers. And in the face of double digit inflation, this "increase" will be more like a decrease in wages without cost of living protection.

Peter Hepp, the man who forced an 18 month strike and brought in scabs by boat at the Sun Oil refinery in Marcus Hook, expects that the workers' fighting spirit will have been broken by long layoffs and his propaganda about the desperate financial plight of the company. He hopes to get a contract that will lay the groundwork for even more brutal exploitation of Sun workers.

The fact is that it is not the company that is in economic trouble — it's the Sun Ship workers. Sun can afford a decent contract and the workers have every right to demand it.



# BLACK POLITICAL CONVENTION

by John Malachi and Jim Griffin

In the last week of December a broad range of Black activists came together to develop a common agenda now that the Rizzo era is drawing to a close. The Black Political Convention was sponsored and organized by the Black United Front (BUF), a broad based organization which grew out of the charter change struggle.

The Convention demonstrated conclusively that the political energy unleashed by the fight to deny Rizzo another term has by no means spent itself and that the BUF has staying power. The workshops and plenary sessions spanning the holidays drew upwards toward 1500 people. Delegates encompassed most of the Black organizations in the city. The same elements who constituted the successful coalition against the charter change were on hand.

Progressive elected officials like State Representative Dave Richardson, community activists like Sister Falaka Fattah and revolutionary nationalists like the cadres of the African Peoples Party all played important roles. Marxist-Leninists, while not numerous, were also active participants.

But the Convention was not limited to veterans of the political scene. As one delegate said, "There are a whole lot of ordinary Black working people and people off the street here and they're making their voices heard." The Convention reflected the overall growth of activism and political understanding that has developed in the Black community over the last year.

## A PLATFORM FOR STRUGGLE

In calling the Convention the BUF had several related aims. The first was to adopt a platform that would concretize the urgent needs and demands of the masses of Black and Hispanic people. This was achieved through a series of ten workshops which developed proposals to submit to the plenary

sessions. One purpose of adopting the platform was to provide a basis for evaluating the candidates and influencing next year's election. But more importantly the platform raises demands that should become the focal point for struggle over the coming years regardless of who is in office. Finally the Convention was expected to determine the future of the BUF, giving it a more formal structure and clear direction.

The Convention also adopted resolutions condemning U.S. involvement in South Africa, endorsing justice for MOVE, calling for a decent standard of living for welfare recipients and enforcement of affirmative action programs in firms doing business with the city... to name just a few.

## FOR A BLACK INDEPENDENT PARTY

The Convention also demonstrated an understanding that neither the Republican or Democratic Parties provide a vehicle for winning these demands. A resolution calling for the BUF to work for the formation of an independent Black political party was adopted.

A final session of the Convention will hear the candidates for Mayor and the row offices and decide on endorsements. Charles Bowser would appear to be the only mayoralty candidate who stands a chance of gaining endorsement.

The show of independence on the part of the Convention is an encouraging sign that the Black people's movement is not about to become the appendage of any candidate's political campaign.

The Convention platform was not adopted without struggle. In the economic development workshop there was an attempt to tie the Convention to a Black capitalist program with an almost exclusive emphasis on building Black owned businesses and financial institutions. This current was soundly



Guardian/cpi

defeated. The Convention was deadlocked over the question of desegregation of schools versus an emphasis on community control.

While the Convention succeeded in convening a broadly based conference and adopting a progressive platform, some shortcomings stand out. Black trade unionists, as an organized force, both leaders and rank & filers, were woefully under represented at the conference and the platform only partially reflects their concerns.

Secondly, the platform does not speak to the question of funding expanded city services. Without a demand calling for the shifting of the tax burden from the working people to the wealthy and the corporations, the support for the rest of the program is narrowed.

Finally, while the Convention was relatively free of the most simplistic forms of narrow nationalism, there continues to be a failure to grasp that the whole multi-national working class has an objective interest in winning the kind of platform articulated by the Convention. While there was recognition of the need for tactical alliances with whites, the necessity of a strategic alliance between the movements of the oppressed nationalities and the multi-national working class remains a distinctly minority viewpoint within the movement.

These weaknesses should not blind anyone to the fact that the Convention marks a great step forward and that the movement represented by it is the cutting edge for progress in the city of Philadelphia at the present time.

# Tayoun Uncorks Police Complaint Bill

by JOE LEWANDOWSKI

Two shows opened in City Council in December. In the "Whitman Park Circus" Councilman Jimmy Tayoun, arrayed in the bright lights of TV cameras, brought down the house with his performance in the center ring. Doing a passable imitation of Frank Rizzo, Tayoun ably demonstrated that he is equally talented at stomping and shrieking.

The second production unimaginatively entitled "The Public Safety Com-

mittee Hearings on Police Complaint Procedure" brought out another, more dignified side of Councilman Tayoun. As chairman of the public safety committee he neither whooped nor did he holler. In fact, he stayed seated in his chair the entire time.

In this role, Tayoun played the statesman. The purpose of the hearings was to examine the testimony concerning two bills about police complaint procedure. The bill proposed by Councilman

Coleman which would have established a police-appointed "civilian" investigatory committee was declared dead on arrival. It failed to draw much community support.

The other piece of legislation, Bill 1063, is supported by a coalition of nearly 50 community, church and legal organizations and also has the endorsement of the district attorney's office and the Philadelphia Bar Association. Basically, this bill amends the present non-functional police complaint procedure to make it more open to public scrutiny. Although Tayoun obviously likes the present set-up just fine, he felt the pressure of broad based support for further reforms of the police complaint system. "There are many similarities between 1063 and the current police procedures," Tayoun noted. "We are like Begin and Sadat, it's a matter of nuance."

Councilman Tayoun's differing performances are motivated by one thing. He along with scores of other Democratic politicians, would love to be mayor. A down-the-line Rizzo supporter, Tayoun realizes that he can pick up a lot of the hard-core Rizzoites by milking the racist reaction to a housing project in Whitman Park.

On the other hand, Tayoun is well aware of the lessons of Rizzo's defeat. He cannot afford to alienate all of the forces who are represented in the coalition supporting Bill 1063 if he is to have a crack at the mayor's race. Thus, Jimmy Tayoun may be having second thoughts about staying in Rizzo's camp with a hard-line stand on police complaint procedures.

The truth is that Bill 1063 is a pretty tame animal. It keeps the present police procedures pretty much intact, but it does provide for public examination of completed complaint investigations. It would also insure that investigations were handled outside of the police district of the accused police officer, and it provides for a timetable at each step of the investigation as well as a method that insures that complaints wouldn't get "lost."

Tayoun will be negotiating for a bill that looks good on paper but which will not substantially change the present system. He would probably settle for a bill that would mildly irritate the Fraternal Order of Police while getting some support from the more conservative groups in the coalition. At this point it's hard to say if Tayoun and his committee could be pushed much beyond that position.

While any brake on police brutality is welcomed, Bill 1063 is not the legislation that will have much impact on police abuse. The sole power of investigation and of discipline will stay under the thumb of the police commissioner. Many of the supporters of Bill 1063 would like to see stronger limits on police abuse, but they point out that the City Charter states that the police commissioner has sole disciplinary powers in dealing with complaints.

On this point as well as many others, the city must be challenged. The only real brake on police abuse can come from an elected civilian review board with the power to indict and prosecute officers who are guilty of wrongdoing.



Police attack on individuals within our city has increased in recent years, especially in Black and Hispanic neighborhoods. An elected civilian review board with the power to indict and prosecute police officers would help curb police abuse.

# Marcase and the School Board Team Up in Rip-Off

by Jack Owens

Six days after Philadelphians overwhelmingly rejected Frank Rizzo's attempt to become mayor for life, the Philadelphia School Board demonstrated the kind of blatant cronyism for which the Rizzo administration is notorious.

In an unprecedented display of arrogance, the Board voted on Nov. 13 to give School Superintendent Michael Marcase an immediate \$4000 raise (to \$54,000 per year) and to extend his contract from Feb. 1, 1981, to July 1, 1984. Fearful of public reaction, the Board omitted this proposal from the written agenda of the Nov. 13 meeting.

The Board attempted to justify this outrageous act by maintaining that they were trying to "insulate" the Superintendent from politics. They were trying to "insulate" him all right — from being canned by Rizzo's successor who will take office in January 1980. If the contract extension holds up it will cost the city some \$200,000 to buy up the remainder of Marcase's contract.

## SCANDALS HAUNT MARCASE

This episode is only the latest in a series of controversies which have swirled around the Superintendent since he was appointed by Rizzo in 1975. Soon after his appointment, it was revealed that he received his "Ph.D." from a mail-order university operating out of a Sarasota, Florida, motel!

The DA's office is looking into allegations that Marcase improperly accumulated 22 vacation days and had a school district employee build a sundeck on his

NJ shore home at taxpayers' expense. Of the latter incident City Controller William Klenk has stated that school district records have been altered in "an attempt to cover up" the employee's time.

It has also been revealed that Marcase and other top school officials received "discounted" appliances and other favors from an electrical contractor who performed millions of dollars of work for the school district.

## THE MARCASE PROGRAM

Marcase's educational philosophy and program have been even more destructive. He has consistently voted for layoffs of teachers and other school employees, and has fought to eliminate innovative programs, many initiated by former Superintendent Mark Shedd who Rizzo fired two weeks after taking office in 1972. In rationalizing the contract extension, Marcase explained that he needed the extra time to rid the system of Shedd's "overly progressive" ideas.

As a friend of Frank Rizzo it is not surprising that Marcase's policies have been shot through with racism. Massive program cuts over the past two years have deeply affected the system's 62% minority students. Marcase has opposed meaningful school desegregation. The watered down "voluntary" desegregation plan now on the books has been criticized by the US Commission on Civil Rights which said, "some Philadelphians regard their city government as opposing desegregation." That's the understatement of the year!



Throughout his tenure, Marcase has been careful to protect the huge bank profits made from rip-off loans to the School District. He has been only too willing to turn virtual control of public education over to a group of bankers led by his friend, First Pennsylvania Chairman, John Bunting.

## OPPOSITION MOUNTS

The enraged public response to the latest scandal shows that Marcase and his rubber-stamp School Board have put their hands in the public cookie jar one time too often.

Mayoral candidates, community and civic groups of every stripe have condemned the vote. The Citizens Committee on Public Education (CCPE) has filed suit to nullify the contract, and the Parents Union has packed two successive Board meetings with protesters chanting "Rescind or Resign".

Most indicative of Marcase's political isolation has been a 13-3 vote in the Rizzo-dominated City Council urging the School Board to rescind the contract extension. While the resolution is not binding on them, Council has pointedly reminded the Board that the school budget is coming up for Council review in the next few months.

Marcase's immediate reaction to the outcry was the smug comment that the new contract was "signed, sealed, and de-

livered". By the end of the first week, however, public anger was running so high that Marcase offered to put off his \$4000 raise until July, 1979. When this obvious ploy failed to deflect the storm, Marcase, on December 5, agreed to consider a proposal by John Bunting that he shorten his contract extension to 1982. CCPE however is continuing its lawsuit and City Council leaders have repeated their demand that the Board rescind the vote.

While we undoubtedly need to rid our city of its reactionary School Board and Superintendent, we should remember that Rizzoism will live on long after Frank Rizzo and Michael Marcase are just bad memories.

Keep in mind that Rizzo will appoint three new School Board members to six year terms in December 1979, just one month before he leaves office.

The School Board must be made more accountable to the people. For starters, it should be elected, instead of appointed by the Mayor. All the mayoralty candidates will undoubtedly have no problem in calling for Marcase's head. But are they willing to endorse the idea of an elected Board? People who are concerned with putting an end to puppet boards which serve the political ambitions of whoever is in City Hall, instead of the students and community, should be asking this question.

# "United Slate" Challenges Ryan and Sullivan in Upcoming PFT Elections

by Betty Coots

On September 14 this year, soon after the recent contract settlement of the Phila. Federation of Teachers, two members of the PFT announced that they would challenge the present leadership of the union in the upcoming union election. Calling themselves the "United Slate" (US), the leadership of this group is comprised of several union staffers and a member of the PFT Executive Board. Union officers John Ryan (chief negotiator), Frank Sullivan (Pres.) and Sunny Richman (Vice Pres.) and their "Collective Bargaining Slate" (CB) have held their positions in this union and won every election since 1965 when the PFT first received collective bargaining certification. Since that time, the PFT has grown to include teachers, teaching and non-teaching aides, secretaries, day care and get set workers, counselors, and other employees making up 11 bargaining units in all. Union membership has increased to about 21,000, making it the largest and one of the strongest locals in the state.

## THE RYAN - SULLIVAN RECORD

In spite of these gains the present PFT leadership is vulnerable on a number of counts. Most seriously, the PFT under Ryan and Sullivan has become increasingly isolated from its natural allies — parents, students and community organizations who share with the union a vital interest in the quality of education. In a

school system where 68% of the students are Black or Spanish speaking, the PFT has generally failed to address the question of racial inequality which is at the heart of the failure of the Philadelphia school system. The PFT leadership has been either hostile or indifferent to the demands of Black students and parents. It has failed to champion the cause of desegregated, quality education for all Philadelphia school children.

These shortcomings have played into the hands of anti-union forces who portray teachers as money hungry and indifferent to the educational needs of their students. This image undercuts the union's ability to win gains for its members. The failure to take a strong stand against racism has also alienated many Black teachers who make up 36% of the public school faculty.

To this the United Slate adds "inept, inconsistent, and lax enforcement of the contract", mishandling grievances and denying the rank & file participation in making union policy. Under the heavy hand of Ryan, Sullivan and company, union meetings are stacked against democratic debate and discussion. Votes are railroaded, microphones turned off and agendas closed at the whim of the leadership. US has also accused the CB leadership of fiscal irresponsibility in the management of the union's health and welfare and legal funds.

Finally there is dissatisfaction among many teachers with the recent contract

settlement which produced a temporary increase in class size and extended the layoffs of many teachers till February. Concurrent with this situation there were teacher transfers to comply with federal desegregation guidelines, leaving many teachers teaching new grades of subjects for which they are not trained. Had the School Board complied with the guidelines earlier, the transfers could have been achieved in a more orderly way.

## THE US ALTERNATIVE

The US platform, reflecting the contribution of militant and progressive rank and filers, proposes to "pursue the ideals of true democracy, trade unionism and education" and asserts a commitment to:

1. Quality, integrated education through ongoing partnership with students, parents, community and other civic groups.
2. Opposition to racism, sexism and all other forms of discrimination;
3. Firm, consistent representation for all bargaining units;
4. Restoration of democracy within the union by establishing a constitutional revisions committee;
5. Restoration of old and new business and good and welfare items on the agenda of membership meetings;
6. More rank and file participation in conventions and conferences;
7. Fiscal responsibility;
8. Membership input into programs provided by Health and Welfare Fund;
9. Increasing staff services and support of the role of Building Representatives

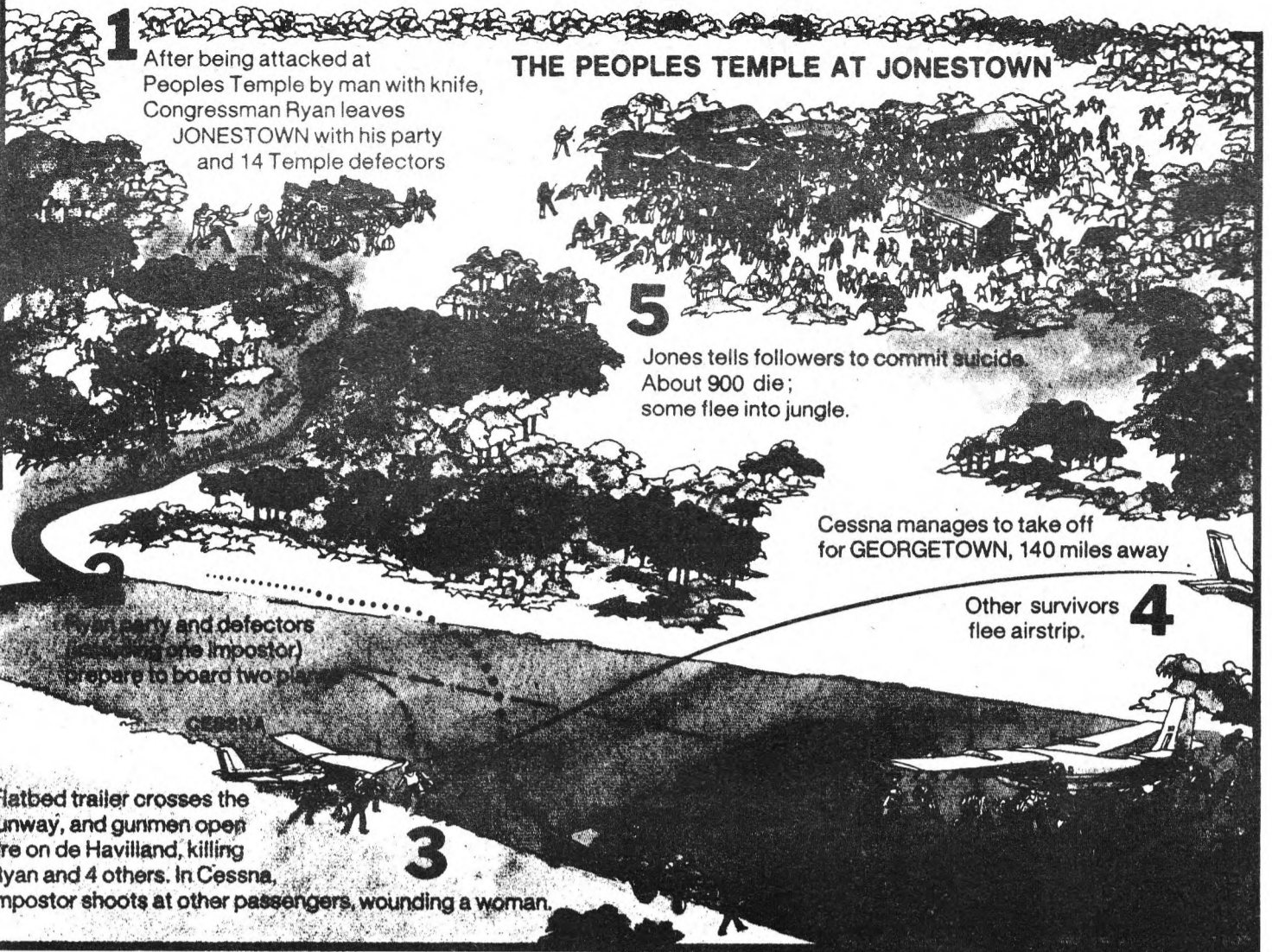
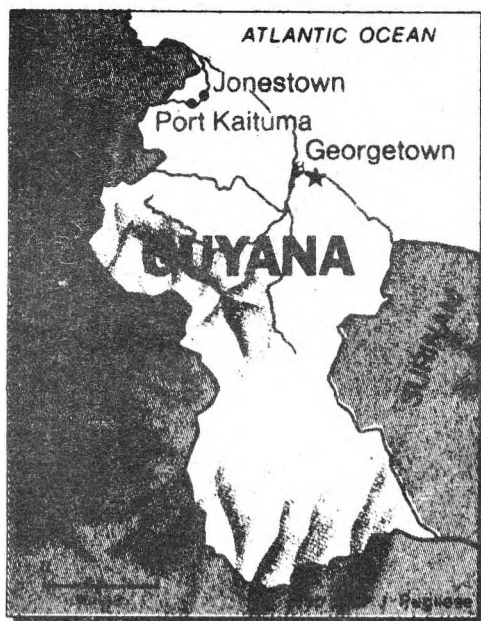
This platform represents a real step forward. It will be up to organized rank and file forces like the School Employee Action Caucus (SEAC) to build broad support for these planks and to insure that the US leadership delivers them if they win the election.

While US has correctly criticized the disruption caused by teacher transfers, it needs to make it clearer that it supports the objective of the transfers — a desegregated faculty. Also it must speak more concretely to the needs of Black workers — many of whom are at the lowest end of the pay scale. These aspects of its program must be strengthened if the slate is genuinely to represent all the members and build a strong, united movement.

Winning is not going to be easy for the United Slate. Last election only 4,000 members voted. US must rouse the broadest support to score a victory.

While Ryan and Sullivan maintain they are not worried about this challenge to their leadership, their actions suggest they are running scared. After the formation of the United Slate, candidate John Murray and two other union staffers openly associated with the slate were unceremoniously fired from their jobs by the Ryan - Sullivan team.

The CB controlled Executive Board decides when to hold the election which can come anytime between January and June of next year.



**1** After being attacked at Peoples Temple by man with knife, Congressman Ryan leaves JONESTOWN with his party and 14 Temple defectors

**THE PEOPLES TEMPLE AT JONESTOWN**

**5** Jones tells followers to commit suicide. About 900 die; some flee into jungle.

Cessna manages to take off for GEORGETOWN, 140 miles away

Other survivors flee airstrip. **4**

Four Guyanese soldiers guard a grounded plane

Party and defectors (including impostor) prepare to board two planes

Flatbed trailer crosses the runway, and gunmen open fire on de Havilland, killing Ryan and 4 others. In Cessna, impostor shoots at other passengers, wounding a woman. **3**

# Jonestown: Paradise Lost

by Ron Whitehorne

*"Dad can make us feel so small but still so big."*

—Letter to Jim Jones from a Temple member.

The gory details of the deaths of over 900 people in Jonestown, Guyana, are by now well known. Countless TV broadcasts, newspaper articles and a rash of hastily thrown together books have related the bizarre story of the People's Temple and its leader the Rev. Jim Jones. Still the question remains: How could hundreds of people knowingly drink Kool-Aid laced with cyanide, administer this deadly potion to their children, and then quietly lay down to die?

Part of the answer lies with the personality of the Rev. Jim Jones. How does a man of God, known for his social commitment and concern for people, come to order his flock to destroy themselves? It is not enough to say that Jones was mad, although he clearly was. Early in this man's career Jones's high ideals became more and more bound up with blind obedience and service to himself. As he acquired power this egoism became more pronounced and at some unknown point gave way to megalomania. The border line between his fantasies about himself and reality became blurred and finally disappeared. In his own mind the interests of humanity and the twisted needs of Jim Jones became one and the same.

According to survivors who knew him, Jones was pre-occupied with his place in history. He described himself as the reincarnation of Christ, Buddha, and Lenin, depending on his whim, and may well have believed it. In order to bolster this image of himself as an all-powerful, world-historic figure, Jones was compelled to create a closed world in which he was worshipped and obeyed. He required daily demonstrations of his power over others and he could tolerate no criticism or opposition. This explains the cruel punishments, the humiliating criticism, and the stringent discipline that prevailed in the cult.

Members were not only beaten in Jones's presence, but were expected to say "Thank you, father", afterwards. The surrender of all property and income to Jones had less to do with greed for money and more to do with his desire to reduce his members to total dependence. While Temple members living in

communes were given two dollars a week for personal expenses, the cult had between ten and fifteen million dollars in numbered bank accounts in Switzerland and Panama. Sexual submission to Jones was part of the regimen. Members had to publicly praise Jones's sexual prowess and agree to let him choose their mates.

Defections of key Temple members and newspaper reports detailing abuses in the cult threatened this system of control. Jones removed himself and his followers to the remote wilderness of Guyana which offered a better environment for his experiment. At Jonestown it would be harder for reality to intrude. But it finally did in the person of Congressman Leo Ryan and an NBC news crew. Long before this, Jones had feared such exposure and had been preparing. He was training his members to be ready to make the ultimate sacrifice for him. What greater tribute and homage could they pay their leader than to willingly take their lives at his command?

Jones now acted to assure his place in history. Like a demented Pied Piper, Jones led nearly a thousand people to their deaths.

## WHO WERE THE FOLLOWERS?

The real riddle of Jonestown is not why Jones would demand such a sacrifice, but why his followers would oblige him. Why would so many people, who appeared to be normal, even happy, destroy themselves on request?

The horror of Jonestown has led to a whole new wave of questioning of the role of religious cults and the power they exercise over their members. The cults all share in common a charismatic leader who is regarded as the repository of truth, beauty and light and toward whom there must be obedience. The cults play on the needs of people who are adrift... those who experience in various ways an emotional, spiritual, or moral vacuum in their lives. The cult appears to offer answers and meaning. Once inside, the member is subjected to a way of life that reduces the person to a state of dependence, thus reinforcing the control and authority of the cult.

This is all clear enough. Certainly the People's Temple shares much common ground with other cults. But it also differs. Most of the cults are based on the idea of a retreat from society. Many of them grew up in response to the disillusionment of many youth with the social activism of the 1960's. Sects like the Hari Krishna preach withdrawal from the material plane and a cultivation of the spirit.

Others, like the cult of Sun Myung Moon, promote the values of capitalist individualism and have a decidedly right-wing political orientation. As a result these cults have drawn their followers mainly from the more privileged strata of society. The typical "Moonie", if there is such a thing, is white, from the suburbs, has had some college education, and probably some bad experience with drugs.

The People's Temple, by way of contrast, was unabashedly political and social in its message and increasingly utilized the rhetoric of the left. Jones initially succeeded in attracting a predominantly Black, poor and working class congregation by combining elements of Christian evangelism with a strong stand in support of racial equality and social justice.

The People's Temple took after the Black Panther Party in running community oriented service programs which attracted much support. The Temple was active in the campaigns to free Angela Davis and defend Native American leader Dennis Banks. Jones provided troops for the campaigns of various liberal Democrats, acquiring sufficient clout to land himself the position of chairman of the San Francisco Housing Authority.

While the public image of the People's Temple prior to its exposure was that of respectable left liberal activism, to the faithful, Jones was preaching a much headier brand of radicalism. By the time they relocated in Guyana, Jones and his followers were describing themselves as communists. God had been reduced to a simple matter of "concern for others". What the People's Temple was allegedly about was defeating US imperialism, aiding national liberation movements, and winning the struggle for socialism.

This message was bound to strike a responsive chord among the rank and file of the Temple. Having experienced oppression first hand, the bulk of the membership had a real interest in a genuine socialist revolution. Tragically, what Jones had in mind had nothing to do with the real article. This man manipulated his followers' hatred of oppression and desire for a better world for his own sick purposes. They were prepared to work and sacrifice for the cause of socialist revolution.

tion. Instead, they died vainly to satisfy the monstrous and diseased ego of their leader.

## JONESTOWN STYLE SOCIALISM

Jones convinced his followers to migrate to Guyana by conjuring up an intricate and sinister conspiracy to destroy the Temple. The CIA and FBI, along with "traitors" on the inside were ranged against them. They had to flee to Guyana in order to continue. In Guyana, Jones promised, they would build a model of the new society. A Temple newsletter later described this effort: "The excellent health of the residents here and the astounding growth of the project are glowing reflections of the spirit of socialist cooperation."

These "glowing reflections" were in fact a cruel caricature of socialist cooperation. Temple members worked from six in the morning until ten at night. They were undernourished on meals that cost less than a dollar a day to prepare. Health care consisted of one medical student who had not completed his internship. Members lived in crowded, poorly constructed one room huts without regard to privacy.

In contrast to socialist cooperation, which is based on people working together and democratically making decisions, all policies and all authority in Jonestown came from the leader. While in a socialist society errors and mistakes are corrected mainly by means of constructive criticism and persuasion, in Jonestown, infractions were arbitrarily punished. Those Jones deemed guilty of one thing or another were denied food, subjected to harassment, humiliated in front of the group and beaten.

Why did the cult members tolerate such treatment? Both physical and mental coercion were employed systematically to keep the faithful in line. But it was not fear of punishment, for the most part, that produced the intense loyalty to Jones despite his gross mistreatment of his flock.

The key element of Jones's system of control was the constant playing on the needs of the cult members to feel that they were living up to the Temple's ideals. Approval from Jones was the only way a member could be sure that they

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# Dollars & Democrats: Who Bankrolls the Democratic Party?

by DUANE CALHOUN

Liberal Democrats like Senator Kennedy are very proud of the Democratic Party's reputation as the "party of the common man". And most people believe that it's the Republicans who are the Party of America's wealthy aristocracy. Looking at who votes for these two parties, there is some truth to this notion.

The Democrats get most of their votes from workers (of all races), from Blacks, from Latins, from Jews, and from the lower-middle class. The Republicans draw most of theirs from the small-town middle class, from professionals like lawyers and doctors, and from business executives. Nearly all of the richest 1% of Americans (those who own nearly three-quarters of all the corporate stock, real estate, and other property in the U.S.) are registered Republicans and heavy donors to that Party.

But when you look below the surface of the Democrats, to see who actually calls the shots, you find a small wealthy club that signs the checks. And with the control of the bankroll, comes the control of the Party—its platform, its candidates, and the votes of its elected officials.

Many of the same last names are found on Republican and Democratic contribution lists—DuPont, Ford, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Biddle, and Blair. University of California professor William Domhoff has said, "The fat cats who contribute \$500 or more to individual candidates do not own the Party lock, stock, and barrel. They do, though, have a dominant interest...This creates no problem for these savvy gentlemen, for they have grown accustomed to controlling corporations with as little as five to ten percent of the stock..."

## LABOR AND CAPITAL

But what about the labor unions? Don't they contribute most of the money in the Democratic campaign chest? Professor Domhoff says, "...the trade unions are strictly bit players when it comes to financing presidential politics, especially at the level of primary elections."

According to figures compiled by Herbert Alexander (the leading authority on campaign finance in America), over 67 million dollars was spent by the Democrats on presidential election campaigns in 1972, including conventions and primaries. Over 30 million dollars was

spent for McGovern's race against Nixon. That year, only one million, two hundred thousand dollars came from labor. Of the thirty million dollars spent in the McGovern/Nixon race, estimates are that no more than 8 million came from small and medium donations from the middle class, and at least 20 million came from business and from wealthy individuals. Fifteen million of that came in donations of ten thousand dollars or more apiece. This means that the rich gave 16 dollars for every dollar given by labor, and two dollars for every dollar given by all of the rest of the American people put together!

Although labor spent a little more on congressional elections than on the Presidential race (five million compared to one million, two hundred thousand dollars), the unions still didn't come close to matching the spending of the upper crust. Plainly, union efforts to win the loyalty of Democratic politicians with financial donations are doomed to fail from the start.

## WATERGATE AND AFTER

Beginning with the first law banning political contributions from corporations passed in 1907, the system has been "reformed" time and again. But the basic control by the wealthy hasn't changed. After the "Watergate" revelations of wholesale corruption in presidential elections, and the public protests that resulted, Congress passed a number of campaign finance reform laws from 1971 to 1974.

—Individual donors cannot give more than one thousand dollars to any one candidate in a primary or general presidential election.

—Organizations (such as the American Medical Association, the National Association of Manufacturers Political Action Committee, or the AFL-CIO Union Committee on Political Education) cannot give more than five thousand dollars to any one candidate in a presidential primary or general election. These spending limits apply only to presidential campaigns and not to congressional campaigns.

—Businesses, including government contractors, are allowed to set up political action committees (PACs) with the corporation's executives heading them up. These business PACs are not allowed to donate corporate funds directly to candidates, but they can use corporate funds to "educate" voters

or to ask management employees and stockholders for donations (these donations can be given to candidates).

—After both major parties nominate their candidates, each contender is allowed to spend only twenty-two million dollars in the general election, and that money is given to them from tax dollars. Some tax dollars are also given to major candidates during the primaries. George Wallace got three million, two hundred ninety thousand dollars in tax money for his 1976 presidential campaign. We now pay for the privilege of being stolen blind.

As a result of these laws, donations of ten thousand or one hundred thousand dollars, which were common in the past from wealthy individuals, are now illegal.

## FROM SUGAR DADDY TO ORGANIZATION MAN

The catch is, a candidate may get \$1000 from each of many rich people, as well as five thousand dollars from each of hundreds of business PACs. So the buying of their own personal politicians by rich individuals has been curbed, but the ownership of the Democrats and of politics by the rich as a class has not.

Since the reforms went into effect, the number of business PACs has skyrocketed from less than 700 to over 1500 by the end of 1978 (this includes corporate as well as trade and professional association PACs). The number of major multi-national corporation PACs has grown even faster than the rate for businesses as a whole. At the same time, the number of labor union PACs has stayed nearly unchanged, at less than 300.

After studying the effects of the new laws, researcher Herbert Alexander has concluded that these reforms have only forced the corporate elite to be more organized and systematic about their politics, and have actually increased the influence of business and the upper class in politics.

## NEW PATTERNS OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Along with this change has come another—corporations and business organizations have switched most of their money away from the Republican and to the Democrats! In 1976, business PACs contributed over five million dollars to Democratic candidates. Two months before the November 1978 elections (the latest figures available at press time), business PACs had given one million, four hundred and thirty thousand dollars to the Democrats and only one million, one hundred and seventy thousand to the Republicans. This is hardly an accident. If you can call a winner, why not take out a little loyalty insurance before the election? As *Business Week* magazine put it, Business lobbyists have had a field day with the now-departed 95th Congress. With that kind of record, business has little incentive to make a sharp ideological shift in its giving practices (to Republicans)."

## THE OLD AND THE NEW

Besides the huge and growing financial clout of the business PACs, many old-style ways of politician-shopping remain. Telethons, much like the Jerry Lewis charity telethon, are one way to raise millions of dollars with small and medium-sized contributions. The 1973 Democratic telethon netted almost two million dollars, and was possible only because Kentucky Fried Chicken chief John Y. Brown (and a few associates) co-signed for loans of well over two million dollars to cover TV time and other costs. There is no limit on the amount that can be raised by selling convention-book "advertising" space, which netted the Democrats one million dollars in 1964.

Even though the presidential general elections are now financed almost totally by tax money, presidential primary and nomination campaigns are not. Some tax-money "matching funds" are used, but there is no limit on the amount of private

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## Short History of the Long Green of the Democratic Party

The history of big money in the Democratic Party goes all the way back to the founding of the Democratic National Committee in 1852. That year August Belmont, a Philadelphia banker and American agent for the European banking houses of Rothschild, sought to raise funds from his fellow aristocrats for the Democratic presidential candidate, Franklin Pierce.

Both Belmont and the Rothschilds had a good deal of money tied up in the cotton trade, and naturally favored the political party that sought to entrench and expand the plantation slave system—the Democratic Party.

Big money entered Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 1936 campaign with the first \$100-a-plate dinner, invented and organized by Philadelphia building contractor Matt McCloskey (later the treasurer and finance chairman of the Democratic National Committee.)

In the 1960's the Democrats organized a fundraising group called the President's Club, open to donors of \$1000 or more. Four thousand blue-bloods belonged when LBJ ran in 1964, and they gave over half of the \$9 million he spent to beat Goldwater. That same year, the Democrats published a souvenir convention book memorializing President Kennedy.

Ads were sold to the major US corporations at \$15,000 a page, netting the Party a \$1 million profit.

The costs and contributors of McGovern's 1972 campaign have already been outlined. But a few people remember that Nixon was not the only politician caught with his hand in the cookie jar that year. Hubert Humphrey took \$50,000 cash from the Associated Milk Producers, and \$25,000 worth of computer time. McGovern got about \$8000 from Greyhound Corp. Ed Muskie and other Democrats at lower levels also took illegal corporate contributions during the 1972 campaign.

In all the presidential elections of the 1960's and '70's, contributions from the rich have made up 60-70% of the money raised by the Democratic National Committee.

Many of the fat cats split their contributions between both Democratic and Republican parties. Henry Ford II gave \$1000 each (the legal limit since Watergate) to President Ford and to Jimmy Carter in 1976. That's sort of the upper crust equivalent of boxing the number.

How likely is it that these rich individuals and corporations would pay the bills for a political party that might curb their profits or their political power?



"I BET IF I HAD A MILLION DOLLARS, I  
COULD HIRE AN IMAGE MAKER AND MAKE  
YOU VOTE FOR ME."

# OPPOSITION TO THE SHAH MOUNTS

by Jenny Quinn

Despite constant rumors of behind-the-scenes deals involving top US officials and Iranian military and political figures, Jimmy Carter is still hanging in there with unswerving public support for the regime of Shah Reza Pahlavi. In a November 6th statement, Carter seemed to waver by saying that the fate of the Shah is something the Iranian people will decide, but the White House clarified and re-affirmed Carter's support for the Shah the following day.

Why did Carter's statement need clarification? Because even in the filtered reports that appear in the press, anyone can see that the people are against the Shah in a big way. Simply by stating that the Iranian people would decide the fate of their country, Carter left his listeners open to assume that he was ready to give the Shah up for lost.

It is clear that even the most massive military assault on the Iranian people will probably fail to keep the Shah in power. As the day of reckoning draws closer, it is important to understand who is leading the opposition against the Shah, and how they see shaping Iran's future.

## THE OPPOSITION FORCES

The movement to overthrow the Shah reaches into every sector of society. From the landless and jobless peasants

who have demonstrated against attempts to demolish their shanty-towns on the outskirts of Iran, to the oilworkers, to the liberal merchants of the National Front, to the most prestigious Moslem leaders, Iranians are organizing and mobilizing.

While the ranks of the Shah's opposition have many different ideas about what an Iran without the Shah should look like, they are united in their common goal. Brutal repression and the failure of the White Revolution have alienated all but the military hierarchy. It is even doubtful that sectors of the military hierarchy will support the Shah much longer.

Reports of soldiers joining in the demonstrations they are supposed to suppress have been coming in all year. Most recently, soldiers in Lavizam sprayed their officers barracks with machine gun fire.

Unlike many other struggles to overthrow dictatorial rule, there isn't a single political organization or individual which stands clearly at the helm of the opposition. The only public figure who enjoys massive public support is Atoyalla (Moslem equivalent to Cardinal) Khomeini. He represents the largest and most important part of the Iranian mass movement, the Moslem opposition.

## THE RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION

Khomeini is the undisputed leader of the Shi'ites, the Moslem sect to which 93% of the Iranian people belong. The Shi'ites have a long history of opposition to dictatorial rule. Ashura, one of their important holidays, is the period of mourning for 72 Shi'ite anti-government protestors who were killed in 680. Since that time, the month of mourning (now under way) has been a symbolic outlet for political frustration and anger by believers. This year, it has clearly become more than symbolic.

Iran's mosques (churches or temples) have traditionally been the central gathering place for people, and under the Shah, the only place where people could safely come together and express themselves. This safety is gone. Military units have attacked mosques with tear gas and gunned down believers on their way in and out. The right to observe religious holidays has also been lost with the recent decree banning public assembly on the mourning days of December 10th and 11th.

Khomeini refused to be intimidated. Unlike other religious leaders, he has stood firmly, promising the Shah "rivers of blood" during the mourning days.

The Shah was finally forced to back down. The largest street demonstrations in Iran's history have been taking place since a temporary lift on the decree which forbids demonstrations. The Shah essentially had no choice — allow "freedom of the streets" during Ashura, or face Khomeini leading a legitimate holy war against him, something which his regime could not have survived.

In the first days, Dec. 11th and 12th, by our calendar, demonstrations were peaceful and kept at low key. This was mainly due to the tight marshalling by religious and National Front leaders who wanted to show the Shah their numbers. And the numbers were there. Over a million in Tehran alone.

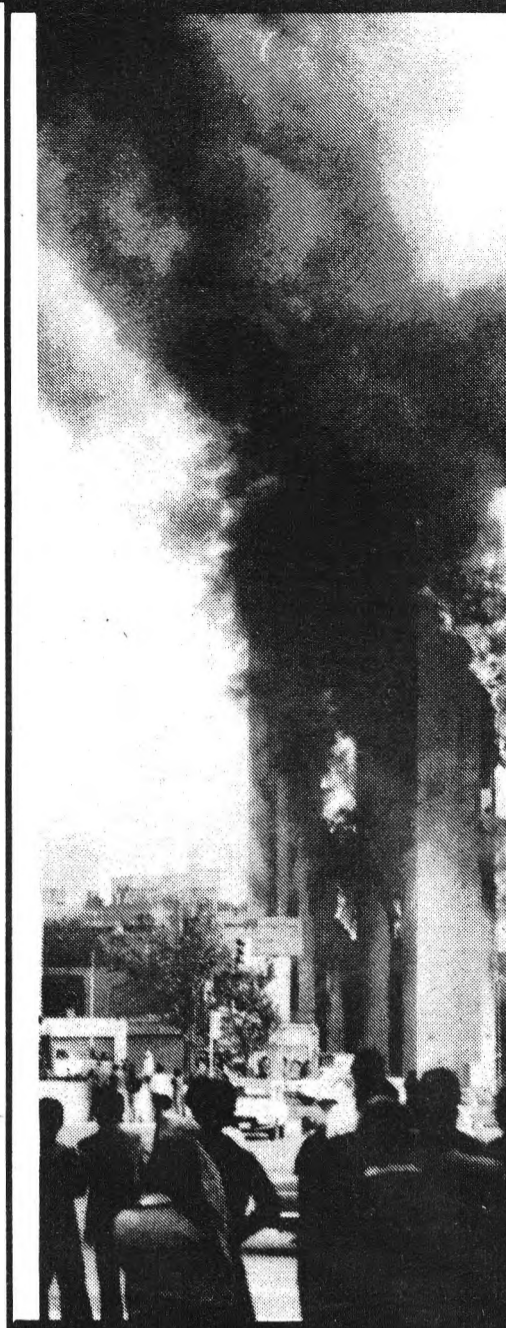
As the days pass, however, street clashes, organized attacks on military installations, internal Army sabotage and more have indicated the sharpening contradictions in Iran today. Hundreds have died in this last week alone.

White western press sources continue to describe the Shi'ite religion in terms of fanaticism and a turn-back-the-clock attitude toward progress. The Shi'ites have demonstrated that they see their religion as a democratic tool, which doesn't conflict with social goals. This fits in with the way in which leaders are determined in the religion. An atoyalla, the highest position, is reached solely by expressing the aspirations of broader and broader numbers of people. Khomeini, who has openly opposed the Shah for 16 years and faced exile because of it, is such a democratically determined leader.

Moslem opposition means Iranian opposition. The faith unites all sectors of Iranian society. It is also important to understand the roles being played by workers, peasants and students, and by the liberal business people of the National Front.

## STRIKES—KEY TO THE STRUGGLE

Demonstrations throughout Iran have continued to express the erosion of the Shah's rule. His ability to survive has been most sharply called into question by his inability to keep the economy functioning. Workers in every sector of the economy have refused to produce, realizing more and more that they have the power to shut Iran down and force the Shah out.



Mass demonstrations and strikes have swayed the political and economic future of that country. Above: the anti-Shah demonstrators.

Since strikes are illegal, every strike in Iran is a wild cat. Every strike leader knows that he may face death for his actions. But despite these facts, and despite promises of 50% to 100% pay increases, workers are staying out.

The oilworkers have stood at the front of the struggle. Beginning with their walkout on September 23, they have continued to press political demands for democracy, freedom for political prisoners, the right to independent unions and the right to full religious expression. The Shah put the cream of his top secret police into cracking the oilworkers. Hundreds have been arrested; spies and informers have been planted; peoples families have been terrorized. He tried promising a 200% wage increase; he resorted to filling the posts of striking workers with military personnel. But oil production is minimal — publicly estimated at half capacity, more realistically at less than a quarter.

The oil workers have been supported by airport workers, teachers, transport workers, etc. While the Shah's ministers re-juggle the budget every day to figure out ways of budgeting in a complete buy-off of the working class, the actions of Iranian workers demonstrate the impossibility of the task.

## STUDENTS: FREEDOM OF THOUGHT MEANS FREEDOM OF ACTION

The student movement in Iran has played an important role in opposition to the Shah for many years. Student dissidents have been numerous among the political prisoners which have crowded the Shah's prisons in the past two decades. The hypocrisy of the White Revolution was blatantly obvious on Iran's campuses. While the Shah trumpeted about education, exercising freedom of thought in a classroom was treated with imprisonment, torture and death.

Part of the student movement of the sixties became the clandestine Marxist movement of the seventies. Since talking about democracy in the 'wrong' way was



The month of December has been a month of open rebellion for the Iranian people. Spontaneous demonstrations take place almost daily. Because there is no clear political force guiding the people of Iran, the future is uncertain. Above: one-million anti-Shah demonstrators march through the streets of Tehran.

# TO THE TS

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Mass demonstrations and strikes have swept Iran during the past month, leaving the political and economic future of that country in question. Banks are often the targets of the anti-Shah demonstrators. Above: the Bank Melli burning near the US embassy.

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Part of the student movement of the sixties became the clandestine Marxist movement of the seventies. Since talking about democracy in the 'wrong' way was

treated as espousing Marxism, many people delved deeper into Marxism, finding that these forbidden ideas made sense.

## MARXIST OPPOSITION

The Tudeh, or traditional communist party, was smashed by the Shah after the 1953 coup which returned him to power. Today's Marxists in Iran are a younger generation of militants.

Organizationally, there are a number of groups, none of which have sway with a majority of Marxist-Leninists. However, their role has become stronger as the struggle advances. Two of the larger organizations, OMPI and OIPFG, have both lent considerable leadership in planning strikes, demonstrations, etc. Tactics such as burning rubber to counteract the effect of teargas are almost a hallmark of the OIPFG, and are now used broadly throughout Iran.

However, greater unity among Marxist-Leninists must be forged in the struggle against the Shah. In this way, their role can become a decisive one in many facets of the popular movement.

## THE NATIONAL FRONT

Led by liberal businessmen and politicians, the National Front puts forward a program based on re-activating Iran's constitution. Sanjabi, its key leader, was recently released from prison, and played a moderating role in the Ashura demonstrations. Chances are that while the National Front doesn't have a strong base, it will play an important role in the coming period. Bazaar merchants who have become the financiers of the opposition to the Shah are, for the most part, members of the National Front.

The current period of rising opposition to the Shah and his US Imperialist backers like Grumman Air and Bell Helicopter cannot go very much farther without forcing a change of some sort. With Carter sticking to the Shah like a tick to a dog, the Iranian people clearly have a hard fight before them.

# The Shah "White or

by Jenny Quinn

Throughout the sixties, Iran's Shah Reza Pahlevi instituted radical changes in the fabric of Iranian society. These reforms have been touted by the Carter Administration and praised by top corporate executives around the globe; but what was labeled as a mass re-distribution of land, development of industry and giant steps forward into the technological age for the benefit of the people and their standard of living has in fact been one of the most important factors in creating the mass sentiment against the Shah today.

The editor of Iran's largest daily newspaper, *Kahan*, put it succinctly, "What does this Westernize-or-bust program give us? Western guns, Western banks, Western secret police, Western buildings. They are supposed to solve our problems, but do they? I don't think so." Let's take a look at how different sectors of the Iranian population have been affected by these changes.

## PEASANT FARMERS

The central feature of the White Revolution, as the Shah's reform program was called, was the redistribution of land. This was supposed to benefit the peasants who made up the majority of Iran's population. Supposedly, the Shah was breaking up the old feudal structure of land control and archaic methods of agricultural production, in order to give the peasant a fair share. What actually happened was quite different.

In the first stage, 1962-4, the Shah called for the following changes: no one was allowed to own more than one village with the exception of tea plantations, orchards, groves, homesteads, and mechanized areas. The rest was to be sold to the government. Those villages which were brought into the new government co-ops were eligible for participation in the land redistribution program, with first priority going to the villagers who did the most productive work. By most productive workers the Shah meant the owners of oxen, already a more privileged sector of the peasant population, and wealthier peasants capable of hiring others to perform labor for them. Only 7-8% of the peasant population received any land at all during this stage.

The second stage of the land reform, 1964-7, was designed to turn share-croppers into renters. Another 6-7% of the peasantry received land, but this time, almost no one got title to it. In effect, they switched from having a private landlord to a government landlord.

All in all, during the entire White Revolution, only 5% of the peasantry actually received land titles. The rest, who held leases, had banks, merchants, and highly bureaucratic government agencies as their creditors instead of the old landlords. This put many in a worse situation as leaseholders than they had been as share-croppers. With no direct aid from the state, leaseholders are either tied to government loans for machinery they are untrained to use, or forced to rely on usurers and loan sharks at up to



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100% interest to buy seed and equipment.

What effect did this have? Iran, once self-sufficient in agriculture now imports 60% of its food. Villages have been broken up in a number of ways. Since the wealthy peasants and oxen owners were already part of an economic hierarchy in the villages, the vast majority of peasants faced even more severe economic hardship during the transition of ownership. Landlords who had been held by certain rules and customs of Islam to permit subsistence (however meager) were replaced by government bureaucrats and loan sharks who had no accountability beyond getting the money they wanted out of the deal.

Only the old wealthy landlords were able to benefit — those of them who recognized that by putting their property in the names of living and dead relatives and developing their holdings along the lines of Western agribusiness, they could profit from the Shah's reforms. To do this, they sponsored forced evacuation of villages.

By 1973, a mass migration of peasants into the cities was in full swing, and agricultural production was on a downward spiral. Village life had been broken up, providing the cheap labor needed for the Shah's industrialization plan.

## THE WORKING CLASS

The industrialization part of the Shah's plan lays bare his real intentions. Nearly all of the Iranian-owned factories which developed during the White Revolution were in the service of the oil industry, 40% of which is controlled by foreign (mostly US) corporations.

The construction industry boomed. New roads, almost inaccessible to the majority of the people, provided foreign capitalist companies easy access for transporting goods and improved conditions for the car owners of Iran, already the most privileged elite. Housing had to be built for the massive influx of US and other foreign bureaucrats, technicians, businessmen and military advisors.

Telephone communications were expanded and made more highly sophisticated. Obviously, the worker who makes three dollars a day or the peasant family at \$450 a year is not going to benefit much from miles of telephone lines.

The largest part of the industrial development went into the oil industry itself — increasing production between 1961 and 1968 by 600.5 million tons. But the revenues from this increase have done little or nothing to benefit the majority of the Iranian people, beyond providing a few more urban jobs. In Tehran alone, the population has doubled since the beginning of the White Revolution. Its outskirts are filled with peasant immigrants living in dire poverty hoping for one of those coveted new jobs in industry.

Unions as we know them are illegal. There are company unions tied to the go-

vernment, strikes are illegal, and strikers or organizers are severely punished. Consequently, the working class grew in size, but had not improved the conditions of life through any joint actions. With no job security or decent wages, the severe housing shortages and spiraling food costs, the working class was forced to the wall. The massive strikes since September of this year have been accompanied by housing demonstrations and other acts which show that it is not merely the on-the-job situation but the whole condition of life for the Iranian working class which is being protested.

## SMALL BUSINESSMEN

The one sector which at least superficially benefited was the urban small businessman. He was able to get business from the foreign community and profit from the urban worker. Described as the "VW class" they are now facing the squeeze as the Shah continues to divert of his efforts into repressing the population and keeping the standard of living of the masses down.

The foreign community is staying entirely inside its enclaves and running scared, so even larger merchants are suffering. A hotel owner recently ran out to meet a crowd of demonstrators in Tehran, offering them his pictures of the Shah (formerly displayed ostentatiously in his hotel) to burn.

The big owners in Iran faced a dilemma during the White Revolution: find a way to fit into the imperialist system or be squeezed out of existence. Today, the process continues, with the largest Iranian capitalists investing in other countries and having second homes in a section of Beverly Hills now known as "the Persian Gulf", while others simply go under.

## SHAH ACCOMODATES U.S. IMPERIALISM

The upshot of the White Revolution is that it paved the way for Iran's integration into the economic system of US imperialism. While the Shah attempted to destroy the old feudal agricultural system, he failed to provide any viable alternative for the peasant. While increasing the amount of profit gained from Iran's workers, he didn't improve their lives more than superficially.

While making it possible for small businessmen to overextend themselves with cars, he gave them no stable existence. He broke up the old society and scoffed at tradition, only to make the Iranian masses more economically vulnerable. His "reforms" for women, which consisted mainly of the vote, only allowed Iranian women to be used as cheap labor.

The brutality with which Iranian social and cultural life was disrupted was a necessary feature of the Shah's reform program, because he was 're-forming' the society along more exploitative lines than the old ones. Exxon and the Shah's cousins thought it went well, but the popular upsurge against the Shah's broken promises tells the real story.



Iran during the past month, leaving the in question. Banks are often the targets nk Melli burning near the US embassy.

reated as espousing Marxism, many people delved deeper into Marxism, finding that these forbidden ideas made sense.

## MARXIST OPPOSITION

The Tudeh, or traditional communist party, was smashed by the Shah after the 1953 coup which returned him to power. Today's Marxists in Iran are a younger generation of militants.

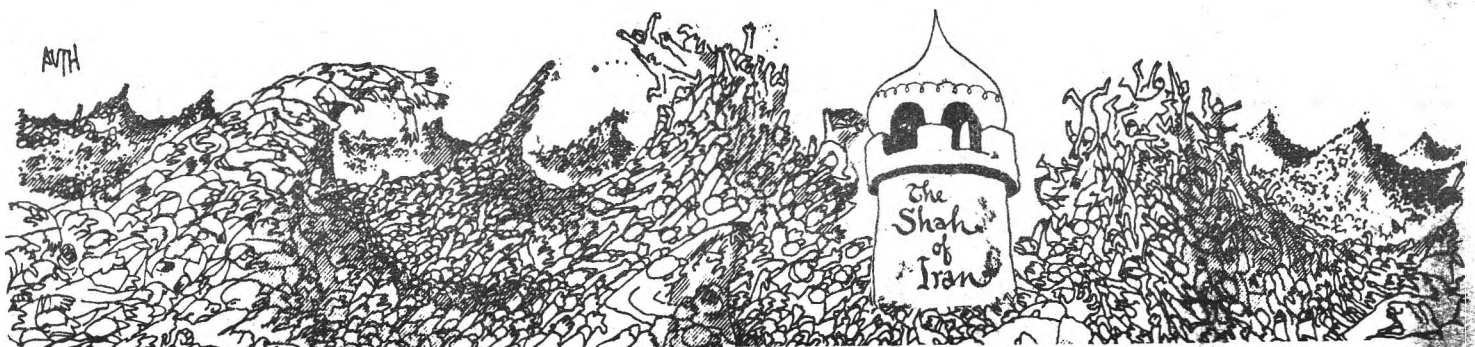
Organizationally, there are a number of groups, none of which have sway with a majority of Marxist-Leninists. However, their role has become stronger as the struggle advances. Two of the larger organizations, OMPI and OIPFG, have both lent considerable leadership in planning strikes, demonstrations, etc. Tactics such as burning rubber to counteract the effect of teargas are almost a hallmark of the OIPFG, and are now used broadly throughout Iran.

However, greater unity among Marxist-Leninists must be forged in the struggle against the Shah. In this way, their role can become a decisive one in many facets of the popular movement.

## THE NATIONAL FRONT

Led by liberal businessmen and politicians, the National Front puts forward a program based on re-activating Iran's constitution. Sanjabi, its key leader, was recently released from prison, and played a moderating role in the Ashura demonstrations. Chances are that while the National Front doesn't have a strong base, it will play an important role in the coming period. Bazaar merchants who have become the financiers of the opposition to the Shah are, for the most part, members of the National Front.

The current period of rising opposition to the Shah and his US Imperialist backers like Grumman Air and Bell Helicopter cannot go very much farther without forcing a change of some sort. With Carter sticking to the Shah like a tick to a dog, the Iranian people clearly have a hard fight before them.



# WHY INFLATION ?

## Part I

# Do Wages Push Prices Up ?

by Jim Griffin

What causes inflation? The capitalist class usually answers this question in one way. Their economists point to greedy unions which drive prices up by demanding increases in wages which outstrip rises in productivity or output per man-hour. This notion, that rising prices are caused by rising wages, is as old as the capitalist class itself. It is an argument which has little to do with a scientific attempt to understand inflation, and much more to do with the propaganda needs of the employers.

By claiming that wage increases are inflationary the capitalists hope to convince workers, particularly trade union leaders, to hold down wage demands. They seek to mobilize those who are hit hardest by inflation, those who are dependent on fixed incomes, against labor. In so doing they are motivated by a desire to protect and increase their own rate of profit.

Another key argument of the capitalist class is that government policies aimed at curtailing unemployment cause inflation. The capitalist economists argue, in effect, that a certain level of unemployment is necessary to control inflation. As the leading spokesman for capitalist economics, Paul Samuelson, put it: "There is, so to speak, a dilemma of choice for society between reasonably high employment with maximal growth and a price creep, or reasonably stable prices with considerable unemployment; and it is a difficult social dilemma to decide which compromises to make." This argument too has a useful political purpose as a means of developing tolerance among the working class for high rates of unemployment.

These arguments fail to explain the real causes of inflation and instead only rationalize the self-interest of the capitalist class. As such, it is disastrous for the working class to accept the premises of these arguments, for they will completely disarm us in our struggle to maintain and improve our standard of living.

How do Marxists answer these arguments? Let's take the idea that increases in wages are the cause of increases in prices. Karl Marx, himself, in a debate before the General Council of the First International Workingmen's Association over a century ago, sought to rebut this position.

While today we would have to add some important qualifications to Marx's argument because of the changes that have occurred in the character of the capitalist system, namely the rise of monopolies and with it the expanded role of the state in the economy, the theoretical concepts developed by Marx remain central to understanding the present Marxist position. Thus, it is worth looking at Marx's argument in some depth.

### PRICES

What determines the price of a commodity in the first place? Then and now it was argued that price consists of the costs of production (raw materials, labor, machinery, etc.) plus a certain percentage of these costs figured in as the capitalist profit.

For purposes of illustration, let's say that a capitalist, in order to manufacture

a single pair of shoes, spends six dollars on machinery and raw materials and three dollars on labor. To this he adds 10% of his costs (90 cents) which he figures as his profit. This gives us a price of \$9.90 for the pair of shoes.

According to this formula, if wages are increased, the price will automatically be increased proportionally. If in our case the cost of labor rises from three to four dollars, the total costs of production will then be \$10, the capitalist will now calculate his profit at \$1.00 and the price of shoes will increase to \$11 per pair.

The obvious fallacy in this argument is that the price of the commodity is not fixed by the will of the individual capitalist. He is not free to set whatever price he sees fit in order to assure himself of a fixed rate of return, or profit, on his investment. Competition from other capitalists and the factors of supply and demand will affect what he can charge. The capitalist must sell his commodities in the market and the dynamics of the market will affect his price, regardless of his own desires in the matter.

Is the market, or the law of supply and demand, then, the determinant of price? No, although it may seem so on the surface. Certainly prices will fluctuate according to supply and demand. When demand for a commodity exceeds supply the price will tend to rise and conversely, when supply exceeds demand the price will tend to fall.

But ultimately this explains nothing about the price of a commodity. How do we explain a commodity's price when supply and demand equal each other? Prices fluctuate, to be sure, but they fluctuate around a "natural" price which we can define as the price of the commodity at the point where supply and demand are in equilibrium. What determines this natural price?

Price is simply the monetary expression of the value of a commodity, that is, value expressed in terms of dollars and cents. The value of a commodity, assuming that it is useful to someone besides its producer, can only be expressed in terms of other commodities. A pair of shoes is worth five pounds of pork which means that a pair of shoes will exchange for five pounds of pork. All commodities have their equivalents in other commodities or in money which is a universal equivalent. But what is it in commodities that determines the ratio at which they exchange? What is it that is equal in the pair of shoes and the five pounds of pork?

Marx answered that the exchange value of a commodity was determined by the amount of "socially necessary labor time" involved in its production. One pair of shoes will exchange for five pounds of pork because both embody the same amount of labor time. By socially necessary Marx meant the average time "required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time."

With the introduction of this definition of value, the shroud of mystery surrounding commodity exchange and prices began to lift. The value of a commodity is determined by the amount of labor time in it, and its natural price is simply the monetary expression of this value. Under competitive conditions, given an



equilibrium of supply and demand, a commodity will exchange at its value.

### WAGES

Under conditions of capitalist commodity production, labor, or more precisely labor-power, is also a commodity. Its value is determined in the same fashion as the value of other commodities — it is the labor time necessary for its production. The amount of labor time necessary to raise, train, and sustain the worker.

The owner of this labor-power, the worker, sells his commodity to the capitalist at its value. The worker contracts to work for a given time in exchange for a wage that is roughly equivalent to the cost of the commodities necessary for survival. But once having made this contract, the worker places his labor-power at the disposal of the capitalist, and foregoes any real control over how it will be utilized. The worker punches in and begins to labor under conditions dictated by the employer.

Let us say that in four hours time the worker produces values equivalent to the wages he or she is being paid. If the worker punched out and went home at this point we would have a fair exchange.

But the capitalist seeks to define the workday as the physical limit of what the worker is capable of doing, and certainly not simply as the time necessary to produce the values equal to the day's wages. If the worker tries to go home at this point, the capitalist will let him know in no uncertain terms he expects a full eight hour day in return for a day's wages. If the worker thinks otherwise, she or he has the freedom to quit and look for a capitalist who will agree with this logic.

The worker continues to work past the four hours. Now the worker is supplying the capitalist with unpaid labor. All the values made during this time constitute surplus value and form the capitalist's profit. The form of wages, be they hourly or piece rate, conceal this thievery on the part of the capitalist. Having contracted to work by the hour or by the piece, the volume of unpaid labor is invisible to the worker. From this we can see that the origin of profit is not through the process of consumption and the milking of consumers as is popularly believed, but rather through the process of production and the exploitation of labor.

### WAGE, PRICE, AND PROFIT

Having defined and briefly examined the concepts of prices, wages, and profits, we can now consider the relations between them. We can return to the original question: does an increase in wages lead to an increase in prices?

Labor power, as we have noted, tends to exchange at value like any other commodity. But wages, like other prices, can and do fluctuate both above and below value. Fluctuations in supply and demand affect wages. More importantly, the activity of the workers themselves, in the form of economic and political organization and struggle, can and clearly has affected the wage rate. It is ironic that both the capitalist class and some misguided revolutionaries have argued that this struggle to raise the rate of wages is useless and even harmful to the workers because it only results in higher prices.

If the workers succeed in gaining a wage increase, how will this affect price? We have already seen that the price of a commodity, given competitive conditions and an equilibrium of supply and demand, will correspond to its value. An increase in wages adds nothing in the way of new values to the commodity — only an increase in the amount of labor time would do that. The fact that the price of labor power is now higher does not in the slightest increase the values produced by this labor power. In short, a wage increase will not affect prices at all.

It is profits, and not prices, which will be affected by a wage increase. An increased amount of value will be paid out to the worker in the form of wages, leaving a correspondingly lower amount in the form of surplus value, or profits.

To illustrate, a shoe worker makes \$2 an hour. In the eight hour day this worker produces values equal to \$32. In four hours time the worker produces values equivalent to his daily wage of \$16. For the next four hours he produces a surplus value of an additional \$16 which forms the capitalist's profits. As a result of a strike the worker secures a dollar an hour wage increase.

Now his daily wage equals \$24. He still produces the same amount of values in the course of his workday. But now it takes six hours to produce the equivalent of his wages. There are only two hours of unpaid labor for the capitalist. The amount of surplus value realized by the capitalist falls by half with a corresponding reduction of his profit from \$16 to eight dollars.

Marx's opponents argued that a general increase in the rate of wages would, by inflating the demand for consumer goods, drive up prices on these commodities and by so doing simultaneously negate the increase in wages and protect the profit rates of the capitalists.

Marx readily conceded that a general increase in wages would drive up prices for those things that the working class

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# There is No Inflation in the People's Republic of China

Prior to the revolution in China, the Chinese working people suffered ruinous inflation. The corrupt Kumintang government issued practically useless paper currency to finance its deficits, foreign governments manipulated the money supply, and banks and money speculators profited from the instability of the yuan.

In 1937 100 yuan would buy two cows, but by 1949, 100 yuan would buy only a single sheet of toilet paper. In the last days of the old regime prices would often double in a single day. A croaker fish cost 10 million yuan, a breakfast of a pancake and a fried dough twist cost 1 million yuan and an inch of cloth cost 150,000 yuan. Inflation was so bad that people spent their money as soon as they received it, before its value could drop any further.

## PRICES GO DOWN RATHER THAN UP

No more! Today China has one of the most stable currencies in the world. Prices rarely increase, and often drop. Shortly after liberation the Chinese gov-

ernment put the money speculators out of business, moved rapidly to increase production and created a new and stable money called Renminbi, or RMB. The result has been a steady improvement in the living conditions of the Chinese people.

Overall, the purchasing power of the yuan, for both goods and services, has risen rather than declined. At their 1965 value 100 yuan would buy 101.57 yuan worth of goods and 103.20 yuan worth of services in 1973.

Food prices have either remained the same or dropped. Pork in 1965 sold for 2.00 yuan per kilogram. Today pork sells for 1.80 yuan per kilogram. Prices for potatoes, onions, eggs, fish, cabbage, and countless other agricultural commodities have also dropped. Prices for beef, mutton, bean curd and dressed chicken have all remained the same since 1965.

Prices for a whole range of consumer goods have either dropped or remained stable. A thermos flask that cost 2.51 yuan in 1965 now sells for 2.10 yuan.

The same alarm clock that cost 15.80 yuan in 1965 goes for 8.00 yuan today. Retail prices on transistor radios, a popular item in China, were cut 40% between 1965 and 1974. For essentials like medicine, the drop in cost is most dramatic. Medicine today costs one-fifth of what it cost in 1950.

In the US the rising cost of housing is a major item. In China the typical family pays between 1% and 4% of their income for housing, compared to 25% to 35% for their US counterparts. Rents have not risen in 15 years and often go down as new housing becomes available. Utilities are also low. Bottled gas, the source of heat for cooking in the newer flats, has declined 25% in price since 1965.

Transportation is cheap with fares on city buses, trolleys and railways stable. Airline fare has been drastically reduced in the last few years so that plane travel is now roughly equivalent in cost to class "A" rail travel, a development that has brought many Chinese flocking to the airports. Entertainment and recreation is also inexpensive and often free.

## MORE PRODUCTION EQUALS A BETTER WAY OF LIFE

In a capitalist economy prices are buffeted upwards by the play of the market, regardless of their effects on the consumer. In a planned socialist economy prices are controlled to benefit the workers, but it also subsidizes wholesale prices paid to the peasantry for food produce.

Besides this, the state has drastically reduced prices at which it sells fertilizers, fuel, insecticides and farm machinery and implements to the peasants. Prices on these items have been cut anywhere from one-third to two-thirds since 1950, while the wholesale price on agricultural produce has doubled.

Thus the income of the peasantry has risen while retail food prices for the urban and rural population have remained stable. China is able to do this because of the rapid growth of productivity that has occurred since the revolution. In socialist China the fruits of this productivity have been passed along to the working people.



A planned socialist economy geared to the needs of the Chinese people eliminated the problem of inflation. Above left: Before liberation, during Chiang Kai-shek's regime, shoppers carried stacks of near-worthless money to market. Above right: Today in China, shoppers in the canned foods section of a store in Peking.

## Why inflation

(continued from previous page)

purchased, assuming no general increase in productivity and thus supply. But Marx disagreed that this development had the effects his opponents claimed.

A general increase in wages, all things remaining equal, can only be accompanied by a general decline in the rate of profit. Thus from the standpoint of society as a whole, the increased purchasing power of the working class is offset by the decreasing purchasing power of the capitalist class. Prices of some commodities, namely the necessities sought by the workers, would be driven up and the profit rate in those branches of industry would rise. But the prices of other commodities, namely those sought by the capitalists, would fall because of the slackened demand resulting from the squeeze on profits.

Of course the employers, seeking the highest rate of profit, would transfer capital from the least to the most profitable branches. As a result prices in both branches would rapidly return to value and the decline in the rate of profit would average out. In short, the result of this general increase in wages would not be higher prices, but a redistribution of wealth in favor of the working class at the expense of the capitalist class.

(To be continued in future issues)



## carter's guidelines

(continued from page 1)

### LABOR'S RESPONSE

The response from George Meany and the AFL-CIO to Carter's guidelines was quick. "It attempts to keep wages down and nothing else," Meany said. The

UAW and the Teamsters reacted more favorably. "The UAW hopes that the President's plan can be administered in an equitable manner," Autoworkers President Douglas Fraser said in announcing qualified support for the program.

Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons pledged his union "would do its share" provided the companies do theirs. Significantly, neither Fraser nor Fitzsimmons would commit their unions to the 7% guideline in upcoming negotiations. Fraser made it clear he thinks UAW members are exempt from the guidelines because of a clause that allows for higher increases if they reflect increased productivity.

While on the surface Meany's response looks militant, unfortunately this is not the case. Meany and the 32 members of the AFL-CIO Executive Council call for "equal sacrifice" from both business and labor and favor mandatory as opposed to voluntary controls. Labor would be even worse off under mandatory controls. Even Meany was forced to admit that there is little reason to believe that the government would "fairly" administer such controls.

During the wage controls instituted by Richard Nixon, which were mandatory from August of 1971 to January of '73, labor took a terrible beating while big business had a field day. Wages rose by 8% while prices shot up by 16% and

corporate profits jumped by 54%. Nixon's pay board rarely allowed wage increases over the 5.5% guideline, while the price commission granted 94% of the increases requested by business. The Carter administration and the Democratic Congress which have trampled all over the AFL-CIO's legislative program, are hardly going to do any better.

Not all the unions accept the class-collaborationist logic of controls. Both the United Electrical Workers (UE) and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) spoke out in strong terms against Carter's program, while opposing mandatory controls as well. President James Herman of the ILWU called Carter's plan a "con job". The UE urged cuts in military spending and controls on corporate profits as alternatives to Carter's anti-labor program. Both unions pledged to ignore the guidelines in upcoming negotiations.

On that point all union leaders seem to agree. "The membership will hang us up on the nearest cross if we go along with this", moaned an official of the machinist's union.

Carter's plan is widely seen as a stepping stone to mandatory controls. Having demonstrated that voluntary controls "don't work", Carter will have created the context for imposing controls. And Meany's position will have played right into his hands.

# Irwin Silber Resigns

The following is the text of Irwin Silber's "Fan the Flames" column outlining his reasons for resigning as Executive Editor of the Guardian. The Guardian Staff voted to refuse to print the column and an abbreviated and considerably watered-down version was substituted in its place. We are publishing the full version because without it the party-building movement will find it difficult to gauge the significance between Irwin Silber and the Guardian staff and between Irwin Silber and the PWOC as well.

Several days ago I informed the Guardian staff of my decision to resign from the position of executive editor. Since actions of this kind are always the subject of rumors, gossip and speculation in our movement, it is only politically responsible to make the reasons for this action known to Guardian readers — and particularly to Marxist-Leninists in the party-building movement.

First let me say that I retain the greatest respect for the general political line of the Guardian and for the indispensable role that it plays as a newspaper and as a leading voice in the struggle for the rectification of the general line of the US communist movement — the task which, in my view, is the indispensable precondition for reconstituting a revolutionary working class vanguard party in our country.

I hope that the movement as a whole will keep in mind the urgent necessity for continued support to the Guardian and not in any way allow the important political disagreement underlying this decision to diminish in the slightest all efforts to advance the circulation of the Guardian or the financial contributions which remain an absolute requirement for the continued existence of our newspaper.

For my part, I intend to remain a member of the Guardian staff and to continue writing for the paper on a variety of subjects both through the news pages and in the "Fan the Flames" and "Ruling Class" columns. I also intend to continue playing an active role in the party-building movement.

My reason for resigning from the post of executive editor is based on a fundamental disagreement with the decision by the Guardian staff as announced in the final section of the document, "The State of the Party-Building Movement," to build a political organization around itself as an expression of a "left trend" within the party-building movement. In my opinion, this decision is unsound both politically and practically.

## SUPPORT THE POLITICAL CRITIQUE

At the same time, I strongly support the general critique of the political line and organizational efforts underlying the formation of the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center (OC) which comprises the main section of that document. I also endorse the decision by the Guardian not to affiliate with the OC at this time.

Within the Guardian staff I have urged that these two questions — the political critique of the OC and the decision to proceed with the establishment of the Guardian's own political organization — be separated. In my view, one is not the logical consequence of the other.

The context for this disagreement is bound up with differing views on the actual state of the party-building movement and on the principal tasks before that movement at this time. Involved in this, too, are significant differences over a general party-building strategy for our movement.

On a political level, I believe it is a serious misreading of the present state of affairs in our movement to postulate the existence of two distinct "trends" among Marxist-Leninists with the points of difference so sharply defined that separate and inevitably competing organizational forms are required. Many Marxist-Lenin-

ists are critical of the principal underlying political errors of the Philadelphia Workers Organizing Committee (PWOC) and the OC. Many of them have come to such an understanding as a result of the ideological struggle waged by the Guardian, particularly around the "fusion" question. But this is hardly the same as postulating the existence in our movement of a definite "Guardian trend" with sufficient unity on other leading political questions to now put itself forward as the "left" (and therefore leading) trend in our movement.

The task of uniting Marxist-Leninists around a single general leading line remains before us. Does that single general line yet exist? Has the task of rectifying the general line of the US communist movement proceeded to the point where we can speak realistically about uniting Marxist-Leninists around such a line? The answer to both those questions in my opinion is — no.

## THE 'FUSION' ERROR

The fundamental error of the PWOC and many of the other local organizations



who constitute the OC is that they have subordinated this critical task of developing a general line to a precondition, the establishment of "fusion" (or some significant measure thereof) between the communist movement as it exists and the spontaneous struggles of the working class and oppressed nationalities. Their thesis is that trying to effect this "fusion" which, in their latest pronouncements, has been reduced to "fusion in its embryonic form," will identify the principal questions of political line before Marxist-Leninists and also identify the priority of those questions. They also hold the view that this "embryonic" form of fusion will provide our movement with a means for verifying the correctness or incorrectness of the general line in the process of its development. Guardian readers and activists in the party-building movement are familiar with the general critique of the backwardness of this line which has appeared in these pages and there is no need to repeat it here at this moment.

But just as the PWOC subordinates the task of line rectification to the process of "fusion," so does the approach by the Guardian staff, in my opinion,

subordinate the task of line rectification to the premature development of a consolidated political organization which is bound to take on the character of a national preparatory formation. As such, despite the best intentions of the Guardian staff, this decision is bound to promote divisiveness and sectarianism within the ranks of party-building forces and unduly tie the ideological struggle of this period to differing organizational forms.

The organizational effort to which the Guardian has now committed itself — particularly by defining it as the expression of a Guardian "left trend external to the formation organized by the OC in order to better sharpen the principled struggle against right opportunism within our party-building movement" — says, in effect, that the OC is a consolidated right opportunist formation (rather than a grouping characterized by rightist errors) and that the struggle to unite Marxist-Leninists in a single party-building effort must be indefinitely postponed to some future time. On the part of the Guardian, such an analysis becomes, in effect, a self-fulfilling prophecy. I believe it is an incorrect view and is, in effect, an abandonment of the correct task of trying to unite all Marxist-Leninists in a common plan to build the party.

## GUARDIAN AND THE CLUBS

The decision by the Guardian staff represents a qualitative change in the form and content of Guardian Clubs. The Clubs, organized roughly one year ago, represent an important base of material support for the Guardian, the paper's eyes and ears on the world outside of New York City, and a most useful organizational form for the training of Marxist-Leninist cadre, particularly around the principal theoretical tasks of this period. They also represent a force that can play a leading role in a widespread rectification movement that will help bring into

being the best possible conditions in which the organizational task of re-establishing the party can be accomplished.

But the decision by the Guardian staff goes considerably beyond this conception. It imposes upon the Clubs political responsibilities for which they are not equipped and which are bound to weaken their efforts in the tasks outlined above. Even if this course of action were correct, it cannot be said that the Guardian has laid the theoretical and political foundation for establishing such an organization at this time — or that it has summed up the first year's experiences of the Club network in an all-sided and scientific way — so that, in conjunction with the Clubs themselves, the new path was being properly charted.

Likewise, as a practical question, the decision to go ahead with the establishment of a Guardian political organization is, in my view, unsound. The Guardian has an enormously valuable role to play in our movement — both in the party-building movement and the broad progressive movement as a whole — as a



Irwin Silber, former Executive Editor of the Guardian.

newspaper! It is particularly well-equipped and well-situated to make an extremely valuable contribution to the general task of line rectification — which includes not only helping to develop a correct line, but popularizing the process as well. No organization or group in the Marxist-Leninist movement made a more substantial contribution to the critique of the class-collaborationist line of the October League and others which manifested itself most sharply around the question of Angola. Indeed, no other existing organization could have accomplished this task which required access to facts and information from the front-lines of struggle in Africa as well as an international overview required for the weekly publication of the Guardian. The same can well be said on many other important national and international questions — and also on some of the more substantive theoretical questions before our movement.

But the strengths and weaknesses of the Guardian as a newspaper — particularly the kind of newspaper it is — point up its inherent weakness as the operational and political leadership of an all-sided Marxist-Leninist political organization. Developing and building such an organization, even if it were the correct thing to do at this time, will require a major commitment of cadre, funds and material resources on the part of the Guardian. It will require the constant and close attention of its leading political body. It requires a level of political and theoretical development within the Guardian staff commensurate to such a task.

In my view, the Guardian is poorly equipped and not well-situated to undertake this task. The demands of producing a weekly newspaper — and promoting, circulating and supporting it — are enormously time-consuming and require the fulltime efforts of its leading political cadre. While there are many devoted, hard-working and enthusiastic comrades on the Guardian staff, they have not yet developed the experience, political maturity and organizational capacity to lead such an effort. This task is made doubly difficult by the fact that the Guardian staff is inevitably one step removed from even the limited social practice of Marxist-Leninists today. I also believe that the Guardian is foolishly jeopardizing its material base and its future as a newspaper with this course of action.

For all of these political and practical reasons, I have urged the Guardian staff not to embark upon the course laid out in the last section of the document, "The State of the Party-Building Movement." But by a very sizeable majority within the Guardian staff, my views did not prevail.

Clearly, the executive editor of the Guardian — of all staff members — must be a person who has confidence in a political decision of this magnitude and is prepared to execute it, defend it and argue it before the party-building movement as a whole. Just as clearly, I am not the person for that job.

I have carefully weighed this decision in the one-week period since the Guardian staff voted to adopt the document published in these pages. It seems to me that out of respect for the Guardian and my fellow staff members, my own political integrity and my concerns for the Marxist-Leninist movement as a whole, it is the only principled decision that can be made in the circumstances.

# Irwin Silber vs. the Guardian Staff : Cut Out the Warts, Spare the Cancer

by Clay Newlin

As is now well known, Irwin Silber has resigned as executive editor of the Guardian. According to his own statement (printed here only because the Guardian refused to publish it), Silber developed "fundamental disagreements with the decision of the Guardian staff as announced in the final section of the document, 'The State of the Party-Building Movement,' to build a political organization around itself as an expression of a 'left trend' within the party-building movement." This divergence made his continued position of leadership within the staff untenable.

In the December issue of this newspaper, we set forth our view of the Guardian document—i.e., that it represented the consolidation of the circle spirit as the foundation of the Guardian's party-building line. Since Silber also states that he is in disagreement with the general line of the same document, it is important to assess the significance of his differences with the rest of the staff. We can then adopt a principled approach to the question of what unity can be developed with Silber and his supporters.

## SILBER'S DISAGREEMENTS

Clearly, Silber does have genuine disagreements with the Guardian. Whereas the staff thinks two mature "trends" have emerged in the anti-revisionist, anti-dogmatist movement, Silber recognized that there is neither a trend around the Guardian nor one around the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center (OC). Whereas the staff feels that a principled basis has been laid for the building of a Guardian national pre-party organization, Silber argues that a move in this direction at this time would be "bound to promote divisiveness and sectarianism" in our movement. Whereas the staff calls for an organizational division in the ranks of party-builders, Silber regards such a division as "premature." And finally, whereas the Guardian staff, in effect holds "that the OC is a consolidated right opportunist formation", Silber does not.

It is important not to underestimate these differences. From the staff's positions flow a whole range of sectarian choices, beginning with their call for complete organizational separation from the OC and its activities up to their renunciation of any attempt to engage the broad forces in the party-building movement in the common pursuit of our most pressing tasks. Perhaps, Irwin, himself, best sums up the essence of the Guardian's current view when he states that it "is, in effect, an abandonment of the correct task of trying to unite all Marxist-Leninists in a common plan to build the party."

On the other hand, Silber's divergence from the Guardian line should not be overplayed. Unfortunately, in his critique of that line, Silber confines himself to excising the warts while sparing the cancer in the Guardian's "body politic."

Silber's critique of the Guardian line centers on two points—its view of itself as the center of a "trend" and its plan to build an organization. But the Guardian's claim to existence as a "trend" is so manifestly out of touch with reality as to be ridiculous—by taking such a position the staff will only fool itself. And the decision to build a national pre-party

organization may be "impractical" but, by itself, it is neither divisive nor sectarian.

## ATTITUDE TOWARD OC IS CENTRAL

In reality, the Guardian's "abandonment" of the struggle for communist unification lies neither in its conjuring up of trends nor in its call for a Guardian organization. It lies in its decision to oppose the only organization that has unequivocally committed itself to engaging "all Marxist-Leninists in a common plan to build the party"—the OC.

Is not the OC the only organization that has called for unity of the entire anti-revisionist, anti-dogmatist tendency in the pursuit of our most pressing tasks? Is not the OC the only organization which has created no barriers—either political or organizational—to the participation of any of the genuine forces in this tendency, including the Guardian, Silber



and others with similar views? Is not the OC the only organization which has called for the formation of a common plan for party-building, a plan forged through open struggle in full view of the entire tendency? Is it not, then, the Guardian's decision to oppose the OC which is the essence of its "abandonment"?

Silber would like to ignore all this for the very simple reason that he "strongly support(s) the general critique of the political line and organizational efforts underlying the formation" of the OC. But like the Guardian, his real opposition is not rooted in principled differences with the OC, itself. Instead, he argues, in effect, that the OC's "one crucial weakness...is that it is dominated by the leading line of the PWOC and most other groups are either too weak, underdeveloped or backward themselves to lead a struggle against it" (Silber letter to Clubs, Guardian Clubs Newsletter, November 1977).

To base an anti-OC position on the fact that other OC groups are "too weak, underdeveloped or backward" to oppose the PWOC is unprincipled. It just shows that Silber is in essential unity with a line which exaggerates differences between prominent circles like the Guardian and PWOC. As Silber knows full well, the purpose of this exaggeration has been from its inception, and still remains today, nothing but an attempt to prevent the development of a common plan for party-building.

Silber's basic unity with the Guardian's sectarianism is clearly demon-

strated by his role in the party-building movement over the last two years or so. Silber himself wrote the original Guardian party-building supplement published in June of 1977. That supplement puts forward the Guardian's 29 points of unity not as a basis for unity with the Guardian nor as the basis for joining the Clubs. Instead, although a disclaimer is issued to the effect that these points cannot "immediately be translated into...a draft program", they are advanced under the following heading—"Principles of Unity for a New Party." And in the final section where Silber discusses the main tasks of the Clubs he has this to say:

*"Party-building: The clubs would be an organizational vehicle for helping to develop a distinct political trend within the Marxist-Leninist movement, a trend based on the 29 principles of unity."*

Apparently, Silber's problems with building a Guardian "trend" are quite recent.

economism and conciliation of revisionism" present the main danger to our tendency. We do not deny that these phenomena exist, nor that they are likely to grow. But it is absurd to advocate turning our attention to these errors when we have not even consolidated our break with ultra-leftism.

Thus, Silber has both advocated line struggle apart from the interests of the working class and also downplayed the danger of unprincipled polarization of our forces. Taken together these things could only feed, and in turn be fed by, the splitist mentality that has clearly emerged in the Guardian.

The most telling indication of Silber's basic unity with the Guardian's sectarianism is the fact that he not only voted for, but by his own admission, raised no objections to the original draft of the Guardian's "State of the Party-Building Movement." This draft is every bit as flawed, every bit as sectarian and every bit as steeped in the spirit of abandoning the struggle for a common plan for party-building as the published version.

It is possible of course that Silber will deepen his critique as a result of the struggle with the Guardian staff. But all indications are that the prospect is not promising.

## SILBER'S SELF-CRITICISM

In the first place, it would seem that Silber would want to really pursue a self-criticism of his role in the Guardian staff. In particular, given his prominence, he would be especially concerned that he might have, in some manner, contributed to the paper's sectarian line.

In his letter to the Clubs, he explains his decision to vote for the Guardian document as follows:

*"It was obviously an error on my part not to have realized...the political significance of these changes (the changes proposed, and subsequently added, by the Guardian staff to Irwin's initial and unpublished draft - CN). I continued to have my vision so focused on the critique of the OC...that I failed to recognize the fact that the document was undergoing a qualitative change in its actual political purpose...it simply went by me and I will not offer any excuses for this political lapse on my part. The best I can do is try not to repeat this error..."*

Frankly, one cannot be very much impressed with this "self-criticism". To call voting for a document whose very essence abandons the struggle for "a common plan to build the party" a "political lapse" just will not do. Silber can hardly expect us to believe that one with as much political experience as he has or one as theoretically astute as he is could allow a document to undergo "a qualitative change" of such severity.

And while Irwin says that he "will not offer any excuses," it is clear that he will not accept any real responsibility either. At the very least a genuine self-criticism would make an honest attempt to go to the roots of the error. Silber, however, seems more concerned with covering over his mistakes.

(continued on page 18)



by S. Bunting

The United People's Campaign Against Apartheid and Racism — UPCAAR — for more than two years has been a leading force in Philadelphia in support of the liberation of southern Africa. The *Organizer* has reported on many of its activities, but what exactly is UPCAAR? Who is in it? What does it stand for?

UPCAAR was formed in the fall of 1976 by people who had worked for several years in support of the liberation of southern Africa. The Coalition to Stop Rhodesian Imports, which conducted successful boycotts of ships carrying Rhodesian goods to Philadelphia in 1973 and 1974, and the Philadelphia Coalition for Justice in Angola, which brought together support for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) during Angola's second war of liberation, in the winter of 1975-6, were two of UPCAAR's ancestors.

The formation of UPCAAR was a step forward politically from earlier groups, because it acknowledged that apartheid in South Africa and racism in the US have the same causes and benefit the same corporate and government interests. UPCAAR's principles (see box) linked racist oppression in the two countries, and called for participation in the struggle against racism here.

Specifically, this has meant actively fighting for school desegregation, and against the school cutbacks in 1977 and 1978. UPCAAR took a strong stand against the charter change and was an active member of the Stop Rizzo Coalition.

UPCAAR members include individuals, both Black and white, as well as representatives from political and community groups, including the Third World Coalition, the Neighborhood Film Project, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the Philadelphia Workers Organizing Committee and the Socialist Workers Party. Many union members have worked in UPCAAR, and new members are always welcome!

In the past year UPCAAR has focused most of its attention on the campaign to "Stop Banking on Apartheid". This is a national campaign coordinated by the Committee to Oppose Bank Loans to South Africa, of which UPCAAR is a member.

Loans by US banks to the South African government, and to corporations investing in South Africa are the clearest and most important demonstration of support for apartheid -- not only the economic support of the monopoly corporations, but also the political support of the US government, which guarantees the profitability of these loans.

## PROFITS AND OPPRESSION INCREASE TOGETHER

US corporations which invest in South Africa actively support apartheid. They provide the weapons, the computer systems, and the funds to keep apartheid going. They provide key technological input throughout the South African economy.

Although US investment has grown over the last 50 years to nearly \$2 billion, the conditions of Black workers have gotten steadily worse. Black South Africans have been stripped of every civil right. Many have been evicted, in the past ten years, from the towns and houses they were born in, to make way for all white cities. The facts of life for Black South Africans are a simple but powerful contradiction of the corporate claim that their presence is gradually improving the situation.

US corporations support apartheid because of the fantastic rates of profit. After all, when the government requires wage and job discrimination by race, and stands ready to jail any Black striker, how can the company lose?

US workers do stand to lose from this situation, though, and UPCAAR has produced literature to bring this out. The existence of forced labor in South Africa, working at starvation wages, enables GM, GE, IBM and others to squeeze their US workers even harder. In *Don't Bank on Racism* (a pamphlet produced by UPCAAR), UPCAAR gives the example of Armco Steel, third largest US producer. In August 1977, Armco invested \$5 million in South Africa. One month later they closed an Ohio plant, laying off 600. Why? The company said it had no money.

Here in Philadelphia, Provident, Philadelphia National Bank, and First Pennsylvania have more money available to lend to South Africa than they do for mortgages for Philadelphia homeowners, or for community development.

UPCAAR has conducted many educational meetings and demonstrations aimed at getting progressive working class and community organizations, including unions, churches, clubs and schools, to withdraw their funds from banks lending to South Africa, and to sell their stock in companies investing there. Nationally the banks campaign has scored some major successes. Unions including UAW, United Electrical Workers, and 1199 (Hospital workers) have already

moved to withdraw. Among local unions, the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers is considering action.

Calvary Methodist Church has provided an example for local churches. Across the country many colleges and universities have been forced to withdraw by their students. Swarthmore College has done so, and the pressure is on the University of Pennsylvania.

As the struggle in South Africa intensifies, and as the US government stands more and more clearly on the side of racism, the movement in support of liberation and against US involvement grows too. A recent conference in New York of the Northeast Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa drew 1300 participants.

The movement against apartheid in the US can have a major impact on the success of the people of Southern Africa in liberating themselves, by providing much needed material and political support. By uniting with the struggle against racism in the US, this movement can have a lasting and positive effect on the US as well.

In January, the Philadelphia premier of *Wilmington 10: USA 10,000*, a film in support of the two struggles, is being sponsored by UPCAAR and other groups. Proceeds from the film go to benefit Zimbabwe refugees, and film maker Haile Gerima will be present to discuss the film. Showtime is 8 PM. Friday, Jan. 26, at the Walton Theater, Chew St. and Chelton Ave. For tickets call: 386-1536 or 243-6687. To join with UPCAAR in the struggle, call: 241-7179, or write: UPCAAR, care of Third World Coalition, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, 19102.

## UPCAAR STATEMENT OF UNITY

We believe that the same giant monopoly corporations which are fighting to maintain apartheid in southern Africa have fostered unemployment, racist divisions, and economic hardships among the working people in this country. Therefore, a victory in one struggle is a victory in both.

We have adopted the following points of unity, and invite the participation of everyone who supports them:

*End All U. S. Economic and Military Support for the Racist Regimes!*

Recognizing that the liberation movements in southern Africa are the only possible means for the achievement of the African people's just demands, we proclaim:

*Victory to the Liberation Movements!  
End All U. S. Sabotage of Mozambique and Angola — Long Live the Peoples Republics!*

Recognizing that in South Africa and the US, the leadership of the people's movements are subject to extreme repression, we demand:

*Free All Political Prisoners!*

And because racist murders in Soweto are no different than racist brutality and exploitation of Blacks and other minority peoples in the US, we demand:

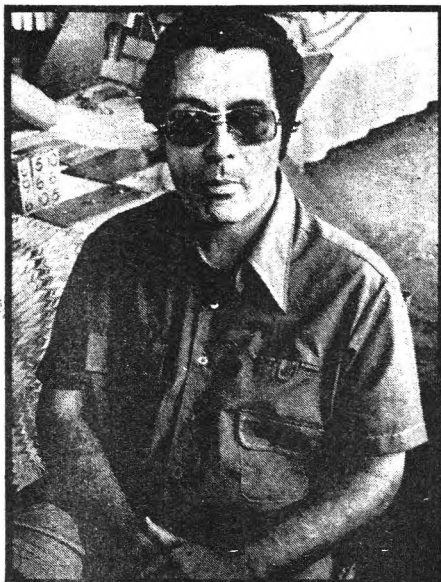
*End Racist Attacks, From South Africa to Philadelphia!*



## Jonestown

(continued from page 8)

were doing so. The People's Temple made its members almost completely dependent on its leader — be it for food or self-esteem.



The Rev. Jim Jones being interviewed the day of the massacre.

*Organizer*, January 1979, page 16

The "Dear Dad" letters found in Jonestown reveal a great deal about the state of mind of its inhabitants. The theme of almost all the letters is guilt for not living up to "Dad's" expectations. One member writes, "I feel guilt about the money I wasted for personal goods instead of giving it to you, Dad, for oppressed people." Another expresses guilt about failing to use Jones as a "role model" and adds, "I do not blame you for criticizing those who mouth Marxism but do not live it. What I need to do is talk less and concentrate on bringing my personal life in accordance with the precepts I teach."

One follower writes ominously, "I will never be a traitor to Communism. I will never let you down or Che Guevara or Patrice Lumumba. . . I shall not let this movement down. . . I shall not beg for mercy at the last moment. . . I shall die proudly. . ."

### GETTING READY TO GO

It was no accident that death was on the minds of Jonestown residents. Long before the Ryan visit, Jones had introduced the concept of "mass suicide for socialism" and it became a regular theme on his six hour long broadcasts on the public address system. Mercenaries and CIA agents combed the bush — prepara-

tions for assault were being made — torture and destruction awaited the Temple, Jones warned. They had to be ready.

Isolated from the outer world, overworked, undernourished and vulnerable to the needs of the leader, the cult members offered little resistance. As one survivor explained, "Because our lives were so wretched anyway, and because we were so afraid to contradict Rev. Jones the concept was not challenged." Nor, when the time came, was its implementation challenged.

Jim Jones's self-advertisement as a latter day Lenin and the promotion of his cult as "true communism" is bound to provide grist for the anti-communist mill. The fact is that it was not the idea of communism which led to the perversions of Jonestown. Rather, it was the actuality of capitalism which provided both a Jim Jones and the human material he was able to manipulate.

The notion that hundreds of people in Cuba or China would knowingly drink Kool-Aid mixed with cyanide for no other apparent reason than Fidel or Mao asked them to is beyond the imagination of even the most fervent enemy of communism. Only a social system that is

rotting away could produce a Jim Jones or a Charles Manson. Only a society tearing at the seams with contradictions drives thousands of people to seek salvation from magic, supernatural, and authoritarian religious cults.

Some on the left ought to be more than embarrassed by their previous support for the People's Temple. Longtime progressive lawyer, Charles Garry, visited Jonestown earlier and reported: "From what I saw there, I would say that the society being created is a credit to humanity. I have seen paradise." Now Garry admits that this paradise "fizzled", but that since he was taken in he doesn't "take any personal responsibility for it". This is not good enough. The cult of the personality and authoritarian methods are nothing new, even in legitimate revolutionary movements. The progressive veneer of the People's Temple apparently led many to overlook or excuse the evidence that something was wrong inside. We should all be more critical and vigilant.

In the wake of the Jonestown tragedy there is much talk of investigations and hearings to produce legislation to control the excesses of the cults. Nothing very useful is likely to come from all this. Monopoly capitalism cannot legislate away the beast within itself.

# Affirmative Action Slashed at Penn

by KAREN DETAMORE

*Karen Detamore is a member of the executive committee of the Philadelphia chapter of the National Lawyers Guild. The Guild is a progressive, multi-racial alternative to the American Bar Association made up of over 6000 legal workers, law students, lawyers and jailhouse lawyers.*

Last July, the day of the Supreme Court's Bakke decision, Mayor Rizzo announced that the city's affirmative action plans would be out the window faster than you can say "Yankee Doodle Dandy." The next day 300 demonstrators gathered outside City Hall to voice their outrage at the Bakke decision and demand that affirmative action programs be maintained and extended. One of the protestors called the decision a dangerous and appalling setback in the struggle for equal rights in this country and predicted that it would open the door to thousands of similar challenges by those who would dismantle affirmative action programs everywhere.

That prediction, unhappily, is being proved correct. On Monday, December 11, the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania Law School voted to approve a change in the school's admissions procedures that represents a real danger to minority enrollments there. The change was recommended by a special commission appointed by the acting dean to examine the school's admissions policies in light of the Bakke decision and propose any necessary changes.

The new plan doesn't call for a cut-back in minority enrollment; however, it fails to address the serious decline in minority enrollment at the law school that has taken place in the last two years. Minority enrollments have dropped from 25% to 15%. It makes even more unclear the standards by which applicants will be judged, while at the same time making no guarantees that any particular number of

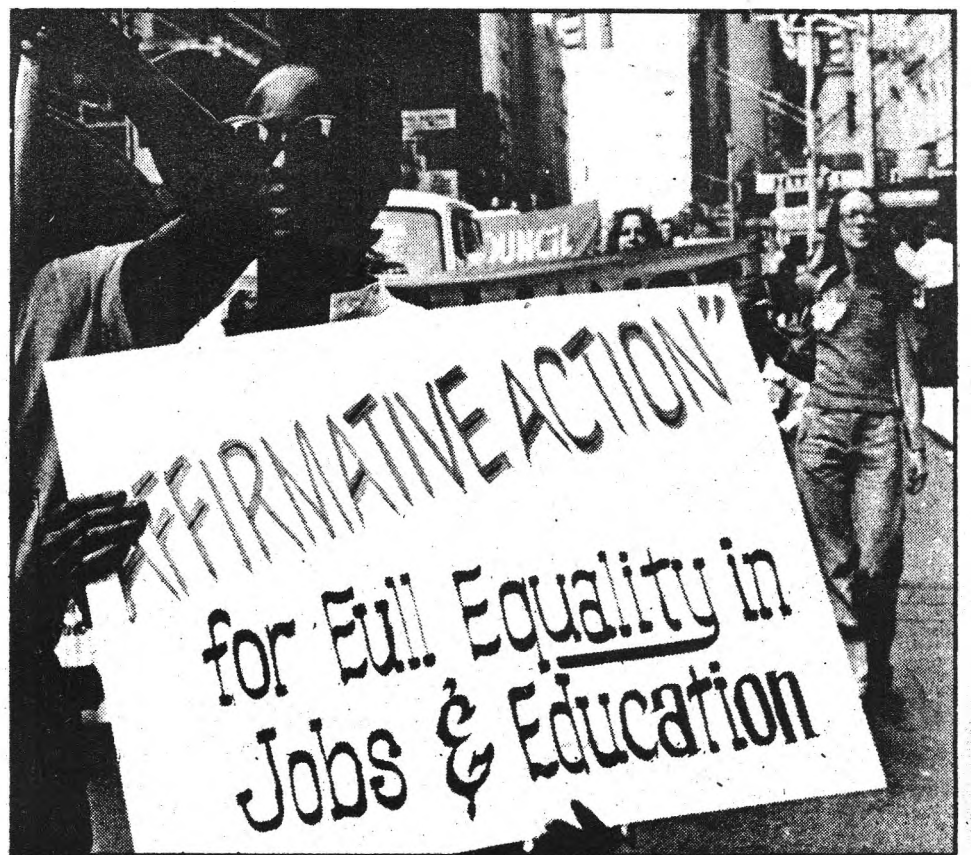
minority students will be admitted. This leaves the level of minority enrollments up to the good will of the admissions committee. Minorities and women can't afford to depend on the good will of the admissions committee or on the good will of anyone else to secure their rights. What is needed are affirmative action plans with numbers — guarantees spelled out — that insure equal opportunities in education and employment.

The law school claims that it has a commitment to a diverse student body, and that means the inclusion of minorities. It claims that the new plan is only being instituted because it is necessary to protect the law school from litigation by rejected white applicants. Ralph Smith, assistant professor at the law school and a leading member of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, says that the plan will not protect the law school from such suits, but that it will undercut the enforceable commitment to minority enrollments.

## COALITION FORMED

The new plan did not pass without a reaction from students and the community. A picket line at noon protested against the proposal and demanded that there be no cutbacks in minority admissions. The picket was called by the newly formed Ad Hoc Committee for Affirmative Action and was endorsed by the Student Committee on Admissions Policy at Penn, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the National Lawyers Guild, the United People's Campaign Against Apartheid and Racism, Neighborhood Resources West, the Philadelphia Workers Organizing Committee and the Socialist Workers Party. The purpose of the picket was to put the faculty of the law school, and others who are watching, on notice. Proposed cutbacks will be met with immediate, strong and continuing protests.

The committee is now considering plans for a city-wide educational confer-



Since the Bakke Decision, Affirmative Action programs have been slashed across the country. A well organized fightback is necessary to regain and extend programs which support the struggle for equality.

ence on affirmative action later this winter. The conference would aim at explaining what the Bakke decision is and is not. The decision is a bad one and threatens meaningful attempts to overcome centuries of racial and sexual oppression. It does not, however, require the dismantling of minority admissions programs and other forms of race and sex conscious affirmative action plans, as some would have us believe. It does not even require changes such as those just approved at Penn's law school.

Speakers would provide information about other so-called reverse discrimination cases now pending in court and explore their implications for affirmative action in education and employment. One example would be the Weber case, where a white, male worker, Brian Weber, is challenging a job training program negotiated by the US Steelworkers with Kaiser Aluminum Company because it reserves half of the places for Blacks and

women. This plan was adopted to help remedy the devastating effects of decades of Kaiser's Jim Crow practices. As a result of Weber's suit, the training program has been discontinued. This hurts all the workers at the plant.

The conference would also examine the current situation in Philadelphia in the areas of education and employment, and would seek to attract members of minority groups, women's groups, progressive trade union forces, other rank and file workers and all people interested in the struggle for equality. The gains of the civil rights movement are under serious attack. We must educate ourselves and others and organize so that we can defend and extend those gains in the same way that they were won — through mass political action.

For more information about the conference or the activities of the committee, call LO3-3055.

# Women's Rights at the Polls

Both advocates and opponents of equal rights for women approached the 1978 elections with high hopes and determination. Now that the votes have all been tallied, the result is the balance of power remains essentially what it was prior to the election. The contradictory results gave both sides something to cheer about. Phyllis Schlafly, head of the national STOP ERA organization was "just thrilled" by the election. But the

National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) also characterized the election as "a stunning victory."

One much ballyhooed aspect of the elections was the increase in the number of women elected officials. This was most significant at the statehouse level where a net gain of 58 state representatives brings the composition of state legislatures nationally to being 10.2% female.

The only two women governors, Ella Grasso of Connecticut and Dixie Lee Ray of Washington were both re-elected and the number of women lieutenant governors doubled from 3 to 6. Nancy Landon Kassenbaum of Kansas was the first woman elected to the Senate in 12 years. The number of women members of the house declined from 18 to 16.

While these modest gains are certainly welcome, they are hardly indicative of any real trend. At all levels of elected officialdom the numbers of women remain at token proportions. And for the most part the women who have been elected are not particularly identified with the general question of equal rights for women.

## ERA, ABORTION RIGHTS

Much more important was the electoral fortunes of the two issues most identified with the cause of women's struggle for equality—the Equal Rights Amendment and the right to abortion.

The ERA did not fare well at the polls. In both Florida and Nevada the ERA was on the ballot in the form of a referendum and lost in both states. The STOP ERA forces claimed their heavily bankrolled effort to elect anti-ERA representatives to state legislatures where the ERA must yet be ratified was a success. There is no indication, however, at either the state or federal level, that the anti-ERA forces scored a decisive victory and the fate of ERA remains very much up in the air.

The so called "right to life" movement, with major financial and organizational backing from right wing

lobbies and the Catholic hierarchy, tested its muscle in a number of races. In New York State the newly formed Right To Life Party ran its own gubernatorial candidate, Mary Jane Tobin, and received 100,000 votes. The Right to Life Party outpolled the Liberal Party, the once influential vehicle of the Garment unions and New York City liberals, and gained its position on the ballot.

In Oregon, however, the "right to lifers" were dealt a sharp reversal. Having gotten the question of public funding for abortion on the ballot in a petition drive, the anti-abortion forces hoped a victory here would spur similar efforts elsewhere. Oregon voters disappointed them, voting in favor of public funding for abortions by a 52% to 48% margin.

Pro-Choice advocates noted a number of other victories. According to the Political Action Committee of the National Abortion Rights Action League, 71% of the candidates favoring the right to abortion backed by the organization in state races were successful. NARAL campaigned for 57 candidates in 25 races. The election left the balance of power in the House and Senate on the abortion issue largely unchanged, although right to lifers did score slight gains in the Senate.

Low voter turnout and a general disinterest in the election means that the results can't be interpreted as a barometer of popular sentiment on either issue. In fact such an election is tailor-made for the much better financed, highly organized troops of Phyllis Schlafly and the anti-abortion forces.



Elections 1978: The ERA did not fare well at the polls, but Abortion Rights won in Oregon.

# "Tax Revolt" in Michigan

by the Detroit Socialist Collective

While rejecting a Proposition 13 type tax cut proposal, in the November election Michigan voters narrowly approved a big business supported tax limitation amendment that will benefit less than 25% of the state's property owners.

Inspired by California's Proposition 13, the Tisch Amendment or Proposition J called for a 50% cut in residential and business property taxes. A coalition of big business, labor and civil rights forces successfully defeated the measure which lost by a 63%-37% margin at the polls. The Tisch Amendment had little organized backing. Its proponents could raise only \$8,000 in campaign contributions and carried only 5 of Michigan's 83 counties.

Big business money was on the Headlee Amendment or Proposition E. Headlee sought to limit taxes to 9.6% of state personal income, the present level of taxation in the state. The powerful corporate lobby successfully portrayed Proposition E as the "reasonable" alternative to the Tisch Amendment. "Taxpayers United for Tax Limitation", organized by Richard Headlee, former head of the US Chamber of Commerce, raised nearly a quarter of a million dollars from General Motors, Ford Motor, Budd Company, Dow Chemical, the Michigan National Bank and others. The Headlee Amendment was endorsed by both the Democratic and Republican candidates for governor.

Headlee carried by a 95,000 vote margin out of two and a half million votes. It was badly defeated in Wayne and Genesee Counties, where the largest concentrations of UAW members live, but carried most of the suburban and rural counties.

A more aggressive campaign on the part of labor could have defeated the measure in the view of many activists. The most effective mobilization against the Headlee Amendment was organized by the Coalition to Defeat E.H. and J. (Proposition H favored public funding for private and parochial schools and was defeated by a 3-1 margin.) The Coalition drew together two dozen labor, community, Black and women's groups. AFSCME region No. 25, Detroit Council President Emra Henderson, Women's Conference of

Concerns and United We Can, a Detroit based organization concerned with public school financing, were among the major forces in the coalition.

In the two months prior to the election the coalition organized mass meetings, leafleting of shopping centers, caravans and poll watching for election day. The major unions and the liberal Democratic Party forces gave only token support to these activities. The Michigan Educational Association was also a major factor in the opposition to all three proposals, spending more than \$500,000 on t.v. and radio ads.

Another major weakness of the labor-liberal opposition was the failure to promote a working class alternative to tax proposals sponsored by the right wing and the monopoly corporations. The UAW, for example, promoted a yes vote on Proposition A which called for a state constitutional convention arguing that tax relief could best be accomplished through such a convention. This proposal was voted down by a 75% to 25% margin. A vague promise of "tax relief" in the future is no substitute for concrete measures to be enacted now.

## TAX REFORM FOR WHOM?

What will the Headlee Amendment mean for the state's residents? According to State Budget Director Gerald Miller, a rollback provision in the amendment would benefit less than a quarter of the state's property owners in the coming year. Moreover, Headlee sets up a roadblock to a real tax reform that would shift the tax burden to the rich.

## Democrats

(continued from page 9)

money that can be raised and spent on top of that. Democrats collected \$24 million in private donations during the 1976 nomination campaigns, including almost ten million given to Jimmy Carter. Most of that came in donations of \$500 or more.

Long before a candidate gets the connections and popular name needed to run for President, he or she must come up through years of local, state, and congressional elections. Only about half of the states regulate political contributions from rich individuals or corporations. So many wealthy Americans buy their politicians before they become nationally known, thereby getting them at a discount. Both Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter and Texas Senator Lyndon Johnson received financial aid from Gulf Oil Co. on their way to the top.

The reforms of the Watergate era have not and will not stop the fat cats from calling the plays from the sidelines of the Democratic Party. As Professor Domhoff has said, "*Despite the social and economic hardships suffered by hundreds of millions of Americans over the past one hundred years, the power elite have been able to contain demands for a steady job, fair wages, good pensions, and effective health care within very moderate limits compared to other highly-developed Western countries. One of the most important factors in maintaining those limits has been the Democratic Party. The Party dominates the left alternative in this country, and the sophisticated rich want to keep it that way. Democrats are not only attractive to the working man, but vital to the wealthy, too, precisely because they are the branch of the Property Party that to some extent accomodates labor, blacks, and liberals, but at the same time hinders genuine economic solutions to age-old problems.*"

Or as Henry Ford II put it in 1972, "We must elect a Democratic President so I can start living like a Republican again." Americans who are looking to find a "party of the common people" will surely have to look beyond the Democratic Party that has been so kind to Henry Ford II and his friends in the Social Register.

Presently, 72% of the Michigan state budget goes to social programs which are vital to the poor, minorities, the elderly, the young and the working class as a whole. As the legislature looks about for ways to limit state spending, it will be these programs that are hurt. The various subsidies to the monopoly corporations and the debt service payments to the banks will remain untouched.

The Headlee Amendment will also handcuff state government from providing immediate relief in the event of another recession such as the one in '74-'75 which crippled the state's automotive and construction industries. Then, in response to pressure from labor, the state legislature raised unemployment benefits by \$30 a week. Under Headlee, the Governor must first declare a state of emergency, get a 2/3 approval from the legislature and hold a referendum before gaining the authority for an emergency tax increase.

Following the election results, Ted Smith, AFSCME Political Director, speaking for the Coalition to Defeat E.H. and J, called the defeats of H and J a "people's victory" and pledged that the coalition will remain together to fight the effects of the Headlee Amendment.

Tax reform in Michigan needs to focus on the collection of delinquent taxes from corporations, the repeal of Act 198, a blatant tax giveaway to big business, and on replacing the flat rate income tax with a progressive tax. These local demands must be linked with a national campaign to cut the military budget, to close corporate tax loopholes, and to tax monopoly profits.

The inequality of the present system of taxation is a glaring expression of the more fundamental inequality that is the very basis of the capitalist system. The question of tax reform can be a means for the widespread exposure of the capitalist system, and toward preparing the way for a socialist alternative.

## Silber vs. the Guardian

(continued from page 15)

It would also appear that Silber's objections to the Guardian's call for a pre-party organization comes less from concern with the circle spirit than it does from opposition to such organizations in principle. According to Jack Smith, in the Guardian staff Silber has advanced the argument that "consolidated organizational forms are a 'mistake' at this period, that they 'freeze' the development of ideological struggle and theoretical advancement." But Silber has sought to keep these views to himself, arguing that they are not relevant to the debate in the Guardian Clubs.

The point here is this. Silber's decision to conceal views that are clearly relevant to the debate in the Guardian network raises questions as to the real basis of his so-called "fundamental disagreements." Are they based on a genuine break with the sectarianism that has characterized so much of the Guardian's intervention in the party building movement? Or is the opposition just tactical, more designed to take the edge off the circle mentality than to negate its essence?

Unfortunately, some of the methods used by Silber to conduct the struggle against the staff's line raise questions about his commitment to principle. Early in his letter to the Clubs, Silber writes, "Guardian Clubs number in their ranks some of the best, most developed Marxist-Leninists in our movement, people who have demonstrated a hundred times over both in their theoretical contributions as well as their practical work, a deep-seated commitment to party-building and to the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism." He continues in this vein for three more lengthy paragraphs, engaging in a rather transparent attempt to ingratiate himself with members of the Clubs.

Silber also sets himself up as the champion of the Clubs struggle against the "bureaucratic centralism" of the Guardian staff. He argues that the leadership of any Guardian political organization is likely to assume the same "commandist" style implemented by the former Guardian Clubs Committee. Apart from the obvious attempt to curry favor in the ranks, there is a strong dose of irony in this. Silber, himself, was the chairperson of the Clubs Committee.

Such unprincipled appeals can hardly be designed to encourage a full and rigorous investigation by Club members of any sectarianism that may affect Silber himself.

Given all this we can not be too sanguine about the probability of a genuine break with the circle spirit on Silber's part. This does not mean, of course, that there is no basis for united action with Silber in the struggle against the Guardian's self-serving approach. At some level, Silber has taken up the struggle against sectarianism. That fact must be recognized.

In the context of the struggle against the Guardian's line we must also call for Silber and his forces to deepen their battle against sectarianism. We must demand that Silber break with his narrow opposition to the OC. We must demand that he commit himself, at least in principle, to the building of a single genuine ideological center for the emerging Marxist-Leninist trend.

Until he does so, we must hold that he, too, in practice, has abandoned "the correct task of trying to unite all Marxist-Leninists in a common plan to build the party!"

## Autoworkers

(continued from page 5)

right to strike over local grievances, the need to raise the standards of wages, working conditions, and contract benefits in the small parts sector of the industry, cost of living for the pension agreement, and affirmative action to achieve equality and integration of the skilled trades.

In the vote on this resolution only one delegate voted no. Thus the generally backward and defeatist view, put forward most aggressively and consistently by the International Socialists, was routed in the course of debate. Marxist Leninists associated with the anti-revisionist, anti-dogmatist trend, including the PWOC, played a key role in defeating this line.

Before the conference adjourned, a continuations committee was set up. There was general agreement on the need to create regional organizations around the country and a discussion of local contract demands and the relation between national and local issues.

The Detroit Conference represented an important step forward for the rank and file movement in the UAW. If the resolutions of the conference can be consolidated and carried out; if those in attendance seriously pursue work in their locals and in their regions; and if we can now begin to draw in the Short Work Week Committees, the Cost of Living for Retirees Group and the base of the Skilled Trades Council on the basis of a principled, all-sided contract program; then we will be in a position to extend a growing influence over the course of events within the UAW.

## COMMUNITY

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