

## Capital's offensive—labor's response

by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

The position of the American labor movement in the fall of 1975 is depressingly obvious. The official—and understated—level of unemployment fluctuates around 9 percent. Between inflation and joblessness, working people have seen an absolute decline in their standard of living. These trends strike like a plague among the minorities and women and youth, incurring a tragic human and social deficit which will be paid by the society as a whole as well as by those who directly and outrageously suffer from it.

But answers to questions about why these disasters happen and how one can find a progressive alternative to them are not as accessible as the brutal data. Those issues are much too complex to deal with in a single NEWSLETTER article, and therefore I will narrow my focus. I will describe one of the crucial theoretical-political weapons of big business in its current offensive against working men and women and suggest how the unions can mount a counter-offensive against it. I am writing about the function and power of capital in American society.

Simply put, the business rationale holds that profits are economically and morally superior to wages. New and ominous expressions of this corporate ideology are being used against workers in general—and savagely against municipal workers of New York and other great cities. The remote abstraction of “capital formation” has been turned into a club for bludgeoning the living standards of most Americans.

First, business ideologists argue that capital is more important than labor. This is the intellectual basis of the “trickle-down” strategy which the corporations always recommend: let the government subsidize the giant companies and the billionaires and that will stimulate them to take care of the needs of the working people and the poor.

This outrageous proposition rests upon a half-truth. In the American economic system *as it is*, profits are the prime source of investment and therefore of new jobs. When profit rates decline—which they normally do at the height of a boom when workers are able to get better contracts—the system requires a recession to restore the conditions of profitability. If, this reactionary argument continues, we want to get out of a slump, raise profits, not wages. In this anti-social logic we

should also oppose increased public spending since it may interfere with private profitability.

Treasury Secretary Simon opened one campaign based on this theory in mid-summer. He proposed to lower the tax on corporations and that tiny minority of wealthy people who live off capital gains (they represent three-hundredths of 1 percent of all taxpayers and have an average unearned income of \$290,000 a year). Even the *Wall Street Journal* editorialist had to admit that Simon's proposals would primarily benefit “relatively wealthy people.” But then the *Journal* hastened to add that America faces a “trade-off between growth and redistribution.” That is to say, the American system requires inequality as an absolute

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## Ten candidates in search of a majority

by JACK CLARK

“The chief threat will come from Humphrey.”

A Muskie campaign coordinator was dismissing the McGovern threat in 1972. These words could be repeated by Muskie partisans *this year*. Still referring to the Presidential nomination. For 1976! Incredible though it seems, the guessing among a lot of party pros is that next summer's convention will be deadlocked; after Teddy Kennedy declines the nomination, convention leaders will turn to either Muskie or Humphrey.

Much of that speculation can be dismissed as this year's version of the conventional wisdom which handed the nomination to Muskie in January of 1972.

In retrospect, that conventional wisdom looks silly, and the guessing about a Humphrey-Muskie convention could look just as short-sighted a year from now. A lot of people, with very different political perspectives are taking that scenario seriously though. To prove it wrong, one of the candidates now running will have to emerge from the primaries and state caucuses as a clear leader. What are the chances of that?

Fred Harris has been running on an economic platform called the new populism; Birch Bayh and Morris Udall are running on good Congressional voting and

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# Cablegram to Portuguese Socialists and M.F.A.

*(Editor's note: More than eighty Americans, all identified with opposition to the Vietnamese war and with various radical and liberal domestic causes, sent on August 9 a cablegram to the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement, to Portuguese President Francisco da Costa Gomes and to Portuguese Socialist leader Mario Soares expressing the hope that "democratic freedoms . . . will continue to grow in Portugal.")*

*(Michael Harrington, the national chairman of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) organized the effort to send the message. He explained that he organized the effort to convince the Armed Forces Movement not to outlaw political parties in Portugal. "Too much of the 'concern' for Portuguese democracy has come from the American Right, from precisely those people who were most comfortable with the Salazar and Caetano dictatorships," Harrington said. "It would be tragic if Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford, who have supported dictators all over the world, were to be the chief spokesmen for concern with Portuguese democracy. I think it's important for the Portuguese to know that those of us who have opposed American support of Franco, the Greek colonels and all the other right-wing dictators are deeply concerned about the future of Portuguese democracy." The text and signers of the cable appear below.)*

As Americans who have consistently opposed our country's support of dictatorships in Portugal, Spain, South Vietnam, Chile and elsewhere, and who are in general sympathy with the democratic and social program of the Portuguese Socialist Party led by Mario Soares, we wish to communicate to the Portuguese Socialist Party and to the Armed Forces Movement our profound hopes that democratic freedoms of assembly, press and political organization, the first fruits of the great events of April 25, 1974, will continue and grow in Portugal.

With great hope for the democratic and social future of the Portuguese people, and in solidarity with their efforts for liberation—(All organizations listed for identification only)

## Initiators

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## Capital's offensive...

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precondition of its existence (on this count, the *Journal* is simply repeating Karl Marx).

Corporate ideologists argue that as one attempts to reverse the recession by socially useful public spending and job generation, the government's borrowing to finance those policies will "crowd out" corporations, making investment funds more difficult and costly to raise. If, as business assumes, those private investments are the key to prosperity, it is in the interest of the society as a whole, and even the poor, to reduce the public sector so that the private sector may grow.

The strike of capital in the New York City crisis arises from the same logic. The bankers did not simply demand that the City balance the budget. They lobbied actively against their own home town in Washington—successfully blocking Federal aid for New York—and within the financial community itself. At one point the *Wall Street Journal* cheered investors for not buying "Big Mac" bonds. Moreover, the banks and corporations made it clear that if the City balanced its budget by taxing the rich, they would desert New York altogether, moving the Stock Exchange across the Hudson. They wanted the budget balanced in a certain way: at the expense of public employees, subway rides, City University students and the like, but with no inconvenience to Wall Street and Park Avenue.

So whether the issue is profits, wages or the public sector, Reaction's justification is that social needs must be subordinated to the imperatives of capital. As Gerald Ford has said, the "basic goal" of his tax plan is "capital formation," i.e. an increase in the inequities of a system which already provides massive subsidies for the rich.

Clearly, the labor movement must deal with this doctrine of the inalienable rights of capital in both theory and practice. How?

Here and now, the unions and the entire democratic Left must intensify the campaign for more—socially useful—public spending. The basic rationale for this has already been developed by the AFL-CIO, the Democratic majority of the Congressional Joint Economic

## Union losses

Layoffs have hit organized labor very hard.

According to figures published in the *July Fortune*, the period from November 1973 through March 1975 saw substantial declines in the number of workers covered under major contracts of key unions. The United Auto Workers led the list, having lost 27 percent of its membership under its three largest contracts. Organized electrical, lumber and construction workers have lost around 20 percent of their memberships. Rubber, trucking and apparel industries now each have about 15 percent fewer union workers. The railroad unions and the Retail Clerks have fared somewhat better: their memberships are down about 6 percent.

At the same time that union ranks are depleted, the living standards of organized workers have been in decline. The real wages of those still working under the major contracts mentioned above have almost all declined in the most recent period we have figures for. The UAW is the exception on this point, but real wages for auto workers rose only one percent since the last contract was signed. Other workers were not so fortunate. Wage losses ranged from around 5 percent for the electrical, clothing and postal workers to 13 percent for rail and lumber trades.

—IRV HEPNER

Committee and, most recently, the Congressional Budget Office. They have pointed out that if Federal programs increase, employment and output will restore business confidence and profitability. This would "crowd investment in," not out.

But then, as the Budget Office also noted, such a strategy would bid up short-term interest rates, "crowding out" home buyers but not big businesses. And even a modest recovery threatens a revival of inflation, as the recent increases in the Wholesale Price Index show. Therefore, in direct opposition to the corporate theorists, tax privileges should be taken away from the wealthy, so that those best able to bear the burden would shoulder it in the battle against inflation. Credit should be rationed, in part at least, on the basis of social need.

On the immediate level, though, public employee unions are under the most bitter attack. The *Wall Street Journal* has adopted unions like the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees as their new whipping boys. That's to be expected. But more distressing is the pressure on the unions—even the direct and indirect threats to the continued existence of public employee collective bargaining—coming from "liberal" governors—like Brown, Grasso and Dukakis—whom labor helped elect. In New York, the Municipal Labor Council, consisting of AFSCME's District Council 37, the Teamsters, Sanitationmen, Firefighters and police unions, struggle under intoler-

Newsletter of

### THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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The following people helped to put this issue out:  
Jim Chapin, Carol Drisko, Harry Fleischman, Jimmy Higgins, David Kusnet, Deborah Meier.

Signed articles express the views of the author.

Published ten times a year (monthly except July and August) by the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, 853 Broadway, Room 617, New York, N.Y. 10003. Telephone: (212) 260-3270

able conditions. The financial community laid down edicts as conditions for continuing credit for the city. The media demanded unilateral abrogation of the labor contracts. And from Washington and the Governor's Mansion came the directive to cut back—drastically.

Despite the popular assertions, the crisis in municipal financing was not caused by pampering of civil servants or by the city's spending too much on its social problems. Rather, the crisis grew out of a national recession, an oil shortage and Washington's irresponsibility on health and welfare costs. None of these problems could be easily solved at the negotiating table. Yet, despite these tremendous pressures, the unions under the leadership of DC 37's Victor Gotbaum, did manage to win some concessions and some reciprocity.

Given that gruesome example (which the *Christian Science Monitor* assures us will spread to other cities),

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## Capital quotes

“We're dealing with an essentially hostile constituency. They take a certain pleasure in seeing our paper unsold. They have a sadistic urge to see that pain is inflicted upon the city. We have to do something to see that urge satisfied.”

—An anonymous director of New York City's Municipal Assistance Corporation, explaining the difficulties of convincing his colleagues in the financial community to invest in municipal bonds.

New York Times, July 19, 1975

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the labor movement must address itself to changing the intolerable conditions under which it must bargain. On the level of both theory and practice, the American people must learn that planned social investment to meet human needs directly has a higher economic payoff than programs to promote private growth by increasing public inequality. Secondly, we must begin a political offensive to demonstrate that our problems do not result from “throwing money at problems.” Both themes will be central to a national conference of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee this January; they should provide a program for the entire democratic Left in the 1976 Presidential campaign.

That campaign is obviously critical if this analysis is to become politically effective. We know now beyond a doubt—if there ever was a doubt—that the Congress, even a two-thirds Democratic Congress, cannot reverse the current disastrous priorities of national policy on its own. Trade union political action, then, cannot be a nice “extra” added to the serious agenda of negotiating wages and hours. For unless unemployment is radically reduced, unless the agents of trickle-down are retired from the Oval Office, those wage and hour negotiations will see labor at a permanent, struc-

tural disadvantage.

But finally this analysis suggests that the labor movement has to look far beyond 1976. So long as we accept the economic system as it is, just so long will we be hoist on that vicious logic of capital first, people last. For it does make a certain kind of sense within an economy which believes that private and profit-maximizing corporate executives should make the basic investment choices for the entire society. In other words, the labor-management game in America is played with a deck stacked on behalf of management. Out of an immediate self-interest in the issues of wages and hours, the American unions are forced to confront the question of the power of capital itself and to develop alternatives to it—alternatives of planned social investments, of people first and the rich last, of growth through increasing equality. □

## DSOC: upcoming events

The Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee is planning a full fall schedule of activities.

On October 4-5, Harvard-Radcliffe DSOC will host our first socialist youth conference. Mike Harrington will address the conference, and there will be discussions on: authority and equality, building a majority for radical change, what happened to the student movement, building an effective response to the recession.

Two weekends later, October 17 and 18, the S.F. Bay area will be the scene of DSOC's first major West Coast conference. The conference will explore alternatives to corporate ownership and control.

Through October and early November, National Secretary Jack Clark will be on tour, visiting DSOC locals around the country. He will speak to campus and community audiences on topics like “What are socialists doing in the Democratic Party?”; “Is full employment possible?”; and “Building a socialist movement.” He will also meet with local leaders and organizers to plan strategies and activities for local chapters.

In late January in Washington, we'll hold a major issues conference. Jerry Wurf, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees will address the conference, and major papers will be presented on energy and public ownership, full employment and planning, housing and the urban crisis, the economics of health care, and taxation and income redistribution. As DSOC National Chairman Michael Harrington has explained it, “Through this conference, we will address ourselves to the myth that our society has ‘thrown money at social problems.’ On some of the major issues facing us, we socialists will take on the nay-sayers ranging from Jerry Ford to Jerry Brown, and we'll get across the message that America can do something about its problems.”

More information on all our fall activities is available from the DSOC National Office, 853 Broadway, Room 617, New York, N.Y. 10003.

# Co-op housing hassles: showdown in the Bronx

by DAVID KUSNET

In Arthur Hailey's novel, *The Moneychangers*, angry tenants bring the "First Mercantile National Bank" to its knees after the bank withdraws funds from their housing development. The confrontation between community residents and faceless bankers isn't as dramatic at Co-op City in the Bronx, where soaring interest rates, fuel charges and maintenance costs have doubled carrying charges in five years. And there is no target as convenient as Hailey's imaginary giant bank.

Attracted by the promise of decent, reasonably priced housing in the North Bronx, some 15,000 families moved into the 300-acre, 35 building high-rise complex which had been built on the site of the old Freedomland amusement park. Six years ago, the average carrying charge per room was \$25; today it is \$53. While rents have doubled, the cooperators' incomes, of course, have not. The development was built for New York's middle class wage earners and, as residents have noted, if you can afford to pay \$50-a-room rent, you probably are too rich to qualify for the state-assisted development.

So more than 11,000 of Co-op City's families have conducted a "rent strike," paying their former carrying charges directly to a cooperators' committee to pay for the development's maintenance costs. As this is written, the state has dropped an earlier hollow threat to evict the almost 60,000 residents and is negotiating a plan for the rent strikers to pay maintenance costs directly to the state. In the meantime, a lawsuit continues over the legality of the carrying charge increases, with the tenants charging that they were defrauded when they bought shares in the cooperative with promises of moderate rentals. And the Carey administration says it is considering some form of state assistance to the development, as Carey promised during his gubernatorial campaign last year.

In demanding the higher carrying charges from the Co-op City residents, the state is serving as a collection agency for the development's bondholders. But, if bondholders in the state's moderate income housing program go unpaid, the event will be a historic first in a time that has seen bailouts of the banks behind Con Ed, the Urban Development Corporation—and now New York City itself.

Instead, the immediate casualties of the Co-op City fiasco are two ambitious, if inadequate, ventures at providing New York's middle class with housing it can afford. Offering loans at moderate interest rates to housing development companies, the state and city middle income housing program (Mitchell-Lama) is itself dependent on an endless roll-over of hundreds of millions of dollars in short-term notes. In today's period of purported capital shortage and unarguable rising interest rates, the program has not escaped the same combination of tight money and rising charges that threatens New York City's cash flow. Today, Mitchell-Lama housing is housing for the rich, at ren-

tals far higher than Co-op City's latest rates, and, when the developers fail to attract upper income tenants, the state and city join the search for subsidies to bail out the landlord.

A second casualty is the United Housing Foundation—a group of New York labor unions, mostly in the garment trades, that have sponsored middle income cooperative housing. Working through the state's subsidy programs, the UHF built stable middle income housing at times when the costs of fuel and money remained stable. Completed in 1969, Co-op City was to have been UHF's Great Society; instead, it became its Vietnam. Hit with the "rent strike," UHF walked away from Co-op City, leaving the development to the state.

In better times, the failure of Co-op City might lead the state legislature to devise a new housing subsidy program, less vulnerable to fluctuations in the money market and more closely supervised to ensure the continued middle class character of the development. But this problem is utterly academic for the people of Co-op City, some facing layoffs from jobs with the city and private industry, and all confronting the problem of how to double the bite housing takes out of pinched family budgets. Co-op City requires \$10 million in aid from the state or federal government to stabilize rents. The bailout of the Urban Development Corporation bondholders cost \$80 million. Bailing out Con Ed cost \$500 million. No one at Co-op City believes Carey's claim that the money isn't there—or accepts bailout priorities that always place bankers first.

Co-op City is living up to its name as this community stages the largest rent strike in history, hoping to create enough of an emergency to receive the sort of assistance that has previously been reserved for the interests who profit from the nation's housing programs. And, if their determination bewilders the state bureaucrats—while disproving the predictions that Co-op City's functional architecture would deaden the human spirit—it really shouldn't surprise the aging trade unionists of UHF. □

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## Elements of capitalism

Little-known facts about the uranium mining industry, brought out at an off-the-record meeting of government and industry experts in Albuquerque, reveal how private enterprise has bungled the development of this national resource. Even though atomic power is so complex that it must be planned up to forty years in advance, the mining of the uranium to fuel our atomic reactors has been organized for short-range private profit.

The Energy Research and Development Administration (formerly the Atomic Energy Commission) is now spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year to develop the "breeder reactor" to produce atomic fuel when our supply of cheap uranium supposedly runs out after the year 2000. The breeder reactor's safety problems are much more serious than those of current nuclear plants. Yet since 1956 the government has stopped searching for uranium deposits, relying instead on secret data supplied by private uranium mining companies (including Exxon and other big oil corporations).

As a result, we know only how much uranium there is in the sandstone ores which are now mined. Our possible reserves of other ores are largely unexplored, even though these ores supply most of the rest of the world. When 36 geologists were asked how much uranium is in New Mexico, the biggest estimate was 1000 times the smallest. East of the Rocky Mountains, there has been almost no uranium prospecting at all, and even less is known about our reserves of the atomic fuel thorium.

Private ownership has obviously contributed to some other problems pointed out at the Albuquerque meeting. Under current ERDA plans, uranium mining will have to grow twice as fast as any major American mining industry has ever expanded in the past. Yet the companies, mindful of past delays in atomic power, are unwilling to invest in new mines. The result is that uranium to be delivered in the early '80's now sells for over double the cost of production—which hardly makes the companies unhappy. In addition, there is now a shortage of trained prospectors to look for more uranium—largely because the industry was laying off prospectors just a few years ago.

Faced with uncertainty, the uranium industry has pulled back and simply refuses to invest. If a shortage results, all of us will pay the bill—while the companies' profits soar. A forward-looking public planning agency like ERDA does try to prepare against future dangers. But private ownership of the mines has prevented it from seeking what may be the cheapest solution—and so we are spending billions to solve a problem that may not even exist.

—HARRIET HIGGINS

## Democratic candidates...

(Continued from page 1)

legislation-writing records and good issues statements. Henry Jackson is still pursuing the real majority, and George Wallace wants to a) send them another message; b) choose the next President in return for some

## An enlightening exchange

"Besides," Mr. Beame said, "our calculations show that tuition [at the City University] would produce only \$32 million."

"Mr. Mayor," replied Felix Rohatyn, [a director of the Municipal Assistance Corporation] "it's not a question of how much. The city has to change its life style."

New York Times, July 19, 1975

concessions; or c) run again on a third party ticket with or without Ronald Reagan.

In the meantime Jimmy Carter, a non-racist Southern conservative, is convincing liberals that he can stop Wallace in Florida, while Terry Sanford, a liberal Southerner, is still trying to convince himself that he can stop Wallace anywhere—even in his home state of North Carolina. Lloyd Bentsen is raising lots of money, and as the *Wall Street Journal* observed, trying to please everybody. Criticizing Ted Kennedy at the Young Democrats convention (presumably to show his independence), and making lots of photostats of a contribution check from Rose Kennedy (to show that he's really part of the clan), Sargent Shriver is also in the race.

An then there are the favorite sons. In Illinois, Senator Adlai Stevenson will run with blessings (and delegate slates) from Mayor Daley of Chicago. Governor Milton Shapp of Pennsylvania is gearing up for his own candidacy at home, but Governor Hugh Carey of New York, after changing the primary date by default for his favorite son effort, has thought better of the strategy. Word has it that two successive polls showed the Governor's delegate slates finishing dead last across the state.

### On the Right: Jackson and Bentsen

While maneuvering on his Presidential bid, Carey may have accidentally revived the fading hopes of Washington Senator Henry Jackson. Although rated (mostly because of highly successful fund-raising) the front-runner by some commentators, Jackson has problems. Since being publicly blasted by George Meany early this year, Jackson has been in search of a base for his campaign. He'll certainly have some labor support in the primaries, but Meany's disenchantment denies him the kind of enthusiastic trade union backing Jackson strategists once counted on. What's more, Jackson, in a repeat of his disastrous '72 campaign, is staying out of New Hampshire. Manchester *Union-Leader* publisher William Loeb was willing to support

him. That would win votes in New Hampshire but cost dearly in other states.

Jackson faces a dilemma. How can he get his campaign off the ground? Carey, with an eye toward whipping New York Democrats into line for his favorite son bid, provided a possible answer. Traditionally, the New York legislature has combined its state primary for nominations to public office with the primary for Presidential delegates. Carey simply avoided acting. Now the New York presidential primary will be held in April instead of June. Jackson could benefit from the earlier primary because the New York primary vote can be as much as 50 percent Jewish, and Jackson is the candidate most clearly identified with support for Israel. More liberal Jews, however, are cool to his general hawkishness and conservative image. What's more, there is little evidence of Jackson campaign activity in New York or many other states.

Standing just behind Jackson in the campaign financing sweepstakes is the darling of Texas oil, Lloyd Bentsen. From the Texas business community, Bentsen has close ties to oil and to the national business community generally. Besides Wallace, he is clearly the most conservative Democrat in the race, and he is the most business-oriented Democratic Presidential aspirant since 1924. Unlike Jackson, he speaks well and projects a strong media image. Also unlike Jackson, Bentsen has actively pursued a political base within the party for the primaries. Massachusetts Senate President Kevin Harrington is leading the parade of Northern party regulars for Bentsen. And he's pushing a bill

### *Wallace's populism*

Campaign season is here again, and the absurd notion that George Wallace is some kind of populist who represents the interests of white working people is in the air again.

Next time you hear someone using that tired old myth, consider the great populist's record:

- Alabama is one of the eight states without a minimum wage.
- Since Wallace took office in 1963 his state has fallen from 30th to 37th in unemployment benefits.
- Wallace criticizes costly federal programs saying "We've got to get away in this country from thinking you can tax the heck out of people and solve problems." But Alabama receives 24.4 percent of its general revenues from federal grants, a higher percentage than 42 other states. The average among the states is 16.7 percent.
- Wallace says the tax burden should be lifted from the common man and tax-exempt foundations should be taxed. Yet none of the 200 foundations chartered in Alabama pays state taxes. Corporate income taxes pay only 4 percent of Alabama's state revenue. Regressive taxes, such as on food and medicine, which weigh heaviest on the poor, account for 70 percent.

through the Massachusetts legislature to move the state's primary up to March 2. Bay State liberals fear that will help Bentsen, who has the money for a media campaign and regular political connections through Harrington, at the expense of candidates like Bayh, Harris and Udall who are depending on liberal volunteers and grass-roots organization. In New York, a small but significant contingent of regulars backs Bentsen; powerful Brooklyn boss Meade Esposito may sign on as the leader of the contingent. If he is able to combine his vast fund-raising capacities with a political base among Northern regulars, Bentsen could emerge far stronger at the convention than previous guessing has placed him. So much for those liberals who have recently discovered the urban machine as a source of social progress!

### **On the Left, Harris, Udall, Bayh**

There's a three way competition for support of the party's Left.

Hammering away on economic issues and building up corps of local activists, Fred Harris has the most underrated campaign. Still struggling to overcome the fiasco of his short-lived 1972 campaign, and running without a current office or a big fund-raising base, Harris is not taken very seriously by the media or Washington political pros. His unconventional, earthy and "down home" style campaigning lead the urbane party leadership to further question his seriousness and his ability to win. But in state after state, Harris has lined up the volunteers, both the veterans of the '68 and '72 insurgencies and the newcomers in Presidential politics who are willing to make major efforts for their cause. In California, Harris got an early hold on the liberal California Democratic Council. In Iowa, one observer noted that Harris has been the most successful in recruiting campaign workers, including "people who've never been active before." In Colorado, State Treasurer Sam Brown has been on the stump for Harris, and in New York and Massachusetts, he has to be rated the current front-runner for endorsements by the New Democratic Coalition and Mass. CPPAX.

Harris could loom as the McGovern of 1976. He has staked out his issues most clearly, and he has recruited a strong organization early. Unlike McGovern, he is running a campaign with a very unconventional style—currently travelling cross country in a trailer with a very small staff. Some of his staff work has been sloppy. Although he claims he can overcome McGovern's weakness among blue collar voters in both primaries and general elections, that remains to be seen. So far, his organization is composed of the same sorts of people—indeed many of exactly the same people—who supported Gene McCarthy and George McGovern.

Two candidates, Birch Bayh and Morris Udall, are following something closer to the '72 Muskie strategy: carve out the territory on the party's left but appeal within the party to the broadest possible spectrum; in the primaries, begin building the coalition for a general election victory. Both are running on records of accomplishment in the Congress; both are respected among the political pros in Washington.

Udall started quite early and won some support among liberals, but his center-left strategy also infuriates some of the more purist reformers. In New Hampshire, Udall's organization seems quite strong. In New York, an influential bloc of liberals is backing him. In California and Massachusetts, his campaign just does not seem to have gotten off the ground.

Bayh entered late by this campaign's standards—he decided to run only 14 months before the convention. Some guessed that was too late. In a few weeks of campaign activity, Bayh has dispelled those impressions. He will limit himself to a few key primary states, he has said—Massachusetts, New York, his home state

## Waiting for Teddy

What about Kennedy? Everyone—well, almost everyone—agrees that he could unite the Democrats, run the strongest campaign, etc. Articles last spring indicated that he's really running. The reasoning seemed to be that because he said he wasn't interested in the nomination, he really is. Don't bet on it.

Some members of Kennedy's Washington staff were recently ordered to move to Massachusetts "where my 1976 campaign will be." Back home, key operatives, including Jim King who has been central to the Senator's past political undertakings, have been taking other jobs. Clearly, Kennedy is not mobilizing for a national campaign. Neither is he gearing up to be "ready" if the convention deadlocks. If he's offered the nomination, he will almost certainly turn it down.

of Indiana, California and not too many others. In those states, his organization has gotten off the ground quickly. Ann Lewis, a power in liberal politics in Massachusetts, has signed on as a national coordinator. A strong coalition of New York liberals has formed a committee for Bayh. The guess in California is that if Harris falters, Bayh is the one who can pick up the liberal votes. Bayh also achieved some favorable publicity when he finished first in the Young Democrats' convention straw poll. If liberal labor unions mobilize for anyone in the primaries, they will work for Bayh.

### The politics of amorphousness

After the explosive politics of 1968 and 1972, the Democrats got used to divisive in-fighting. So much so that ominous predictions filled the air after last year's mini-conference that, while specific issues addressed by the conference were settled, deeper issues were left untouched. Those, we were told, would come back to haunt the party, wracking it with divisions between New Dealers and veterans of the peace movement.

Judging from the line-up of Presidential contenders it just isn't happening that way. The problems are less divisiveness than dullness and lack of clarity. No one is threatening to capture the public imagination. There

are no issues as clearly defined as the civil rights issues of the early '60's or the anti-war stands of the last 10 years. Liberals are clear enough that Jackson, an unrepentant hawk, is unacceptable. But Bentsen who's even further to the right hasn't been pigeon-holed into that category yet, and Carter, a major spokesman for the "let's not throw money at social problems" perspective, commands major liberal support.

On the party's Left, the differences on issues are minor, and few people are concentrating on any kind of program. Harris may be trying to begin discussion around the new populism, but he has generated much more of a debate about whether or not he's serious. Bayh and Udall are so laden with pragmatism and records that their programs have consisted mainly in not being Jerry Ford. Through it all, the labor movement and many liberals are sitting it out or waiting to see what happens. Unfortunately, by the time the New Hampshire primary has been held, delegate slates will have been filed in six of the largest ten states, and precinct caucuses will have been held in many of the smaller states. So, those who are hesitating may find that it's too late to affect much by the time they decide.

We just may come back around to that Humphrey-Muskie convention. And though Ford looks very beatable right now his re-election might be easier than we imagine. □

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frustrate their knavish tricks . . ."

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for a socialist presence in the U.S.

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# Jimmy Higgins reports...

**THE WAY IT IS**—North Carolina Governor James Holsinger recently pushed a bill through the state legislature requiring the teaching of the “free enterprise system” at the high school level. The bill requires teaching free enterprise’s “history, theory, foundation and manner in which it is actually practiced.” As Harry Fleischman recently pointed out, the Governor may not know what he’s doing. “If the schools teach how free enterprise ‘is actually practiced’—unemployment, poverty, poor housing, pollution—might it not create a generation of socialists?”

**RESPONSIBLE TO WHOM?** Melvin Laird, former Nixon Defense Secretary and Ford advisor, recently opined that “we have the most responsible labor movement right here in the United States.” Though reporters have asked George Meany his position on President Ford, Laird explained, “Meany hasn’t rushed out and proposed any other candidate.”

**KEVIN WHITE’S NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS** went up in smoke last month. The Boston mayor is now up for re-election, but it’s clear that his sights (and some staff energy) have been focused on a possible vice presidential nomination next year. The August 15 indictment of White’s former fire commissioner, James H. Kelly, on charges of strong-arming firefighters for contributions to the mayor’s campaign tarnishes White’s image for the Democrats’ number 2 spot. The Grand Jury charged that Kelly and other department officials solicited campaign contribu-



tions from firefighters and threatened to hold up promotions or push through undesirable transfers if the “voluntary” donations failed to come through.

**EVEN WITHOUT THIS LATEST SCANDAL**, though, White’s national stock was on the way down. In 1972, White was fond of comparing himself to then Presidential contender, Mayor John Lindsay of New York. The comparison is all too accurate. According to some municipal fiscal experts, Boston is heading into a fiscal pinch as serious as the one New York finds itself in. And some of the local reasons are the same: administrative incompetence and fiscal double-dealing. As if that weren’t enough, it’s now an open secret that White played footsie with Louise Day Hicks in the last two mayoral campaigns. A deal was struck for Louise to run, thereby narrowing the opposition and increasing Kevin’s chances. With all of these problems, White is still rated as the favorite for re-election. For the third successive year, he has held the tax rate steady, and his only serious opponent has been unable to crack the impression that White makes the city work.

## We’ve moved

We relocated over the summer. Our new offices are at 853 Broadway (corner of 14th Street), Room 617, New York, N.Y. 10003. The phone number is (212) 260-3270.

Please address all correspondence to the NEWSLETTER or the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee to the new address.

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