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THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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217

Edited by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Kissinger's U.N. speech

19th century rhetoric as 'radicalism'

by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Henry Kissinger's message to the special United Nations session on economic development last month was a profoundly conservative ideological document. One would never have known that from the initial reaction: the delegates gave Moynihan, who read the statement for Kissinger, prolonged applause; many Third World representatives proclaimed it signalled a basic shift in American policy; and the British Ambassador, Ivor Richard, even called it "the meatiest American economic speech since the Marshall Plan."

Unfortunately, that was not the case at all. Kissinger did indicate a change in the tone of American policies, but that rather modest shift had nothing to do with the economic substance.

Compared with his declaration of January 15, 1975, in which he threatened military retaliation against OPEC, or with his tough statement in Milwaukee last July, the Secretary's address at the U.N. was positively suave. Gone were the warnings to Third World countries that "those who do not wish investment from abroad can be confident that they will not receive it." By the same token those countries which are eager to industrialize must also be ready to create the conditions that will attract large-scale capital. In short, and bluntly; Stop that radical nonsense and go win the confidence of the multinational corporations.

Why did Kissinger speak more softly at the U.N. in September? Pressure from Europe and Japan, which are more dependent upon Third World raw materials than the United States, was one factor. Another was a fear that the decline in exports from the advanced capitalist powers to the Third World would exacerbate the recession. Putting a little money in the pockets of the developing countries would function as a subsidy to business in the advanced nations; thus charity would yield a profit. Germany's *Der Spiegel* suggests a third answer: that American power has grown now that the Vietnam war is over.

But, though Kissinger's rhetoric had changed, his policies had not. First of all, Kissinger advanced a standard and utterly unrealistic American theory about how the developing countries will break out of the cycle of poverty. "We believe," Kissinger has said, "that economic development is in the first instance an

internal process. Either societies create the conditions for saving and investment, for innovation and ingenuity, for enterprise and industry which ultimately leads to self-sustaining economic growth, or they do not." Practically every word in that sentence is a free enter-

(Continued on page 3)

Unity and discord in NYC school strike

by DEBORAH MEIER

"55,000 Teachers and 1.1 Million Pupils out of School in NYC Strike."

"Pentagon Discloses \$2 Million Increase in Price of One F-14 to \$20 million; Navy Orders 390."

—New York Times, September 15, 1975

September 16—The cost of eight F-14's could have saved New York City from educational disaster.

When New York City schools opened on September 8, chaos prevailed. Most schools had huge class registers, waiting lists for kindergarten, few paraprofessionals or aides, no assistant principals, guidance counselors or nurses, and reduced clerical staff. At least 15,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, aides, security guards, attendance teachers, guidance counselors, assistant principals and secretaries had lost their jobs completely—nearly a fourth of all school personnel. Thousands more were in limbo, at best awaiting a shift from one school to another in the massive game of musical chairs that results from a bumping process in a 900-school system. At worst also jobless.

The laid-off employees include mostly the newer (and often nonwhite) staff and nonprofessional community, people hired since the war on poverty began. Also fired, because of a fluke in the state law, was sizable number of teachers with from 15-25 years of service, who unwittingly lost seniority when they switched into differently licensed positions.

School aides had been hit worst of all but unfortunately their union—D.C. 37 of AFSCME—was not supporting the school strike, which began the second day of school. Only a third of the aides remained on the

(Continued on page 6)

Indira tables Indian democracy

by STANLEY PLASTRIK

At 2 A.M. on June 25, a squadron of police cars surrounded the Gandhi Peace Foundation, located in the heart of New Delhi, India. Inside slept an elderly, ill and fragile man, Jayaprakash Narayan, popularly known to millions of Indians as J.P., or *Lok Naik*, the People's Hero. He was about to be taken away and clapped into a jail cell *incommunicado*.

Thus began the wave of brutal repression which was to sweep over India for the next month, entailing the arrest of thousands. Under powers conferred by Prime Minister Gandhi, each political boss of the ruling Congress Party could draw up a list of political oppositionists, trade-union leaders, intellectuals and professors, "trouble-makers" whom he wanted clapped into jail and held indefinitely, without charges. It is estimated that somewhere in the neighborhood of 100,000 political prisoners reside in India's prisons and camps today; before the emergency there were 40,000 alleged Maoist Communists (Naxelites), mostly in Bengal, being held, according to an Amnesty International report. The present clandestine opposition leadership today estimates that between 50,000 and 60,000 more were arrested. The government has attempted to lump them together with black marketeers, hoarders, etc., but our calculations exclude this element.

To the widespread bureaucratic decay from which India suffers must be added the fact that nature has been cruel over the past two years, with drought and floods—the bane of India's agriculture—causing famine in many areas. India, like all Third World nations, has also suffered heavily from the doubling and tripling of costs for crude oil from the Arab countries.

Despite these major difficulties, since independence in 1947 India has progressed on many economic fronts: agriculture has doubled its overall output, along with substantial increases in output of heavy industry and consumers' goods. All these gains have largely benefited the wealthy classes and the government bureaucracy, not the masses of peasants and urban workers. The poverty level (defined as those assured of two meals per day) has risen over the past two decades from 30 percent to 40 percent; i.e., four out of 10 people are not sure of more than one meal per day. The rich have become richer and the degree of inequality is greater than ever. It was against this situation that the political opposition, headed by Narayan, raised its voice about two years ago, beginning in the poverty-ridden state of Bihar in northern India. Efforts of the government to build up stocks of grain and food, to control prices, to make food available by opening up grain shops, etc., were marked by half-heartedness, corruption and failure. The social base for the rising tide of opposition during 1974 and early 1975 was the suffering of many millions of the poor. J.P.'s movement represented an elemental upsurge of the lower layers of Indian society, with leadership and support from an

educated and frustrated urban middle class.

The opposition's program was summarized in the People's Charter of demands presented to Parliament on March 6, 1975, by Jayaprakash Narayan at the head of a demonstration estimated to number 500,000 people. Its preamble stated that:

"We pledge ourselves to a total revolution in society which will create a new order of social and economic equality, genuine democracy and moral value within the Gandhian framework."

All opposition parties, leaders, cadres, etc. pledged to work nonviolently toward this program. It was the beginning of what might have become a unified opposition party bringing together on a minimal basis the rapidly-growing anti-government movements throughout India. In fact, there are those who maintain that Mrs. Gandhi chose this moment to strike at her opposition because, after her electoral defeat in the state of Gujerat, she felt the danger of a united opposition that might oust her in the general elections then scheduled for February, 1976. The scope of her blow against the opposition indicates long planning and preparation.

The People's Charter contained a series of propositions ranging from price reductions, land redistribution, creation of a regime of national austerity, etc. to more sweeping political and constitutional proposals for decentralization of political power along Gandhian lines, a series of major educational reforms, lowering of the voting age to 18 years, etc.

Some of its proposals, such as increasing the number of state-owned grain shops and effecting land reform long mandated by legislation, have supposedly been put into effect by Mrs. Gandhi's government after the declaration of emergency. As might be expected, this appears to have had some immediate results favorable to the country's economy. But one must remain skeptical both as to the duration and the fairness of this economic improvement. The policies of the ruling Congress party are tilted in favor of the rich, the landlord class (which has profited extensively from the "Green Revolution" on the land), the upper middle class and

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the industrialists. It took Mrs. Gandhi nine years to begin a program of simple economic reforms, and we ought to wait six months before judging its results.

Basically, the opposite side of the coin of a "soft" democracy may be described as a "soft" authoritarianism. There have yet to be any real changes either in the productive apparatus (agriculture and/or industry) which would, in turn, have consequences for the unjust system of distribution of the nation's goods.

Mrs. Gandhi has solved none of her problems, even her personal ones, except to have decapitated the opposition, in that the latter can offer no organized resistance for the time being. Her party is still a disorganized, faction-ridden and corrupt mass of self-interested individuals looking for the main chance; it has no consistent program or ideology. The army, one-million strong and until now largely isolated from political happenings, watches—and is watched—uneasily. And Mrs. Gandhi herself—like all oppressors, the victim of her own creation—remains isolated inside the Prime Minister's home. The facade is of order and calm, but the old problems gather explosive force.

At the time of writing, the immediate future of India lies in the hands of the Supreme Court, a body of judges modeled after the U.S. Supreme Court. The question of Mrs. Gandhi's role in her own election some years ago has now been replaced by the more basic question of the constitutionality of an act adopted by the current Parliament which retroactively exonerates her of any wrong doing and places her and other top officials beyond judgment by the courts, subject only to a difficult impeachment process. If the court rules in favor of this dubious act, it will clearly have surrendered its independence, yielding to political blackmail by the Congress Party. If the court rules the act to be unconstitutional, subjecting Mrs. Gandhi to a further hearing and eventual decision regarding her election, it will precipitate a new constitutional crisis. Mrs. Gandhi might yield and resign her post; unlikely. She might tear up the constitution, calling a new constituent assembly to redraft the present constitution and curb the courts—in a word, set up an outright one-party regime; also unlikely. Or, resigning, she might appoint a surrogate prime minister in her place, ruling from behind the scene. But in no case can one now expect India to return to a parliamentary democracy with the opposition permitted to function freely, within the bounds of the law, and non-violently.

Like many other countries in our unsettled world, India has entered upon a condition of permanent crisis. The opposition, in spite of the fact that political parties as such have not yet been declared illegal, has been decapitated, with its leaders, first, second and third rank, either jailed or forced into clandestine activity. Having breathed the free air of democratic life for a quarter of a century, completely inexperienced in the ways of underground existence, finding itself without its leaders, the opposition will now have to take a long-range view of things. Indian democracy is not totally, finally or definitively destroyed; but it is certainly shelved. □

Kissinger's U.N. speech . . .

(Continued from page 1)

prise slogan. More importantly Kissinger asserts a crucial American premise: the developing countries will advance just as we, and other capitalist powers did, because that is the only way.

Secondly, Kissinger posits harmony in the relationship between rich countries and poor, not conflict: "The advanced nations have an interest in the growth of markets and production in the developing world; with equal conviction we state that the developing countries have a stake in the markets, technological innovation and capital investment of the industrialized countries."

The world market, then, as it is now constituted, will facilitate economic development in the Third World, particularly if everyone stops criticizing that great instrument of progress, the multinational corporation.

The Kissinger-Ricardo theory rationalizes the wealth and power of the capitalist world.

In his U.N. speech, Kissinger merely warmed over Ricardo's famous theory of "comparative advantage," which teaches that if every country specializes in what it does best, everyone will benefit. A good theory, if its assumptions occasionally approximated the real world, for its givens are competitive markets, an inability of capital to migrate, uniform international wage rates, and full employment. Although nothing like these conditions have obtained during the past century and a half, the theory has remained enormously popular, because it rationalizes the wealth and power of the capitalist world.

Let us look at what has happened to Third World economies in recent times. The years 1970-73 were quite favorable to the developing nations. High prices stimulated the export of primary commodities, and earnings rose by 25 percent a year, while imports only increased by 20 percent. So both corporate and government income in these countries went up, but at the same time, Third World incomes continued to fall behind the advanced world, as 60 percent of the developing countries failed to maintain their per capita rates of agricultural production.

Agricultural output declined despite the "Green Revolution." New greatly improved types of grain need more water, making these societies more dependent on the weather than ever before; they also require more—petroleum-based—fertilizer, which rose in cost at a rate of 13 percent a year between 1967 and 1972. Meanwhile, the advanced nations were furiously trying to increase their own food output, further squeezing the world fertilizer market. And OPEC's

price increases dealt the Third World's increasingly mechanized agriculture another cruel blow.

So even in good years, Third World agricultural production did not prosper. But what about manufacture?

Here, the figures show that there was hardly any change in the relative position of the developing countries in the world market. In 1960, they had 6.7 percent of the total world manufacturing output; in 1970, they were still at 6.7 percent and in 1973 they reached 6.8 percent. Since then they have been disastrously hurt by the current recession—the *New York Times* put their combined payments deficit at \$35 billion for 1975—and have already lost their 0.1 percent increment.

But these figures make reality too pretty. The Third World's share of heavy manufactures is less than 5 percent and is dominated by a few products (clothes, consumer electronics, shoes) and a few low-wage havens like Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore. Moreover, even during those good years of 1971-1973, the rapid accumulation of reserves in the Third World did not offset their external debts; the former rose from \$1.8 billion to \$8.8 billion, the latter from \$7.9 billion to \$15.7 billion.

In sum, even under the best conditions, there has been no relative improvement in the position of the Third World in the world agricultural or industrial markets. And those best of conditions are now over for the foreseeable future; the pattern of absolute per capita decline will once again take over. Why does reality thus violate the Ricardo-Kissinger theory?

My answer relies heavily upon the work of some Third World economists, most notably Sami Amin.

Capital quotes

“Why has government spending exploded? Because I would suggest, we've been willing to assign to the government the responsibility for solving many of the problems that people should be solving for themselves.

We begin with the best of intentions, but wind up with social programs that are spinning out of control. The food stamp program began as a small \$14-million experiment in 1962. By 1976 it will cost over \$6.6-billion a year. That is a 47,000 percent increase, and it is a well-known haven for the chiselers and rip-off artists.

We see the threat to free enterprise in the growing domination of [such] government spending within our economy. . . . The free enterprise system is the foundation of our economy, the rock upon which we have built our earthly kingdom.”

—Treasury Secretary William Simon addressing Conference on Junior Achievement in Bloomington, Indiana.

The theory has been called “the development of under-development.” It holds that current forms of economic growth in the poor nations serve to intensify the structural conditions of their backwardness and, under present world market conditions, the Kissinger strategy will only institutionalize, not abolish, the inferior Third World position within the global economy.

Let us take one country, Gabon. Its per capita product today is roughly that of France in 1900, but its position clearly is different. For France then possessed a developed capitalist infrastructure in which growth generated more growth and it was competing in a not fully developed world market. Gabon, on the other hand, is a developed underdeveloped country in which the “spread effects” of internal growth are systematically and structurally limited, and whose fate is determined by an international division of labor that puts it at a disadvantage.

Let no one doubt Kissinger's devotion to the multinationals.

Let's look at some of the details. In the developing countries, there is a vast labor reserve, either in the rural areas or the shanty towns. This mass unemployment grew up under conditions of “urbanization without industrialization,” which means that wages are low. In Europe, during the transition to capitalism, the artisans who were dispossessed by the new technologies became workers; in the Third World they became the unemployed. As a result, the developing countries now lack internal markets, even when they have enclaves of high technology and productivity. “In the colonial model, industrialization employs fewer workers than it ruins artisans,” Amin notes. Consequently developing nations must have export economies, which lack the national integration and self-reinforcing tendency to growth characteristic of the advanced economies.

At the Pacific Science Conference this summer, Dr. Moises Behar gave a dramatic illustration of this point. In Guatemala, he reported, the Mayans had built a coherent civilization upon corn and beans supplemented by fruits, vegetables and meat from wild animals. They tilled patches on cleared forest land, and then moved on, allowing the forest to reconstitute itself. But when the Europeans came, they cleared the ground to grow coffee and raise beef, thus destroying the old self-sufficient economy. Kissinger would say a productive investment had been made, but it retarded the development of the entire society.

Today, similar trends are reinforced by the movement of international capital which sends capital-intensive technology into the Third World, creating enclaves of modernity, disrupting the old order, and opening the way, not to development, but to continued under-development and dependence on the advanced economies.

Of course, in the future, the Third World will increase its manufacturing capacity. For the multinationals are locating more of their plants in the developing nations; one can even expect to see those countries take over what used to be the advanced industrial functions of the West. But this is happening only because new industries—computers, electronics and the like—are becoming the leaders in the rich countries.

One can be sure that if the poorer countries are given the job of producing, say, more steel, then steel is of declining importance, and profitability; more, the production of steel in the Third World will be organized in such a way that it will not lead to integrated development. This is not the result of a conspiracy by plutocrats; it is built into the very structure of both the world market and the various nations which comprise it.

How does Henry Kissinger propose to deal with this grim reality? By improving the workings of the world market, the very mechanism retarding genuine development. For example, Kissinger proposes to stabilize the fluctuation in export earnings of the Third World through the creation of a development security facility to be financed by the sale of International Monetary Fund gold. This would spread the cost among all the developed world (unlike the Marshall Plan, which was basically a gift from the United States). The facility might have a pump-priming effect by providing some purchasing power for the Third World, thus helping to speed recovery in the advanced capitalist countries. But it would not lead to development, since it would merely make the present structure more efficient and predictable, not different.

Secondly, Kissinger wants to create international institutions to help private capital on the world market. One—basically the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank in a greatly expanded form—would be specifically directed toward helping private enterprise in the Third World. The other, an International Investment Trust, would seek public and private capital for investment in public and private enterprises in the developing nations. Its most singular feature is a \$200 million loss reserve, which would be put up by the governments of the developed

***If the poorer countries are given
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nations to guarantee, presumably, the monies of private investors. Both proposals would tend to make the multinational even more the instrument of American policy.

Let no one doubt Secretary Kissinger's devotion to the multinationals. "Transnational enterprises," he said "have been powerful instruments of modernization

Socialism in one city?

Chapel Hill, North Carolina, may next month become the only United States city with an avowed socialist mayor.

Gerry Cohen, currently a member of the town council and the coordinator of the Orange County Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, is an announced candidate in the non-partisan election. The North Carolina press has identified Cohen as a socialist and cited that as one reason local conservatives and the business community oppose his election. A number of commentators, though, concede that Cohen stands an excellent chance.

As a member of the town council, Cohen fought to establish a public transportation system in Chapel Hill, and he has vowed to expand it as mayor. Other issues his campaign is addressing include public ownership of utilities and greater neighborhood and town employee input into municipal decision-making.

Contributions to the campaign will be appreciated and can be sent to: Friends of Gerry Cohen, P.O. Box 307, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.

both in the industrialized nations and in the developing countries where there is no substitute for their ability to marshal capital, management skills, technology and initiative. Thus the controversy over their role and conduct is itself an obstacle to economic development." In this last, incredibly arrogant sentence, Kissinger is telling his United Nations colleagues, who have been studying the multinationals, to shut up.

Kissinger prefers to ignore some of the basic findings of the U.N.'s own study, *Multinational Corporations in World Development*, which detail the damage done by multinationals to the Third World. Kissinger ignores the problems for the Third World posed by the multinationals' technology, their evading local taxes and regulations by playing bookkeeping games, their monetary speculation. Nor does he mention how the multinationals are a major instrument of the anti-development structures of the world economy.

Finally, Kissinger proposed establishing a grain reserve to head off international famine. This is useful, will receive support from agribusiness, and does nothing to solve the Third World's agriculture problems.

Thus, while Henry Kissinger prescribes international capitalism for the developing countries' malaise, the experience of the last 150 years suggests that the more efficient system of private investment Kissinger proposes will perpetuate that malaise. Henry Kissinger's "radical" speech at the U.N. was a power-rationalizing program for the internationalization of those capitalist priorities which have created and perpetuated a global system in which 6 percent of the people consume 40 percent of the resources. □

NYC school strike . . .

(Continued from page 1)

payroll—thousands were fired who had been working in the schools for as long as eight years. Nearly half the remaining aides honored the UFT picket lines, where they were joined by hundreds of laid-off colleagues.

By the end of the first week of the strike, few teachers or children were crossing the picket lines. Staff solidarity was overwhelming (the strike vote was 22,000 to 900). Nearly half the schools were closed, either by local school boards or by individual principals. Where schools were technically open, only an occasional teacher or a handful of students attended. Even in Manhattan's Central Harlem district, where the union never recovered from the polarization of the 1968 strike, about 80 percent of the students and staff stayed out. (The other 20 percent stressed "dedication" rather than racial militancy.) Meanwhile, various splinter opposition groups in the UFT warned teachers of a possible "sell out" and of the need to stick together. For once, their words were listened to intently.

The intense hostility between teachers and parents that characterized the 1968 strike was absent this year, although a residue of distrust remains to complicate the coalition between the two. In Manhattan's liberal District 3, a center of anti-union activity in 1968, parents had closed several schools to protest cuts in staff even before the union struck. These parents are uneasy with their new allies, but they know they need to stick together. The District's parent-dominated School Board, on the other hand, remains fearful of appearing to embrace a UFT position and hold onto a "schools-must-always-be-open-and-teachers-at-their-posts" line. In neighboring District 4, low-income Hispanic and black parents, their school board and staffs are in total harmony. In District 1, the focal point of community opposition to the UFT for years, even the viruently anti-UFT (pro-Fuentes) "Por Los Niños" voted by a 4 to 1 margin to support the strike.

Yet despite this solidarity among the activists, many parents in these districts are eager to get the kids back in school and return to a normal, predictable existence, no matter how it is done. This push for sheer stability is an omnipresent although incalculable variable.

Among the strike's ironies is the fact that most of those local School Boards now opposing the teachers'

Clark hits road

Since Jack Clark will be on a national organizing tour during October and most of November, an editorial committee has been appointed to manage the *Newsletter*.

Carol Drisko, who has written for this publication on energy and food, will convene the committee; David Bensman, Gretchen Donart, Marjorie Gellermann and Peter Steinfelds will serve on the committee. Michael Harrington will continue to serve as the editor of the *Newsletter*.

Clark's tour will take him to DSOC chapters on the West Coast, in Texas and throughout the Midwest.

Capitalism and freedom

"The guiding light of the [Chilean] junta's economic policy has been Milton Friedman, a conservative economist from the University of Chicago who visited Santiago shortly before the 'shock treatment' program took effect. The 'Chicago boys,' as the junta's economic advisers like to call themselves, slashed public spending, restricted bank credits and slowed the printing of money.

"The only public expenditure that has escaped the scissors has been the military budget, a taboo topic for public discussion."

—New York Times, September 21

demands were those elected with UFT support last spring and accused at the time of being UFT stooges. They represent more affluent and conservative districts where it was popular to favor cutbacks in services for Title I schools and in general to take a management-type viewpoint.

Allied to these anti-teacher school boards have been old-line parent and school advocate groups (the United Parents Association, Public Education Association) and the new Alliance for Children which have been busy denouncing the union and not the cutback in services for children.

Teachers and parents alike face agonizing choices. The teachers don't want to return to the conditions which prevailed when school opened. Even more, they feel compelled to assist their laid-off colleagues. Parents want services restored to make schools viable, and they insist on regaining for their own schools valued individuals who were either fired or bumped elsewhere. Both teachers and parent activists are aware that another area is nonwhite employment. Blacks, who have been disproportionately laid off, are even more vulnerable than Hispanics because low seniority staff who can demonstrate bilingual Spanish competence may be in a position to be rehired first.

Without substantial Federal support at this time these apparently reasonable aims and concerns of parents and teachers cannot be realized. Yet since no Federal support is likely to be forthcoming, there is little possibility of an educationally viable or humane solution to the present strike.

To be sure, eventually the strike will end. The strike, by saving the city \$5 million a day plus the fines likely to be extracted from the teachers may be the means for rehiring a token number of teachers. Other gimmicks of a similar sort may be found to save some jobs. But it's uncertain whether the Board even wants to look for such compromises—for this may seem a propitious moment for anti-union forces to try to break the UFT and thus set an example to all municipal unions. (How ironic that on the "other side of the table" are all the people Albert Shanker helped elect: Governor Carey, Mayor Beame, the new Chancellor Irving Anker, most of the incumbent school boards.)

The danger of the strike being used to crush the union probably accounts for Shanker's rapid retreat on all issues (after sounding tough all spring and summer). He is in the same dilemma that forced the other municipal unions to capitulate over the summer to similar if less drastic cuts. In fact, Shanker tried on the eve of the strike vote to persuade his own hand-picked Executive Board to accept an extension of the contract while negotiations continued. After a lengthy session the Executive Board members—in response to what they knew to be membership sentiment—dissuaded him. As negotiations continue during the strike, this tension between Shanker's efforts to get out at almost any price and the membership's resistance remains apparent.

Whatever the final settlement, we will not have the resources in 1975-76 to provide anything like a modern educational system in this city. Children, of course, will be the foremost victims. As much for their sake as anyone's, we need strategies that avoid dividing us. Can we find ways of losing this strike without turning on each other—teachers versus parents versus blacks versus whites versus Hispanics? The blame must be directed to those who place a higher priority on F-14's than on schools, who bail out the mismanagers of Lockheed, Penn Central, Franklin National and Grumman Aircraft while they punish the children to teach the cities "a lesson in finance."

The settlement and beyond

September 19—The uneasy unity between parents and teachers during this strike was remarkable and promising. The "victory" settlement (hailed by Shanker and

condemned by the *New York Times* as a teachers' victory), shattered that unity without benefiting working teachers.

The new contract was approved by a 3-2 margin by a delegate assembly and membership referendum, but the display of opposition in the UFT was highly unusual. Dissenting teachers disputed Shanker's dishonest claim that "almost all" of the lost personnel would be rehired. At most, 2 to 4 thousand of the 15,000 dismissed staffers "might" be rehired. And the money to rehire them comes entirely from lost wages and penalties paid by individual striking teachers.

Parent and community hostility to the settlement centered around the union's agreement to give up two preparation periods only if children gave up 90 minutes of school each week. Teachers gain nothing from that shortening of the school day, and, in fact, it could be used to justify further lay-offs. Parents and a number of teachers feel that this is not an appropriate item for negotiations.

Both teachers and parents are concerned about the distribution of money among school districts. Will Title I schools lose out as the Board reshuffles resources?

Shanker still claims the settlement as a great victory "brilliantly achieved." He continues to boast nationally about his cleverness and his ability to deliver. But the working teachers in New York know better. Instead of feeling that they made a heroic sacrifice, they are left with anxiety that perhaps they were used to deflect the protest that should be directed against abandoning urban children. Hopefully, in time, parents and teachers can recement their coalition. Only then, do we have a chance of reversing the school system's decline. □

Teamsters' scandals: Hoffa and other skeletons

by B. J. WIDICK

The latest power struggle in the scandal-ridden Teamsters union—the largest and richest labor organization in the United States—came to a brutal end with the disappearance of James R. Hoffa. His demise erases any chance that Frank Fitzsimmons' regime (and alliances with notorious Mob figures) will be upset. If tough guy Jimmy couldn't take Fitz on, who can?

Cracking the Hoffa case, as a Detroit Grand Jury is currently trying to do, is very difficult. Taking the Fifth or even going to jail is preferable to becoming another Hoffa. Few knowledgeable people expect even Hoffa's body to be found.

Besides the threat of his return to power, there was the danger that Hoffa might talk. If he did, the consequences could be as fatal for many political and union figures as the Watergate tapes were to the Nixon regime. Now Hoffa won't talk. It remains to be seen how damaging and revealing a book he co-authored will be.

In mid-September, the *Detroit News* indicated that a New Jersey mobster is negotiating for immunity. If he gets it, the *News* said, he'll reveal who

put the contract out on Hoffa. Then at least we'll know who killed Jimmy Hoffa. But a lot of questions remain, and it's doubtful that we'll get satisfactory answers.

Since the public reaction to Hoffa's death is not indignation and outrage—as it was when Jock Yablonski was killed, or when the Mob tried to assassinate Walter Reuther in 1948—the prospects for a sweeping investigation of the Teamsters aren't very good. The alliance between the Teamster hierarchy and the Republican party, with a Republican President and a Presidential election coming in 1976, suggests something less than enthusiasm in Washington for a full-scale campaign to look into misuse of pension funds, political contributions and the relations between Fitzsimmons and his notorious associates.

For organized labor, the challenge is obvious. Business unionism may be inadequate, but predatory unionism has no place in a modern democratic labor movement or society.

Sooner or later, the issue will be met. If an imperial Presidency can fall, the Teamsters can not remain beyond public disapproval forever. □

Jimmy Higgins reports . . .

CAN PRISON BE FUN? Apparently ABC-TV thinks so. Its new series, "On the Rocks," features Jose Perez (late of "Calucci's Department"), who plays Hector Fuentes. In heavy Puerto Rican accents, he reassures the audience that he is only in the minimum security prison somewhere in Middle America "due to tragic circumstance—I got caught." ABC has given us a "Stalag 17," or its TV spinoff, "Hogan's Heroes," in which inmates playfully outwit dimwit Nazi guards and cheerfully confirm to one another, "Like the man said, we're in prison to be punished."

John J. O'Connor, the New York Times TV critic explains the phenomenon thus: "There is a certain type of comedy atrocity with roots deeply embedded in television. The trick is to reduce something that might be powerfully disturbing to a level of silly meaninglessness. Instead of 'The Sorrow and the Pity,' the TV series has given us 'Hogan's Heroes.' Instead of 'Fortune and Men's Eyes' or 'Short Eyes,' it gives us 'On the Rocks.'"

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICKING—Morris Udall and Fred Harris were winners while Birch Bayh fared badly at the first of a series of regional candidates and issues forums for liberal-left Democratic activists. The conference met in Minneapolis September 13 and 14. Populism was the order of the day as Udall, Harris, Bayh, Terry Sanford and Milton Shapp attacked big business, the oil companies and the Ford Administration for bringing us high prices and higher unemployment rates. All mentioned the Hawkins-Humphrey full employment bill as the most important way out. Udall and Harris impressed with the smoothness of their campaign operations and the quality of their presentations. An informal Washington Post poll showed Udall as the first choice of those attending, and Harris, whose speech was frequently interrupted with applause, the second choice. Bayh, who has been picking up much support in the Midwest recently, flopped; his speech was dull and his answers to questions imprecise.

THE MOST PROMISING aspect of the conference was the seriousness, strength and zeal of the Party's

liberals. They're obviously eager to stick together and win the Presidency. Women's rights activists were the best organized, and progressive trade unionists from AFSCME, the UAW, the Communications Workers and the National Education Association also turned out in impressive numbers.

THE SAME OLD STORY of tax injustice is repeated in figures released last month by Ohio Representative Charles Vanik. According to the Congressman, seven people with incomes of more than \$1 million dollars paid no income tax in 1973; 164 with incomes in excess of \$200,000, and 3,088 with incomes of more than \$50,000 who also paid no taxes. "This is only the tip of the iceberg," Vanik noted. "There are many wealthy individuals who pay a few dollars and thus not included in this no-tax list."

CAPITALISM IS IN DECLINE in the view of most Americans, according to a Hart poll conducted for the People's Bicentennial Commission (PBC). Hart found that:

- 33 percent of those polled believe that our capitalist system has reached its peak and is now on the decline;
- 57 percent agree that both major parties favor big business over the average worker;
- 58 percent believe that major corporations tend to determine the actions of public officials while only 25 percent believe that public officials in Washington tend to dominate and determine the actions of the corporations;
- 49 percent agree that big business is the source of most of what is wrong in this country;
- A majority favors employee ownership and control of companies.

PBC was formed in 1971 as an alternative to the official Bicentennial committee; the poll and a magazine, *Common Sense*, are available from PBC, 1340 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington D.C. 20036.

NO PLACE TO HIDE—"No one at the National Security Agency has to shinny up a telephone pole and clamp alligator clips onto a terminal box," according to *Newsweek*. "Instead the agency plucks electronic pulses out of thin air." Most overseas telephone calls and domestic and international printed messages are transmitted by microwave. The government monitors these messages with computers programmed to watch for trigger words or phrases. When triggered, the computer records the entire message. No laws cover such monitoring. Senator Frank Church, who heads the committee investigating intelligence activity, has warned that such "capability at any time could be turned on the American people, and no American would have any privacy left. . . . There would be no place to hide." A dictator could, Church warned, use this technological ability to snoop to impose a "total tyranny." Even the most private conversations would be within the "reach of the government," and "there would be no way to fight back."

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