

Newsletter of

THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT

October 1974—Vol. II, No. 8

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Edited by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Miners demand job health and safety

by ROBERT COONEY

Years ago, labor observers looked for clues on whether there would be a coal strike by checking the back page of the *United Mine Workers Journal*. If the recipes were meatless and spartan, it indicated a walkout.

With contracts covering 120,000 bituminous miners due to expire November 12, there's no need to read tea leaves or study recipes. The union is openly preparing for tough bargaining and a possible shutdown. During the summer, the *UMW Journal* ran a "Contract '74" contest to solicit ideas from mineworker families on how to endure a strike if it comes.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Mills, Jr., of Elderton, Pennsylvania won the \$50 first prize with a poem which urged frugality now so that "when November 12 comes, you won't be filled with dread because you were smart and looked ahead."

Mrs. Stacy Sorrels of Vandergrift, Pennsylvania summed up six pages of entries with her suggestions: "Make a garden if possible. Use all leftovers. Throw nothing out that can be used later. Bake your own bread if you can. Can and freeze all vegetables for winter. Pick blackberries and other berries. Make jelly and applesauce. Mend clothing and have shoes repaired and new soles for good long wear...."

Mobilizing the family in support of contract demands is just part of the United Mine Workers' rediscovered strength. In August, the union sponsored a week long memorial work stoppage to honor members killed in the mines. While commemorating the dead, the union mobilized the living. A rally in Washington, D.C., and a mass march through Harlan County, Kentucky were held to support a bitter strike against Duke Power Company. Traditional mine-worker solidarity was renewed; the membership was prodded on the safety issue as a key to the upcoming negotiations. And a week-long shutdown of the mines depleted the stockpiles, giving the UMW bargaining team a strong tactical advantage.

A few days later, a 23-year-old striker named Lawrence Jones was shot and killed and a foreman for Duke Power's mine at Highsplint, Kentucky was charged with murder. The tragedy brought a quick settlement of the 13-month-old struggle and spurred the organizing campaign against non-union operators.

What is of critical importance in the current nego-

tiations is that this is a revitalized union. The United Mine Workers enters the 1974 bargaining with a confident and determined leadership and a newly-adopted bargaining structure intended to involve as much of the membership as possible.

What do the miners want?

When negotiations formally opened September 4, the UMW presented more than 200 demands to the pattern-setting Bituminous Coal Operators' Association, which represents 80 member companies with about 80,000 miners.

"We've obviously asked for the moon, but we plan to bring a big chunk of it back," remarked John DiBiase, UMW District 4 chief and a bargaining council member. And UMW President Arnold Miller left no doubt when he listed the miners' priorities at the opening of negotiations. "The first is health and safety," Miller declared. "Simply put, the lives and safety of American coal miners are not negotiable items to the United Mine Workers of America."

Miller said that more than 40 or about one-fifth of the union's demands involved safety. Behind every safety demand, he added, is the awareness that a miner is killed on the average of every other working day—more than 80 this year and some 800 since the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act took effect in 1970. In addition, about 3,000 miners die each year from black lung.

"The UMW demands a safe and healthy workplace for coal miners as a fundamental right," Miller declared, adding, "we will insist on contract language that guarantees every coal miner the right to walk out of any workplace that endangers his life or health."

Among the safety demands presented to the BCOA are full time helpers on all dangerous mine machinery, extensive safety education and training for new miners, a full time safety committeeman chosen by the local union and paid for by the company, and access to any mine by UMW safety inspectors.

In the economic area, Miller sees 1974 as a "catch-up" year. With the price of soft coal on the open market tripling from \$14 to over \$40 a ton in the past year, the UMW feels the money is there to meet many demands.

(Continued on page 5)

The coronation of Prince Albert

by WINSTON SMITH

It was, of course, over long before it began. One might say that it was over last December, when Al Shanker organized the AFT Executive Council into demanding Dave Selden's resignation as AFT President. *Al is a good organizer.*

Perhaps it was over earlier than that, when Al Shanker organized the AFT Executive Council into declaring him "First Vice President" of the AFT—a position nowhere contained in the AFT Constitution. *Al is a very good organizer.*

Or, perhaps, it was over even earlier, when Al Shanker organized a referendum mandating roll-call voting in the election of AFT officers. *Al is a very good organizer indeed.*

The Coronation Party was planned, and planned very well, long before the election took place—in fact, long before the 58th AFT Convention was held at all. It was a lush, opulent affair, held in the most lush and opulent ballroom in Toronto, which put the official convention meeting places to shame. No "cash bars" at the Coronation—bars all over the ballroom were continually jammed—and entertainment was not only provided by a swinging band, but also by Valerie, the UFT's resident belly-dancer, who seemed to have gotten a new and sparkling costume for the occasion. And for the first time in history, the audience—nine tenths of the AFT delegates gathered for the Coronation—was instructed to sit down on the floor so that those in the back could watch the performance. Prior such performances have only been seen by those who managed to huddle together, standing, in the front row, thus preventing anyone else from seeing the spectacle. *Al really is a good organizer*, but this organizational feat has taken years.

And when Prince Albert finally appeared to lend his blessing to the occasion, he appeared *on the stage*—thus adding another five feet to his usual height (nine feet, seven inches at last measurement, and still growing). Surrounded, as he was, by lesser men (and, of course, women) the effect was predictably astounding. *Al is the best organizer around.*

I have never seen such a collection of scared and intimidated people in my life. They dutifully enjoyed the belly-dancing, and drank as if their lives—or perhaps their souls—depended on it. All literature tells us that alcohol is a sedative. I'm willing to predict that Al's caucus in the AFT will have to increase its dues just to pay the bar bill at the Coronation. Delegates who hadn't voted for Al walked around quavering, afraid someone was going to try to throw them out. Delegates who had voted for him tried to explain why in the usual terms: they were afraid of reprisal; they didn't want their local to get shafted; they needed help

Author's note—For obvious reasons, I must remain anonymous. If a name is necessary, "Winston Smith" will do.

in an upcoming bargaining campaign; they were getting ready to go on strike and needed support from the AFT—all of the usual excuses; after all, it was a roll-call vote, and Al will know who voted for whom. *Al will know!* A great exercise in pseudo-theology: God sees all our private sins and will punish us appropriately when the Day of Judgment comes. God may not be real—but *Al is the best of all possible organizers.* The deity should only be so good!

Dave Selden's election night party was very different. It was small, and everyone was having a good time. Dave was having a good time, too—he had lost that doomed look which has dogged him for the past several years, and he wasn't looking over his shoulder. He had gotten less than fifteen per cent of the vote, and it was a triumph. He was holding court, and people who loved him were there—not because they were afraid of what would happen if they weren't, but because they knew they'd never be able to face themselves again if they weren't able to face Dave that night. The contrast was vivid, and a Martian observer might have concluded that it was a victory party—which, in a sense, it was, although some people were in tears and some were angry. But it was full of good feelings, fellowship, solidarity, and brotherhood, and Dave—who led the singing, as usual—was probably the happiest person in the suite.

And, whatever his faults, Dave Selden was the one person who behaved with gallantry and honor throughout the convention. In spite of repeated and vicious attempts by some of Al's disciples to bring Dave publicly to heel during his chairing of the convention, Dave conducted the proceedings with dignity and with grace—and, one might add, with patience. The fact that the convention delegates generally supported Dave during this onslaught surely contributed to his serenity on election night. *Al is a good organizer, but no one is perfect.*

Two days later, the 58th AFT Convention was a shambles. It had been adjourned by Dave, under pro-

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The following people helped to put this issue out:
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Signed articles express the views of the author.

Published ten times a year (monthly except July and August) by the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, 31 Union Square West, Room 1112, New York, N.Y. 10003.

test, for lack of a quorum—after Al led a drift-out (one hesitates to call it a walk-out) during the last session, before most of the committee reports on resolutions had been heard. Before Al left, of course, he moved the adoption of a long resolution in praise of Dave—a resolution which was put to no vote other than the ten-minute standing ovation the delegates insisted on—after all, it was the last thing they could do, and an activity in which they could remain safely anonymous. Dave stopped it, to his credit, before his integrity could be damaged by having to join Al, as one delegate requested, in leading a chorus of “Solidarity Forever” to show the assembled multitude that all was forgivable. *Al isn't that good an organizer, I guess.*

Many hours later, I went up to Dave's suite to find that the place was deserted, although the door was open. I emptied the ashtrays, ate up the left-over peanuts, and searched in vain for something to drink. It had taken a long time, but it was finally over—so I left and locked the door behind me: what else could one do?

Sure, I voted for Al. After all, I'm an officer of my local, and we need help from the national office this year. We may be on strike in September, and we're sure to be challenged in the spring. Being a member of the Coronation is a small price to pay—and I know that Dave understands. Unlike many of my brothers and sisters, I don't worship the water Al walks on—but *he's the best organizer in town.* □

Liberalism, socialism and the crisis of capitalism

by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

World capitalism is in crisis. Therefore the immediate demands of the democratic Left must increasingly call for basic, structural change in American society.

I hesitate to write in this way. This NEWSLETTER is, of course, published by socialists, yet we have tried to speak from within the framework of a mass democratic Left which is not socialist. We have therefore stressed the common ground which we share with the best of labor, minority and middle-class liberalism. Events, however, are forcing that very liberalism to go beyond itself, to move in a much more socialist direction. Our basic purpose remains as it was: to contribute to the creation of a political majority for the democratic Left. Only now the new economic and social environment does not permit that to be done on the basis of the conventional welfare state wisdom.

Henry Kissinger is reliably reported to believe that the current crisis “could lead to a breakup of the political fabric of the West.” *The New York Times* editorializes about a possible “global economic catastrophe.” The economic reality and the attendant political alignments which emerged out of the New Deal are in the process of transformation.

There is, fortunately, a considerable consensus on the democratic Left as to how we should respond in the very immediate future: a public employment program to provide jobs for the victims of the current recession; an end to rationing credit by the purse which benefits big corporations and penalizes would-be homeowners and construction workers; a cut in the outrageous welfare program for the corporate rich in the Internal Revenue Code rather than any reduction in government social expenditures. On one issue, there is debate: whether or not to move to wage, price and profit controls.

In what follows, I assume that consensus as a given and choose not to explore the one contentious issue within it. Rather, I want to focus on the medium range, i.e., on those factors which the democratic Left must confront in elaborating a strategy for an unprecedented new era. In a very practical political way, that requires a consideration of the systemic nature

of the current crisis—of a breakdown in the mechanisms of that reformed capitalist society which took shape after World War II and has dominated our economic and political life ever since. I propose to do that by talking quite specifically and concretely about some of the causes of our present incredible plight.

• **Oil.** The World Bank estimates that the nations of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) will accumulate \$650 billion in the next five years and \$1.2 trillion by 1985. This is not simply a tremendous inflationary cost for the United States and the other industrialized powers. It has already begun to disrupt the international capital markets and monetary system, bringing Italy to the brink of bankruptcy. England is now so dependent on the deposits of Arab wealth in its banks that the decision of a single country, like Kuwait, to shift its funds to the continent could cause a severe internal crisis. It is an exaggeration for *The New York Times* to say that “. . . the oil producing states of the Middle East will become the center of world wealth and power”—but not much of an exaggeration.

Events are forcing liberalism to go beyond itself, to move in a more socialist direction.

But how is this situation related to capitalism? It arises because the U.S. government made private oil corporations its international agents, starting in 1943 when Washington helped Standard of California and Texaco shoulder the British out of the Saudi concession. Since then, as the NEWSLETTER has documented, tax policy, import restrictions, the federal highway program and the like have made oil company priorities public policy. This subordination of the common good to private profits is the essential characteristic of late capitalist society and the prime source of our current dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

To deal with this catastrophe will require a national energy policy to develop present resources and new

technologies in a planned, social manner. It requires, for instance, a mass transit program and an accompanying restoration of the cities and the environment which we have sacrificed to a generation of insane, privately profitable transportation priorities.

• **Food.** The world is quite probably on the verge of a murderous famine; the United States is most certainly in the grip of a grocery inflation which strikes savagely at the poor and minorities and forces some of them to eat dog food. Is this simply the result of the finite productivity of American agriculture and rising demand from an affluent world?

Energy exploration funds were invested in oil wells known as Montgomery Ward and Ringling Brothers Circus.

In a word, the answer is no. Our basic limitation comes less from Mother Nature than from the agricultural politics of private profit. Let me explain.

For over a generation, American agriculture has been rigged in favor of corporate agribusiness. Supply has been limited, production held back, profits maximized. Despite the hunger of the poor at home and abroad, it was only last year that the government stopped paying rich farmers to let their land lie fallow. While gentleman farmers and giant conglomerates were on the dole, family farms were gobbled up into larger units, and tenant farmers were driven into the urban ghettos.

But the large farm units did very well. In 1973, the nation's agricultural surplus amounted to \$9.3 billion, the most positive single item in the balance of payments. A year earlier, the government generously subsidized the Russian wheat deal, enriching a few agribusiness sharps while driving up prices in American supermarkets.

In the face of the present challenge, agribusiness wants to continue its domination of government policy. Earl Butz, perhaps the most reactionary single Cabinet member, has steadfastly held out for private control (with federal subsidies) of our food supply. He opposes any system of non-market rationing which would seek to earmark a portion of the American surplus for starving countries. In fact, that surplus could be enormously increased if the Department of Agriculture, as the big farm lobby is called, were not in charge. Tony Dechant, President of the National Farmers Union has said, "There is no excuse for us getting into a position where we won't have enough food." *The New York Times* has estimated that we could increase production by 50 percent in the immediate future if we wanted to.

Take the case of the "Green Revolution." When the new grains were developed, the fertilizer companies overexpanded during the Sixties to take advantage of the situation. Their capacity outran demand, so when the need for more fertilizer became desperately urgent two or three years ago, *The New York Times* reported that the industry "balked at spending more

millions on expansion until they could be sure it would be profitable." Meanwhile, nations were moving toward famine while business waited to see if the return on agony was high enough.

• **Capital.** There is an ideological offensive underway, as the NEWSLETTER outlined in the last issue, to show that profits are morally and economically superior to wages. They are now defined, not as a means of private enrichment, but as a source of new investment funds and therefore of jobs. The New York Stock Exchange has impartially determined that industry will need \$4.7 trillion in new funds in the period 1974-85 and these are supposed to come from profits. Therefore business is now fighting to get tax breaks for itself and to cut the budget for everyone else. *The Wall Street Journal* attacks the unions for "being hypnotized by the more or less Keynesian idea that demand is sufficient to insure growth," and laments that "American labor allied itself with government against capital."

So the basic proposal is that the American government guarantee high profits to business which the latter will then invest as they see fit. So Mobil and Gulf recently took profits which were specially protected to provide funds for energy exploration and invested them in oil wells known, respectively, as Montgomery Ward and Ringling Brothers Circus. Such a use of the public monies is intolerable. If Washington is supposed to guarantee investment funds, then the public has a right to vote on how they are spent. This should mean, as a first step, public and union representatives on the boards of directors of every major corporation in the land.

What is needed is a structural shift in the balance of economic power—a redistribution of wealth.

• **Wealth.** Part of the democratic Left consensus is that new monies would be raised, and/or demand restrained, by taxing the rich, not by cutting services to the poor and the rest of us. As AFSCME President Jerry Wurf told President Ford at a White House meeting, "Financing public service jobs through cuts in federal grant money would be self-defeating. It will take new money. New money can best be provided through adjusting our federal tax laws to provide relief to low and middle income Americans and to close tax loopholes." This is an "incomes policy" and a good one. Now it has to be made even more explicit. Every time there is a tax reform, while the liberals are plugging up the loopholes on the floor of the Congress, the corporate rich are drilling new ones in secret sessions with obliging lawmakers. What is needed is a structural shift in the very balance of economic power—a redistribution of wealth—something which has not happened in this country since 1945.

• **Unemployment.** Quietly and without too much

notice a new reactionary dogma is being proclaimed in America: that 6 percent unemployment is tolerable. That is the figure at which Arthur Burns and most of the public employment bill writers want to trigger federal action. It is double the level of joblessness set as a goal by the Kennedy Administration; and a third higher than the Kennedy-Johnson interim figure. In current statistics, that means that we are accepting the misery of an additional two to three million workers as necessary to the functioning of the system.

This tragic backsliding is accompanied by a subtle business attack on full employment policy itself. *Business Week* last month told its corporate readers the most important reason for inflation: "the worldwide commitment to full employment and maximum production." This comment is usually accompanied by a *pro forma* statement that no one wants to go back to the old ways, i.e. to what they consider to be the only real solution to the problem. However, Paul McCracken, one of Ford's top counselors (and like the rest of his colleagues, one of the architects of the present disaster), let the cat out of the bag. He told *Newsweek* that his (and the Administration's) "emphasis will be on fiscal and monetary policies designed to check inflation—even at the expense of rising unemployment."

This is capitalist orthodoxy: that unemployment

will drive down wages, spur productivity, increase profits. And like every other problem noted here—oil, food, new capital, wealth—it can only be countered by structural change. We need full employment and maximum production to build the new transportation system, to help us to become less dependent on Middle Eastern oil, to meet our food commitments to America and the world, to build a new technological base in this society and so on. But we will not get these things out of the present system as it is. The Keynesian—New Deal to Great Society—assumption that Government need only to intervene judiciously because the basic private infrastructure is sound no longer works (it never did, but leave that historical point aside).

If the Left is not innovative, the corporate Right will be. There is a solution to these problems within the system, only it is intolerable. It would make the poor and the working people and a good section of the middle class pay while the rich retain all their prerogatives. If that is not to pass, then the democratic Left must start thinking, and agitating, for more basic changes than they have considered during the last generation. The socialist critique of the anti-social priorities of profit-seeking corporations has been placed on the political agenda by the disasters those priorities have now wrought. □

Miners . . .

(Continued from page 1)

The new UMW leadership finds the 1971 contract—which took a 44-day strike to win—lacking in many respects. Though it brought the largest wage increase ever, the miner's real purchasing power has declined 3 percent. The miner still gets only two weeks vacation after 50 weeks in the pits; he has no sick pay; the once-famous pension plan provides only \$37.50 a week after 20 years' service no matter how long a miner continues to work.

The union's bread and butter demands include a substantial wage increase, a cost of living escalator, a sizeable hike in the 60 cent per ton royalty paid into the health and pension fund, more sick and vacation time.

Referring to industry concerns over lost production due to wildcat strikes and absenteeism, Miller said the BCOA's own data show declines in both problems in the past two years. The operators also claim man-day productivity has fallen because of the federal mine safety law.

Miller argues that the chief reason for wildcat strikes is that most miners have no confidence in the present grievance process. "It takes too long, it is undemocratic, it is inconsistent and the decision-making process is weighted in the company's favor," he said. The UMW has proposed new grievance machinery which replaces the present single umpire with a three-member panel, sets time limits and encourages settlement at the site.

The UMW knows that its demands will be modified and reshaped in the give and take of negotiations during the weeks ahead. The leadership also has no illusions about the formidable concentration of eco-

nomic power on the other side of the bargaining table. And it knows that the final tough decisions may be made by energy overlords beyond the public eye.

Over the past decade, oil companies have been increasingly taking over coal companies. According to the UMW, the oil industry now owns about 70 percent of the nation's coal reserves. Of the top 20 coal producers, 15 are wholly-owned subsidiaries of the oil and steel corporations, railroads and metal interests.

As the nation becomes more aware of the high price and uncertain supply of imported oil and the limited reserves of domestic oil and gas, coal becomes a critically important energy source. According to the UMW, coal presently accounts for 78 percent of America's energy sources and oil and gas account for about 17 percent. To meet its fuel needs, however, the figures are almost reversed; the U.S. relies on oil and gas to meet approximately 77 percent of its needs and coal to meet 17 percent of its needs. Utilities and the steel industry consumed about 80 percent of the nearly 600 million tons of coal produced in 1973.

Some 800 miners have been killed since the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act took effect in 1970.

Depending on where one sits, the profits reaped by the oil industry during the energy crisis are accidental, pretty big, embarrassing or obscene. "Occidental Petroleum, which owns the nation's third largest coal producer, Island Creek, saw its profits after taxes in

the first half of 1974 rise 403 percent over the same period last year," declared Miller at the opening of the coal talks. He adds, "Continental Oil Company, the parent company of Consolidation Coal (second biggest producer), claimed an 111 percent increase in after-tax profits. The Pittston Company, the number four coal producer, reported an 868 percent profit rise while Westmoreland Coal Company, an independent company, claimed 408 percent."

How to win a fair share of the wealth he produces and convert it into safer and healthier working conditions is the question ahead for the miner. It appears that health and safety—now enjoying belated recognition in the public consciousness—may be the issue which could bring about a deadlock and a walkout.

"Kenny Holland was killed because Peabody Coal wouldn't spend \$20 . . ."

The mine union leadership is straight out of the mines: President Arnold Miller, 24 years underground; Vice President Mike Trbovich, 25 years; Secretary-Treasurer Harry Patrick, 18 years. They speak the language of their members. The UMW has an increasingly younger membership, many of whom are Vietnam veterans. Like the young auto workers at Lords-town and a new generation anywhere, they are operating on assumptions different from their fathers.

Miller reflected this point in his state of the union address to last December's convention: ". . . no coal miner today is willing to repeat the history of his father and his grandfathers who labored their lives away in the bowels of the earth and reaped as their reward a back bent like a stunted tree and lungs that wouldn't work because they were full of coal dust."

Miller noted the regrets of the industry. Coal mining is dangerous work, they say, and accidents happen. "They say it's a tragedy that a 21-year-old boy like Kenny Holland got caught in a conveyor belt and run through its rollers until his neck broke as happened last April [1973] in a Peabody Coal Company mine in Kentucky. They say accidents like that are part of the risk of being a coal miner. But the federal investigation into Kenny Holland's death says something different. It says that Kenny Holland died because Peabody Coal Company wouldn't spend \$20,

as required by law, to put a protective guard over the conveyor belt that killed him."

According to the UMW, Kennecott Copper, the company which controls Peabody (the nation's top coal producer), counted after-tax profits of more than \$106 million in the first half of 1974, up 52 percent compared to the same period last year.

The UMW does not damn the entire industry. Miller made some distinctions in his convention address. If accidents happen simply because mining is dangerous work, Miller wondered, "why are miners injured eighteen times more often in coal mines operated by the Pittston Company [after-tax profits of \$39 million in the first half of 1974, up 868 percent from 1973] than in mines run by U.S. Steel where an honest effort is made to promote safety? Why do Eastern Associated Coal Company [controlled by Eastern Gas & Fuel, after-tax profits of \$20.6 million in the first half of 1974, up 149 percent compared to 1973] mines kill men thirteen times more frequently than Bethlehem coal mines where new men receive extensive training in safe mining practices?"

Profits pulled in during the energy crisis can be used to make the mines safer—or to outlast a strike.

Miller reminded the delegates that the Bureau of Mines 30 years ago called for quick action to reduce the death toll. Miners waited while 15,719 fellow workers died, Miller said. Then he recited a tragic litany which always stirs bitter memories. "We waited through 23 dead at the Sunnyside mine in Utah and 47 dead at Old Ben No. 8 in Illinois. We waited while 13 miners were killed in a single accident at the King mine in Indiana and another 11 died in the Edgewater mine in Alabama. We waited through 119 dead at Centralia and 37 dead at Robena No. 3. We waited through Hyden and Farmington and Buffalo Creek. And then Blacksville and then Itmann."

There are several new factors in the coal bargaining situation in 1974. If the UMW is revitalized and determined to win substantial gains, the operators also have come to the table in a stronger position. The profits pulled in during the energy crisis can be used to make the mines healthier and safer—or to outlast a strike.

The operators can come to terms on a fair contract—or try to make the miners a scapegoat in the effort to slow inflation. The reaction of coal industry negotiators at the talks in early September was not encouraging. BCOA President Walter Wallace and his aide, Guy Farmer, told a news conference that recent declines in productivity must be reversed. More ominously, they pointed out that the industry had a "grave responsibility" to help President Ford fight inflation.

The industry spokesmen did acknowledge that mine safety was a major bargaining priority. Then, in an observation worthy of Alan Greenspan, Guy Farmer told the press that "the ultimate safety would be no production at all." □

Some upcoming events

Conference on "Economic Equality for Women: How Revolutionary?" at the City University Graduate Center, 33 West 42nd St., New York, N.Y. Saturday, October 19, at 10 a.m.

Next National Board Meeting of Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, November 24 and 25 in Boston.

Second Convention of D.S.O.C. January 24, 25, 26, Commodore Hotel, New York City.

Constitutional con job in Texas

by STEVE ROSSIGNOL

Seven months and \$4 million of the taxpayers' money later, the 1974 Texas Constitutional Convention failed to submit a document for the voters' approval. An unlikely, perhaps unholy, alliance of liberals, Republicans and conservative Democrats coalesced to prevent the proposed constitution from receiving the necessary 2/3 (121 votes); the final vote was 118 to 62.

Reasons for opposition to the new document were as diverse as the delegates who voted against adoption. Liberals opposed the "right to work" provision; Republicans and conservative Democrats (who opposed reforming the old constitution at all) rallied against the equal opportunity clause of the education article.

Viewed from the Left, perhaps it is best that the document was not approved. The "right to work" provision would have left Texas labor even weaker than it is now. The proposed constitution granted the state the right to appeal acquittals in criminal cases involving a constitutional question. The draft would set property ownership as a condition of voting in bond elections. The environmental section unquestionably favored industrial interests by eliminating citizen action against polluters.

Struck from the proposed constitution were sections that would shield reporters, protect the right to privacy, provide for initiative and referendum, and set a

ceiling on interest rates.

The constitution had a few strengths, though. Equal education at last seemed to be a goal for the state. Ex-convicts, after long and heated debate, were given the right to vote. (But one prison reform lobbyist pointed out, "So we give them the right to vote. It does them little good if they can't get a decent job," referring to "right to work.") The right of access to the state's public beaches was retained. ("Socialism!" cried Representative Billy Williamson of Tyler), and the convention defeated Republican efforts to add an anti-busing measure.

An interesting fight developed on guaranteed health care. Liberals initially wrote in a section guaranteeing medical services, but on third reading Republicans managed to convince the convention to replace the guarantee with a general policy statement that the state "adhered to the goal" of providing health care for all, a move that so angered liberal delegates that many voted against the constitution.

The failure to produce a new constitution may heighten already strong anti-incumbent feeling in Texas. While anti-labor delegates blamed organized labor for the defeat, liberals accounted for only 37 of the 62 "no" votes. In fact, a good number of labor-backed liberals voted in favor of the new constitution. Republicans and Dixiecrats must share the voters' wrath for the demise of the document. □

social policy

SYMPOSIUM ON SOCIALISM

Socialism—and apprehension of it—seems to be alive in so-called advanced industrial countries.

In Britain, West Germany, and Japan, socialist movements are on the rise.

So, too, in Sweden, Denmark, and Canada. In the United States, John Kenneth Galbraith uses the term to describe his social vision, and Michael Harrington and the New Democratic Socialists are calling for a resurgent socialism in an era of advanced capitalism.

Fortune Magazine alarmingly notes the "possibility that, at some point within the next ten years, we will find ourselves a capitalist island in an international socialist sea."

How appropriate is socialism for America today?

Does it offer a potentially fruitful direction or is it simply an antiquated construct regurgitated now to paper over the present dearth of radical ideology?

Social Policy, in an ongoing symposium, is presenting a broad spectrum of views on this newly emerging question.

Social Policy Magazine Suite 500, 184 Fifth Avenue New York, New York 10010
\$10 a year, \$18 for 2 years, \$25 for 3 years

Jimmy Higgins reports . . .

WITH KENNEDY OUT, what happens to the Democrats in '76? Will current front-runner Henry Jackson take the nomination? Or will it be a New South moderate? How about an Irish governor (Carey of New York or Gilligan of Ohio) or a familiar face (Humphrey, Muskie, McGovern)? One former Presidential contender, Eugene McCarthy, has announced the formation of a Committee for a Constitutional Presidency which will probably run a third party effort (though only on the Presidential level) in '76. And former third party candidate George Wallace is riveting his attention, at least right now, on the Democratic Party. He plans to attend the mid-term Democratic Charter conference in December, one of the few elected officials to commit himself to attending so far. He might feel lonely there; most of the delegates will probably be from the liberal wing of the party, and Wallace's own drive, announced with much fanfare last January, to get his followers elected from every state, failed miserably. If Wallace feels rebuffed, he has other options. According to Kevin Phillips, the Alabama Governor raised over \$500,000 in the first half of 1974 alone. With resources like that, and the right combination of Democratic and Republican candidates, it could be a four way race in '76.

TILTING TOWARD CAPITAL—In a rare bit of candor, Arnold Weber, the former head of Nixon's Cost of Living Council, recently admitted just what animus guided the wage and price control programs he administered. Business, Weber explained, had been "leaning on" the Administration to do something about the economy, "especially about wages." The idea of freezes and phases was "to zap labor," Weber admitted, "and we did."

THIS MILLS IS MADE OF STONE—House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Wilbur Mills, a long-time symbol of bad Congressional practices, has been under heavy attack lately. Pressured by the growing strength of the House Democratic caucus, his power endangered by the proposed House reorganization and faced with a serious challenge back home in Arkansas, Mills might be expected to be ready to conciliate a few of his enemies. But he'll have none of it; he prefers to maintain his image as "the most powerful man in Congress" by defying those who would question him. A case in point: last May, the House Democratic caucus ordered Mills to have the Green Amendment (to end the oil depletion allowance immediately) reported out of committee so the full House could vote on it. Nearly five months later, the Amendment is still languishing in committee, and Mills has tied its fate to the misnamed "Tax Reform Act." Among "reforms" Mills is pushing: a widening of the capital gains loophole with a provision to reduce the rate of taxation on income earned from clipping coupons to 25 percent of the tax rate levied on income from working; lowering of tax rates on unearned income; and liberalizing the capital loss write-offs.

POLITICAL HEALTH—No national health insurance bill is likely to be passed in this session of Congress, but various interests are gearing up for next year's legislative fight. The American Medical Association has collected a \$2 million war chest to be dis-

tributed to friendly Senators and Representatives. \$400,000 of the largesse has already been distributed to 42 of the AMA's best voting friends. According to Common Cause, there is an additional \$700,000 in the campaign funds of minor health lobbies like the American Podiatry Association, the American Dental Association and the American Association of Oral Surgeons. The American Hospital Association is fighting on another front: public opinion. The AHA has contracted with the J. Walter Thompson ad agency (among Thompson's infamous alumni are H. R. Haldeman and Ron Ziegler) for a series of 30 second television spots. The T.V. campaign has already begun, and its message is clear: hospitals are expensive, sure, but only because they're so good. And because, perhaps, the hospitals have such high public relations budgets; the cost for this series is running an estimated \$500,000. Of course, the health insurance industry has more to lose if a comprehensive health insurance bill is passed, so they're spending more than the doctors or the hospitals: \$4 million this year and \$5 million next year to promote their position on health insurance.

ON THE OTHER SIDE, groups fighting for the Corman-Griffiths Health Security bill, the most comprehensive of the possible bills, are also mobilizing. The Committee of One Hundred for National Health Insurance and its lobbying arm, the Health Security Action Council, got more witnesses to testify before Congressional committees for their position than any of the competing groups. The AFL-CIO and the UAW still have passage of health security at the top of their legislative agendas, and the unions are spending \$5 million on political action, giving most of it to challengers. Finally, there's a national group operating out of Boston, the Health Professionals for Political Action (HPPA). A monthly bulletin, *Health Politics*, various position papers and political organizing geared toward passing the Health Security bill, and beyond that to "making [health] workers and consumers an effective force in health care policy-making" are HPPA's goals. More information is available from HPPA, Box 386, Kenmore Station, Boston, Mass 02215.

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