

Newsletter of

THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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Edited by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

For black workers:

A partnership in social change

by WILLIAM LUCY

Among the first people President Ford invited to the White House were George Meany and members of the Black Congressional Caucus, although, of course, not Meany *and* the Black Caucus in the same meeting. With the fervent hopes all of us have for an inclusionary rather than exclusionary White House, the overture by the new President was a welcome one.

Still, I'm nagged by the thought of how OEO supporters brought in former Florida Congressman William Cramer to lobby the Republican side of the aisle for continued legislation last spring. When Cramer served in the Congress, he had many opportunities to support OEO, by simply casting a "yes" vote, but he always managed to vote "nay."

President Ford has had his opportunities in the past to help black people and the working man and, like Congressman Cramer, seized few if any of them. His reluctance to approach civil rights or working people's problems with a sense of open-mindedness stamped him as Nixon's echo, which led to his appointment as Vice President and his subsequent inheri-

man and Vice President. We can wait and hope; but still . . .

I'm more concerned at what is happening to the whole political process in this country. The situation is awesomely gloomy. Despite the lessons of Watergate, we don't see campaign spending legislation that really gets to the heart of the problem. Democrats spend 21 hours on a national telethon to raise the money Republicans can pick up with one telephone call to a Clement Stone or Walter Annenberg.

The Democratic Party has won empathy with blacks as the "working man's party" and labor unions have become the movement of black working people. Yet both the party and labor have failed the black community in much the same way—by both neglect and rejection. Both count on the many, but include only a few. Whether it is politics or unions, black workers share little in the decision-making and the black com-

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After the walkout — can the Dems reunite?

by JACK CLARK

Democratic Party bickering surfaced publicly again last month, and once again the issues which caused the controversy have been obscured by longer standing factional divisions within the party. This time, though, there may be a basis—for the first time since Johnson's war policies split the Democrats—for a lasting reconciliation.

Less than two weeks after the Democratic Charter Commission ended its final session in a bitter walkout, that's a bold prediction to make. When hardliners around the Coalition for a Democratic Majority are still saying that there is not room for themselves and the reformers in the same party, when Evans and Novak are reporting threats by COPE operatives to pull the AFL-CIO out of the Democratic Party, such a prediction may seem insanely optimistic.

But on August 27, nine days after the Charter Commission blow-up, a less publicized event occurred in Washington. Seven top union leaders, representing unions which have differed with AFL-CIO COPE Director Al Barkan and his operatives on internal party

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tance of the Oval Office. One is tempted to think that if you were Mr. Ford, you might hesitate to turn your back on what has, politically, been a very good thing indeed. In Mr. Cramer's case, a fat \$25,000 monthly fee changed his mind about OEO and he had no hesitancy in embracing its cause in a lobbying capacity. For Mr. Ford, we would like to feel that a genuine concern to unite the nation after the horrors and divisiveness of Watergate might be persuading him to reconsider previous positions and to give blacks and working people an unexpected roll of the dice. For the moment, it is probably in all our interests to give the new President every chance to take the steps as President that he so assiduously avoided while a congress-

Solidarity at Stanford

by SCOTT SINGER

In spring, 1970, Stanford University was the scene of massive student protests against the American invasion of Cambodia. During the summer which followed, thirteen Stanford workers who sympathized with the student anti-war movement broke with the pro-administration Stanford Employees' Association to found a new labor organization, the United Stanford Employees' union (USE). At the time, the event seemed of scarce importance. But four years later, the student movement was dead, while USE, over a thousand members strong, was battling the University in the first major labor dispute in Stanford's history.

In the interim, the union had affiliated with the Service Employees International and won an NLRB election that made it bargaining agent for Stanford's technical, maintenance and service workers. The NLRA, of course, requires management to talk to the union, and talk Stanford did. After six months of negotiations, administrators were still talking about wage hikes in the neighborhood of 4 and 5 percent. Evidently they thought they were dealing with leftist amateurs who couldn't pull off a strike no matter how insulting the pay offer.

When the union's strike deadline rolled around, not a single item of the proposed contract had been initialed. So on May 13, 1974, USE members, from food service workers to technicians (including, incidentally, more than a few college graduates) went on strike. Most of the union's demands were "classic"—wages, hours, fringe benefits. But many union members also attached a great deal of importance to the "free speech" issue—USE's right to put what it wants on union bulletin boards, and assurance that bargaining unit members would not be fired for non-job-related activities. In any case, the strike had "political" overtones, and union members never tired of pointing out that Stanford's Board of Trustees, a veritable Who's Who of the Pacific corporate world, has included at least one member who was responsible for illegal corporate donations to Nixon's re-election campaign. (The guilty party, Thomas Jones, resigned from the board during the strike.)

The union's young and militant leadership also gave the strike an original twist. When scabbing construction workers (most building trades unions endorsed the strike) attempted to move a crane into a construction site, USE President Jim Berk laid down in front of the vehicle. Two weeks later, the crane managed to get past a picket line, knocking down a union member and part of a fence in the process. A union picketer later mounted the 160 foot crane, where he remained for two hours in protest against the University's failure to take adequate precautions to prevent injuries to picketers.

Student support of the strike was significant, if not overwhelming. Chicano students, medical students and

assorted veterans of the Movement sponsored teach-ins, rallies and fundraisers, and joined picket lines. Teaching and research assistants, who are currently attempting to organize their own union, organized a one-day walkout in solidarity with the strikers. Unfortunately, some would-be student supporters were influenced by the University's insinuations that pay raises would require increases in tuition. The fact is that wages of roughly half the bargaining unit members are covered by government contracts, and no unit employees are paid from tuition money. Student support turned out to be important. The University realized that if the strike were still in full swing in mid-June, commencement exercises would be turned into a circus. The union, for its part, was wary of continuing the strike into the summer, when University operations are normally reduced and most students are away from the campus. So what originally promised to be a long strike ended after a tense three weeks. The contract terms were reasonable—a three year contract averaging about 9 percent annually, slightly attenuated "free speech" rights, and a modified union shop. And everyone expects that when the contract expires in September, 1976, the union will be in a stronger bargaining position.

In the interim, the union will be organizing workers not in the current bargaining unit, including library workers, secretaries, and most part-time workers. Of course, the labor movement at Stanford would be much more effective if professionals—professors, engineers, and research associates—were organized as well. (Four Marxist professors recently considered joining the union but changed their minds when they realized it would put their untenured jobs in jeopardy.) In short, USE's next five years may prove as exciting as its first four. And outsiders should take notice: the Stanford union is in many ways what radicals think a union should be—militant, democratic, and industrially organized. □

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Inflation: Challenge to the labor movement

by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

The national honeymoon with Gerald Ford will be short. When it is over, there will not be the "marriage" the new President hoped for in his first speech to Congress, at least not from a trade union point of view. There will be a divorce. I say these things even though I feel that the labor movement is quite right to offer its cooperation to President Ford. He is not the menace to our freedoms that Richard Nixon was, and, in any case, a weary, disillusioned American public desperately wants conciliation at this moment of national transition. But Ford is a conservative leader of a conservative administration. He will therefore propose with openness and sincerity and even charm that the working people and the poor bear the burden in the struggle against inflation and that the corporations and the rich get the rewards.

So the organized workers have to prepare for the divorce which will take place after a brief honeymoon. The immediate program of the unions when the inevitable estrangement comes is obvious enough. In describing it, I am not taking a narrow "interest group" point of view. I believe (and I have documented the assertion on numerous occasions elsewhere) that the labor movement is the largest, most crucial democratic force for social and economic change in the nation. If it does not come up with a militant answer to the threats of simultaneous recession and inflation, then there is no chance that the entire society will solve them progressively.

Indeed, it is precisely in the name of the common good that the unions must become more insistent and militant than ever before. They must demand, not simply a rise in the real wages of the working people, but a shift in the shares of income and wealth in America. As a socialist I have, of course, been for that policy for a long time, but this article is not concerned with the general arguments in favor of it. It is impossible to raise real wages without a certain redistribution of wealth. The fight for daily bread must, in the new situation in which we find ourselves, proceed by way of structural transformations in the American economy. This is not simply a philosophical truth; it is an imperative of a struggle already in progress.

Another Truman?

First of all, consider the Ford Administration's conservatism. Ford is, as Julian Bond has remarked, an "honest Nixon" and this is, God knows, an improvement for the Republic. But on economic and social matters, he has been, and will be, to Nixon's right.

Ford's past is well enough known. He voted in Congress 9 times out of 118 for measures backed by the unions. He was against minimum wage, Medicare, the Economic Opportunity Act, aid to education and on and on. He fought vigorously to weaken every piece of civil rights legislation which came before the House. But then, isn't it possible that the office will transform

the man, as it transformed another "middle American" President, Harry S. Truman?

On the available post-Inauguration evidence, the answer is no. In his speech to Congress, Ford placed himself squarely in the tradition with which he has so long and loyally identified: the Herbert Hoover school of economics. The central point of his address was that the present problem of inflation is the result of Big Government spending. "The fact is," the new President lamented, "that for the past 25 years . . . the Federal budget has been balanced in only six."

This is, of course, the classic theme of the Old Economics and it has always served as a rationale for cutting back on social programs. This is particularly true in Ford's case because his program for budget cutting is coupled with a strong emphasis on national defense expenditure. Having all but foreclosed that avenue of fiscal saving, and having announced through his spokesmen that he is against any tax changes (the other possible source), from whence will those cuts come? The answer has to be from the domestic side of the ledger.

Moreover it should be noted that Ford's first speech to Congress pitted him against 25 years (or rather, 19 out of 25) of budgetary policy. He is thus saying that the Kennedy-Johnson tax cuts, which helped to reduce unemployment measurably, were bad, and that the economic mismanagement of the Eisenhower and early Nixon years, when joblessness increased under the sign of the balanced budget, were good. The trade union movement rightly thinks the exact opposite.

This reactionary attitude was stressed by Treasury Secretary William Simon when he testified before Congress on behalf of the new administration in mid-August. It is true that Simon competes with Attorney General Saxbe to see who is the highest placed foot-in-the-mouth official in Washington, yet he spoke as a representative of the Ford White House and must be taken seriously. He told the Congress, "The insane fiscal policy of guns and butter during the Vietnam War, especially in the 1960's, was the major contributor to the current problems." This statement has to be savored.

First of all, Ford and Simon were for the Vietnam War. They are quite right to say that it made a significant contribution to our inflationary crisis—at one point, Lyndon Johnson overly "fine-tuned" the budget with a \$10 billion stimulus predicated on an early end to the tragedy in Southeast Asia. But what conclusion is one to draw from that fact? That this is one of the countless reasons why that war should never have taken place? This is not Ford's or Simon's point of view. For what Simon is saying is that the inflation came from guns *and* butter and that we should have dropped the butter. (I should add that it is a myth that we had both guns and butter during Vietnam; the Great Society was clearly a casualty of that horror. But that is another story.)

So Ford's speech and Simon's testimony are clear warnings of what to expect. There will be a reactionary indoctrination in the Herbert Hoover faith that Federal spending is bad (with the corollary that private spending is good) and this will provide the rationale for a reduction in social outlays. Gerald R. Ford is not Harry Truman, a centrist in the party of the mass liberal Left who looked to working people as a basic constituency. He is Gerald R. Ford, a right-winger in the party of American conservatism and nothing he has done since he succeeded to power has changed that basic identity.

After the Honeymoon

How, then, should the labor movement respond when the Ford divorce comes?

First of all, the unions obviously have to vigorously pursue the collective bargaining struggle. Since January 1973, real wages have been going down without interruption. There will be demands for "restraints," i.e. the executives and major stockholders of General Motors and the workers who make the cars will be told to moderate their demands. The former would then have to forego an extra limousine, the latter will be asked to eat less meat, more macaroni and give up the hope of buying a house.

One of the most important tests of this reactionary logic will take place this fall when the United Mine Workers' contract comes up for negotiation. We can expect pious sermons on how these workers, who risk their lives and lungs every day, must sacrifice for the common good. But, as will be seen in a moment, no one will ask anything like an equal sacrifice from the mine owners or the corporate rich in general. It would be a real tragedy if the middle class Left were taken in by this flim-flam. Vigorous support for the Mine Workers will be a litmus test for anyone who claims to be on the side of justice.

Secondly, we cannot forget for a moment that there is not just an inflation, but an inflation-recession. James Tobin and Otto Eckstein carefully calculated the econometrics and concluded that it would take at least two years of 8 percent unemployment to reduce inflation to a 4 percent rate. And the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development forecasts that the jobless rate in this country will rise to 6.25 percent this year (it also predicts a \$7 billion trade deficit by 1975, a trend which could motivate the U.S., or other countries, to adopt a "begger-thy-neighbor" approach to the situation and thereby set off a world-wide crash).

A number of policies are necessary to deal with this problem. There must be a massive public employment program to provide a job for every worker who wants one. This could be used to meet a number of social needs, not the least of all the construction of a mass transportation system. Arthur Burns is on recent record as favoring a very modest program in this area—and a \$10 billion budget cut which, given the Ford and Burns philosophy, is a contradiction in terms. And we cannot allow credit to be rationed by price, for that guarantees that a "tight money" program will

penalize social priorities, like new housing for working people and the poor, and encourage speculation.

Thirdly, these things can only be done within the constraints imposed by inflation (which includes the outflow of some extra \$60 billion from the advanced capitalist lands to the oil producers) if there is ranging tax reform. If the new programs which we so desperately need are financed by increased deficits, this will indeed create some of the problems which the conservatives talk about. But the answer is not, as the conservatives think, to walk away from those needs; it is to adopt a redistributive tax policy to make it possible to simultaneously fight inflation and recession.

It is this demand which points to the necessity of structural change, not as pie-in-the-sky for the millennium, but as a tactical exigency of the immediate struggle. There will be an "incomes policy" in the United States, i.e. the Government is going to play a conscious role in allocating shares of wealth to the various social classes. The only question is what kind of incomes policy. Simply put the issue is whether profits will take precedence over wages.

The Keynesian approach, at least in its liberal variant, argued for stimulating full employment by increasing consumption. That was easier said than done, and even in the case of the Kennedy-Johnson tax cut, the corporate rich got the lion's share of the benefits. But now that Ford and his friends have defined our plight as one of over-consumption—without specifying whose overconsumption, that of the rich, the workers or the poor—there is a new rationale for holding back on wages and increasing profits.

'Philanthropic' Profits

In June, Treasury Secretary William Simon told the Joint Economic Committee that the Government should hold down consumer demand and increase profits so as to satisfy the enormous capital needs of the decade. Simon estimated the latter at \$1 trillion. Therefore, corporate profits "will have to grow substantially to make their contribution to the investment needs of future years." He even suggested that the Administration should run a budgetary surplus—and presumably cut back on social programs—so that it would not compete with private capital on the money market. Ford has bought this case.

Then in early July, Kenneth Rush, who remains as Ford's economic counselor, made this theory more precise by advocating tax incentives for business but rejecting tax cuts for the people. This was necessary to increase corporate "cash flow" (profits plus depreciation allowances) which Rush said is not "nearly sufficient" for industrial expansion. A few days later, Arthur Burns went to the Congress, pushing for lower capital gains taxes and a reduction in Federal spending. The rationale was, once again, more investment money for the companies. And by the end of July, Nixon himself took this line in his Los Angeles speech on the economy.

The demand for redistributive taxes, I must point

out, will not be met unless we change one of the basic features of the American economic system—profit making and private planning as the source of investment and growth. Let me explain:

In the bad old days, the apologists for corporate wealth openly proclaimed the redeeming social value of greed. Let the risk-taker be the decision-maker, for people will not be foolish with their own money; and if an entrepreneur then satisfies a public need through private ingenuity, let him drink champagne from his mistress' dancing slipper. Conspicuous consumption was a mark of virtue, not vice; bankers were supposed to be at least portly.

Now the heroic age of avarice is long since gone and we get philanthropic arguments for capitalist institutions. The name of the game is not, as *Forbes* magazine told us last spring, expense account lunch, midwinter suntan or limousines; it is meeting America's needs through investment.

The husk of truth which hides the kernel of the lie is this: that in any dynamic economy there must be a deduction from the present production for depreciation and new investment. The lie itself is multifaceted. The White House *et al.* are proposing that consumers provide business with its "risk" capital for nothing, by paying higher prices to yield higher profits which the companies will then generously invest in what they deem to be good for the people. Secondly, the

consumer does not get any equity out of the funds he thus advances, but the owners of America do. Since, as the Government's *Social Indicators Report* told us last February, the top 20 percent of the society owns 76 percent of the wealth (and the bottom 20 percent, 2 tenths of 1 percent), these "philanthropic" profits will increase an outrageous maldistribution of wealth. Thirdly, the people who pay get no say in how their money is spent. The oil companies, as even *Forbes* admits, used their profits to deliver us "into the hands of the Arabs rather than develop coal and other sources of energy." The reason was simple: as owners of all forms of energy, these companies simply maximized production of those which suit their own purposes and the public be damned.

In short, the radicals in the executive suite and the Government are demanding—and getting—a Federal policy for the redistribution of wealth to the rich by equating the social necessity of investment with the corporate mode of making and profiting from investment. This rationalizes less consumption and income for the masses, more wealth for the upper classes. Business understands that there is a new ball game: it is trying to invent the rules for it. And significantly, *U.S. News and World Report*, a magazine with excellent connections on the Right, notes that the one area in which President Ford will relax his austerity is in providing tax incentives to corporations.

Alan Greenspan, the incoming Chairman of Ford's

New hopes for housing

by DAVID KUSNET

An ailing housing industry received a shot in the arm when President Ford signed a bill authorizing \$11.9 billion over three years for state and local community development programs.

The new housing act—the first since 1971—came as interest rates soared to 11 per cent, unemployment among construction workers doubled the national average, and 75 per cent of all Americans were priced out of the new housing market.

There's good news and bad news in the compromise housing program which mixes the New Federalism, aid to the wealthy and one of the best conceived—if worst funded—programs of the New Frontier.

Block grants for local communities to spend as they choose total \$8.4 billion. That means the cities can use the money for low income housing, and the suburbs can use federal resources to keep low income tenants out.

Affluent home buyers benefit from raised ceilings on home mortgages made by federally chartered savings and loan associations—up to \$55,000 from \$45,000—but mortgage money is expected to remain as scarce as ever.

For housing reformers, traditionally advocates of direct federal loans to non-profit sponsors, a

major victory was scored with Senate passage of an amendment by Harrison Williams (D-N.J.) authorizing government loans of \$800 million for housing for the elderly. Reviving a section of the New Frontier housing plan, the new program reserves mortgages for non-profit sponsors such as churches, unions and community groups.

The three year void in national housing policy resulted as much from scandals in Great Society programs as from Nixonian budget cutting. Under Sections 235 and 236 of the National Housing Act, "limited profit" developers took six per cent profits on subsidized projects and sold their interests to wealthy investors seeking tax shelters. The developments were financed by below market interest rate loans; the F.H.A. paid the difference between the market interest rates and the three or four per cent rate allowed "limited profit" developers.

The renewed direct loan program, spurred by Senator Williams, may signal a shift from the mid-Sixties approach of offering the private sector special incentives to invest in the inner city. Democratic Congressmen can't help but listen to voices like Carpenters' President William Sidell who told the union's July convention that the federal government should "remove the housing industry from the free enterprise banking system" and "provide funds directly to the citizens." □

Council of Economic Advisors, was quite revealing on this point. Greenspan is a disciple of Ayn Rand, the novelist-philosopher (*The Fountainhead*) who believes so passionately in laissez-faire that she once suggested that the dollar sign is the proper symbol of true morality. He says of the present situation: "It will take leadership. It will take commitment. It will take pain." Precisely. But whose pain? The Republican, corporate—and Ford—answer is the working people's pain. It would be suicide to say that bluntly, of course. So it has to be put deviously, in the form of an intricate theory that proves that profits are more socially desirable than wages.

There is a certain vicious logic to this thesis so long as one accepts the proposition that basic economic decisions in America should be made in private board rooms. Then the corporation does become society's representative—self-appointed, unelected—in deciding how that necessary deduction from present output should be made. Therefore the labor movement, in coping with the immediate problem of real wages, is going to have to challenge the private corporate domination of basic investment decisions in America.

That means taking the AFL-CIO's commitment to national economic planning with much greater seriousness; it requires that we come up with another "Freedom Budget for All Americans" along the lines proposed by the A. Philip Randolph Institute in the '60's (that excellent enterprise that was another victim of Vietnam). The fight for a public gas and oil corporation, as urged by Senator Stevenson, has to go on; and there should be a campaign to nationalize the railroads as the UAW has proposed. Trade union and consumer representatives should be seated on the boards of all major corporations. I cite these items as examples, not as an exhaustive list, but the point should be clear: public and social priorities have to be imposed on investment in America. We cannot, the AFL-CIO has rightly said, have rationing by price for credit to home-builders. We need a social priority in the allocation mechanism. That point applies to major areas of investment where "equality of sacrifice" can only be achieved by social planning and control.

I suggest, then, that the immediate and middle range struggles are merging, that protecting the daily bread of American wage-earners also requires a certain redistribution of wealth through a ranging tax reform and even demands the assertion of public control over many "private" investment decisions.

The Great Depression of the Thirties unleashed creativity among the working people of this nation, and their battles helped this country to a minimum and modicum of humanity. The Great Inflation of the Seventies may be a similar challenge. There are, I think, programmatic answers to it, but they will become political and practical only if the unions passionately make them their own. The national honeymoon with Gerald Ford will soon be over and the labor movement will be a party to the divorce. How it responds then will affect not simply the organized workers, but the very fate of this nation. □

Union maids

by GRETCHEN DONART

For the first time in the history of the labor movement, domestic workers—one segment of the working poor—are successfully organizing for collective bargaining.

The California Homemakers Association has already won the right to bargain for domestics who care for aged and disabled welfare recipients in Sacramento County. According to CHA field director David Shapiro, most of the household workers earn so little that they receive welfare benefits which, combined with their paychecks, total less than \$250 per month.

Under a system of grants administered by the county, disabled people are able to hire "chore workers" to help with shopping, house cleaning and bodily care. But the CHA does not see welfare recipients as their adversaries in negotiations. Instead it is bargaining with the county for higher grants, and organizing the aged and disabled to join them in the fight.

The CHA wants the county to classify more of their employers as "severely impaired," making them eligible for larger chore work grants (for which the county would be reimbursed by the state). CHA organizers claim that Sacramento County classifies a smaller proportion of its aged and disabled as severely impaired than do other counties in California.

The union began talks with the Sacramento County Department of Social Welfare when it gained recognition in March. But in April, the welfare department conducted a case review of all people receiving old age or disability assistance, collecting in the process lists of household workers employed by the recipients, noting whether they were affiliated with the CHA. The union filed suit and won a ruling ordering the county to destroy the lists. The county also issued a manual, setting time standards for various chores, in effect instituting piece work. Concluding that the county was bargaining in bad faith, the CHA has broken off talks and is now pursuing its cause in court.

The CHA has organized three thousand household workers and their employers. The Association offers, through donated services, free dental care, legal advice, clothing, job referrals and welfare advocacy.

Efforts to organize household workers may spread to other states. In New York, Assemblyman Seymour Posner (D-Bronx) reported that his bill to grant private domestic workers recognition under the New York Labor Relations Act again failed to make it out of committee. The Posner bill would grant collective bargaining rights to household workers hired by contracting firms, temporary agencies and individuals. Office cleaners are already covered by the Act.

Typical of opposition to the measure was the remark of one member of the Assembly who feared it would "destroy the relationship between my wife and our girl"! Posner anticipated strong public support for his bill from New York's large liberal community. It hasn't been forthcoming. □

Blacks . . .

(Continued from page 1)

munity reaps few of the economic or social gains.

There is every reason for blacks and poor people to lose their faith and belief in the American political system. They feel betrayed and impotent. They see the high priests of law and order in the Nixon Administration get less jail time for selling out the Constitution than a poor man gets for heisting a six-pack at the supermarket.

Blacks are as absent from the policy-making bodies of most major unions as from the executive suites of major corporations. Only two of the 35 members of the AFL-CIO Executive Council are black, C. L. Delums and Fred O'Neal. Both represent tiny unions.

We've done a little better at the polls in recent years, but even here, numbers can be misleading if power isn't wielded for change. A few years ago it was an event when a black man or woman was elected to office. Today there are over 2,600 black elected officials in this country. More significant is how few of that number are part of the cutting edge for change beneficial to the needs of the black community. We elected our friends to office and they became part of the elite that protects what already has been gained, rather than using their power to break new ground.

The question is not whether politicians have failed the black community or whether the labor movement has failed it, but does either fully understand the need and the potential for doing something of substance?

A labor union will bargain for an additional 12 cents an hour for its members and be keenly aware of what increased wages will mean in the worker's family budget, but will tolerate hiring practices that effectively exclude blacks, seemingly unaware of the immorality and of what high unemployment means to the black community in terms of increased crime, broken families, demeaning welfare, drugs and delinquency.

For the Democratic politicians, too often the extent of their political interest in the black community is: "Will it vote on election day?" They have to ask that question because rarely is there any substantive reason for the black community to vote. No one worries about the Republicans going to the polls. They've got too much at stake, too much self-interest, to stay away. But between elections, Democrats rarely develop programs that benefit the black community, programs that broaden the poor's economic base, programs that would establish a tangible commitment and give the community a valid reason to vote in the next election.

What is so tragic about this isolation of the black community from both the political and labor movement power structures is the potential for change that such a partnership would represent. It was this potential, the need for a mechanism from within to make it come alive, that inspired the formation of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

William Lucy, the secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, was elected chairman of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists at the spring convention.

The CBTU was organized in September of 1972 at a meeting in Chicago attended by some 1,200 black union officials and rank and file members from 37 national and international unions. We established at the outset that CBTU was not going to be a separatist organization, but would do its pushing and prodding and provoking from within. A statement of purpose made these points about CBTU: "It will work within the framework of the trade union movement. It will attempt to maximize the strength and influence of black workers in organized labor . . . as black trade unionists, it is our challenge to make the labor movement more relevant to the needs and aspirations of black and poor workers. The CBTU will insist that black union officials become full partners in the leadership of the American labor movement."

"Partners" is the key word of that proclamation. Blacks want a genuine partnership with all segments of our society that can have positive input on the needs of the black community.

Black workers are having their natural empathy for the Democratic Party shaken by flirtations many of its leaders are having with George Corley Wallace. The Alabama Governor's efforts to change his racist image have not been persuasive with CBTU. Our Detroit convention passed a resolution expressing the membership's "strong disbelief" in the "miracle transformation" of Governor Wallace who, we are told, "is no longer racist or anti-labor." The CBTU said it has "little confidence in miracles" and that throughout his public life Wallace had built a record opposing racial equality, and never has he repudiated that record. It also was noted that the Governor's labor record shows "he is no friend of working men and women."

That resolution concluded: "At a time when this country desperately needs national leadership to inspire the best that is in us, for human rights and dignity, any suggestion that Governor Wallace might be a part of that leadership is insulting and repugnant, and we particularly resent those black elected officials who give him a measure of credibility with the public support of his national candidacy."

Not only must the Democratic Party resist such suicidal excursions as the scramble to embrace Wallace, but it must begin to give serious attention to the needs of the party's working class constituency.

We need a reassessment of where we are going, a ready implementation of programs to rescue the increasing millions slipping into marginal poverty and despair by inflation, unemployment and fear.

There must be a deflection of excessive military expenditures to social and rescue programs, combined with a one-or-two year selective tax increase to redress the flow of large money to the economically powerful by diverting it to areas where need is crucial, emergency in nature, and vital for survival.

To effectively accomplish this, we need to win some elections. Despite Watergate and a potent constituency calling for change, nothing is certain. Democrats have a way of alienating friends and allies—as with the Wallace courtship. As J. D. Salinger would say, "it's a goddam talent." □

Democrats . . .

(Continued from page 1)

policy met with Democratic National Chairman Robert Strauss. The seven included: UAW President Leonard Woodcock; AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Bill Lucy; OCAW President Al Grospiron; CWA President Glenn Watts; Graphic Arts President Ken Brown; Hotel and Restaurant Employees Organizing Director (and former AFL-CIO Organizing Director) Bill Kircher; and Machinists President Floyd Smith, who called the meeting.

The liberal labor leaders told Strauss that they were concerned with the direction of the AFL-CIO in Democratic Party affairs and that they expected him to play a leadership role in ending the rift between the reformers and Barkan. While they offered to help conciliate the warring factions, they made it clear that labor political action was not a monolithic arrangement and that they did not intend to be taken for granted.

They were responding to the latest Democratic crisis which came into public view on August 18 at the final meeting of the Democratic Charter Commission in Kansas City. A proposed party Charter, for consideration by the delegates at the mid-term Charter Conference in Kansas City in December, was supposed to emerge from the meeting. The meeting ended abruptly when California Assemblyman Willie Brown led a walkout of black Commission members protesting efforts to eliminate many of the reforms achieved over the last six years. When a number of white reformers and party moderates followed Brown, the Commission lost its quorum, and Chairman Terry Sanford gavelled the meeting to an end.

A complicated amendment offered by Doris Hardesty of Maryland precipitated the clash. Hardesty proposed to strike language from the proposed Charter which dealt with timeliness and proportional representation in delegate selection, and affirmative action in all party affairs. From the reform viewpoint, that was disastrous; those are all the issues reformers have been fighting on since 1968. To make matters worse, Hardesty, probably by mistake, proposed to strike language which would outlaw the infamous unit rule which allows a majority of a state delegation to control the vote of the entire delegation. Since the unit rule had been associated with an earlier reform struggle—the civil rights movement of the '60's—that part of the Hardesty proposal drew particularly strong criticism. Other members of Hardesty's caucus moved quickly to keep the prohibition against the unit rule, but the walkout came before the vote.

Another explosive fight had ended in a compromise before the Hardesty amendment was raised. Reformers wanted to include the compromise language on affirmative action, worked out by the Mikulski Commission on Delegate Selection and approved by the Democratic National Committee (DNC), in the Charter. The regulars objected that such a move would lead to implied quotas and offered alternate language, barring quotas and not requiring affirmative

action. A black walkout was threatened then, but a compromise was offered. No language on affirmative action would be contained in the proposed Charter, but each side would present its proposed language to the Charter Conference. The original compromise, called for by the regulars, would have presented the Mikulski compromise as the reform alternative, and the language offered by Congressman Thomas Foley of Washington as the regulars' suggested language. Congresswoman Yvonne Burke protested that the regulars could present their own position, while the reformers would be stuck with a version that itself was the result of a compromise. Finally, it was agreed that each side would be allowed to present two proposals to the Charter Conference.

Background of the fight

The Charter Commission fight goes back several months to a split between Strauss and Barkan. When Barkan lost several crucial battles with reformers on the Mikulski Commission, and Strauss refused to come to his aid in beating the "kooks," Barkan publicly and privately expressed his dismay. Strauss was his worst political mistake, Barkan told a Midwest governor. Then Barkan cut off all communication between the AFL-CIO and the DNC Chairman. Strauss, who has emphasized building a strong party consensus, wanted to reopen the channels to Barkan and keep the COPE operation in the Democratic Party councils.

Strauss was also concerned over the Charter Commission's call for a Judicial Council to settle disputes over delegate selection, and the Commission's vote mandating interim issues conferences between presidential nominating conventions.

So Strauss and his allies teamed up with hardliners from the Coalition for a Democratic Majority and COPE to turn back those Commission decisions. Beginning several weeks before the August 18 meeting, talks were held in Washington to form a regular caucus for the Charter Commission. The caucus was set up as a disciplined or "unit rule" caucus.

Three days before the Commission meeting, Minn. Congressman Donald Fraser, a leading reformer, charged that Strauss and his top aide, Mark Siegal, were "stacking" the Commission in order to overturn the Judicial Council and mandated conferences decisions. Siegal, an employee of the National Committee, was, Fraser charged, lobbying regulars who couldn't attend the Commission meeting to step down so that anti-reform replacements could be appointed. Eleven regulars stepped down, and by mail ballot of the DNC Executive Committee, Strauss secured the approval of eleven replacements.

When the meeting opened in Kansas City, the regular caucus easily defeated the Judicial Council and the mandated conferences. Then an apparent split developed in the regular caucus between the CDM-COPE hardliners and Strauss' allies. Caucus moderates, having won on the issues they wanted, were satisfied to leave it at that. But the hardliners around CDM persisted in raising almost every reform issue that has been discussed in the last six years. Since

members of the caucus were bound to vote with the caucus, the hardliners were in control.

The reformers—and the moderates outside the regular caucus—expected the setback on the Judicial Council and on the mandated conferences. And they knew that the issue of proportional representation down to the precinct level was controversial and could require further discussion. They were not, however, expecting the frontal attack on delegate selection and affirmative action language. No motions or amendments were presented to the chair in advance; none were presented in writing to Commission members at the meeting.

Battle lines and bitterness

After the meeting, the most bitter factional feelings were expressed. A party moderate, Martha McKay of North Carolina, who joined the walkout, criticized the “Sunday afternoon massacre” of party reform. Willie Brown called the whole proceeding a “travesty.”

But those were words of affection compared to hardliners’ comments. One labor regular remarked that “Willie Brown and his friends are behaving just like the Communists did in the ’30’s.” Evans and Novak, long the unofficial columnists for the CDM-COPE alliance, accused Willie Brown of walking out to revive his “sagging” political career. Sanford, the syndicated columnist charged, was using the Commission and appeasing black “histrionics” to boost his 1976 Presidential hopes.

More recently, CDM Director Penn Kemble called the tactics of reform members “a throwback to the New Left” and charged that the walkout was “staged by the New Politics . . . to awaken interest among their rank and file.”

In fact, the walkout was far more serious than that, and those who came down on the “New Politics” side ranged well into the party’s center. Among those absent when the quorum was called were:

- Joseph Crangle, New York State Chairman, long identified with the regular wing of the party;
- Ann Martindale, a close associate of New Jersey Governor Brendan Byrne;
- Millie Jeffrey, a UAW staffer;
- Matt Reese, a professional campaign consultant, long known as a superb Democratic technician;
- Bill Welch, AFSCME political action director and a former DNC staffer himself;
- Lester Hyman, another party moderate, former Massachusetts state chairman with close ties to Senator Kennedy.

Aftermath: another chance for unity

Some of the rancor from the meeting has dissipated; some has not. Strauss, who originally charged Brown with walking out to bolster his career, apologized on the *Today Show* the Friday after the meeting. On the same TV program, the DNC chairman said that all the people who walked out were “well motivated.” Mr. Kemble of CDM predictably disagrees. In an August 28 *Wall Street Journal* article, Kemble was quoted as accusing the “New Politics forces” of demanding “veto power” in the Democratic Party. In an August

29 interview with the *NEWSLETTER*, Kemble defended his charge, despite repeated COPE threats to leave the party if the reforms aren’t turned back, and asserted: “If Willie Brown and his allies persist in their insistence on the veto, one or the other group (the regulars or the reformers) will have to go.”

But Brown and his allies, at least his allies in this fight, represent too much of the Democratic Party to be forced out. As Evans and Novak pointed out, all but two of the state chairmen on the Charter Commission meeting sympathized with Brown.

That’s why the seven liberal labor leaders are moving—leaning on Strauss to end the factional warfare. They realize that a Democratic Party purged of either its reform wing or of COPE will be hobbled and incapable of winning. And they have clearly had enough of CDM and COPE threats, issued in the name of “labor,” to do away with the reforms and the reformers. Smith, Woodcock, Watts, Brown, Gros-piron, Lucy and Kircher are exercising bold and unprecedented leadership in the Democratic Party. With their influence in the party councils and in the labor movement it is possible, as it has not been possible before, to isolate the hardliners looking for a purge, and to bridge the gulf between the followers of George Meany and of George McGovern. □

Jobs and snow jobs

A Committee for Full Employment Without Inflation has been formed under the leadership of Coretta Scott King, UAW President Leonard Woodcock and Amalgamated Clothing Workers President Murray Finley.

Along with several blacks, trade unionists, academics and other democratic leftists, I participated in the Committee’s founding meeting in June. Congressman Augustus Hawkins of California, who was also there, won the support of all present for his bill, now before the House, for planned full employment.

There are signs that the Ford administration may come up with a public employment program of its own. It is crucial that the democratic Left not be fooled by such a proposal. First of all, it will be a stop-gap measure pegged to go into operation only when there is intolerably high unemployment. In this, it will be completely different from Congressman Hawkins’ full employment approach.

Secondly, and of crucial importance in the immediate future, the decisive question will be how Ford will finance his public jobs. If he does so by cancelling other domestic social expenditures, that will solve the problem of one group of workers by adding to the miseries of other workers and the poor. The only progressive way to deal with this issue is to finance such an urgently needed job program out of the money saved when the corporate rich are cut off from their \$80 billion welfare system in the Internal Revenue Code.—M.H.

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Jimmy Higgins reports . . .

MORE THAN A HONEYMOON—He probably won't get the "marriage" with Congress that he's asked for, but President Gerald Ford is enjoying an absolute love affair with the press. Days after he assumed office, nationally syndicated columnists offered recitals of his virtues. Offering us, as usual, the "inside story," Jack Anderson told the nation that Ford was deeply upset about poverty and hunger in the United States—concern he never betrayed on Congressional roll calls. Most interesting was CBS's present to the Administration: a transfer of "abrasive" Dan Rather away from covering the White House. CBS officials said that Rather was "promoted," and will now co-ordinate the *CBS Reports* documentary series.

A ROCKEFELLER LABOR MOVEMENT?—Labor leaders have been quick to offer "support and co-operation" to the new Administration, and once again there is speculation that the unions will shift to the Republicans. The speculation increased when Rockefeller, who enjoyed a good relationship with the New York building trades when he was governor, was designated Vice-President. The Administration has some definite advantages with a Vice President Rockefeller. Chief among these is an open channel of communication between the White House and the AFL-CIO. Because Rocky has a good record with the skilled crafts unions, and because he has a long-standing relationship with George Meany, this Administration will probably not suffer the complete breakdown of communications that beset Nixon after Treasury Secretary George Schultz left. One Administration official who is likely to be saved by Rocky's ascension is Labor Secretary Peter Brennan, a Rockefeller supporter from way back. But, since Meany won't work with Brennan, the Labor Secretary will remain a minor influence.

JUST HOW MUCH THE REPUBLICANS can gain from the trade unions remains problematic. Ford has been friendly of late but his record shows him to be a consistent, anti-labor conservative. Rocky has friends in the labor movement, but he also has enemies, particularly among the growing public employee unions. And along with all the

offers of co-operation, top trade union leaders have been sending warnings and demands to the new Administration. Days before Nixon resigned, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland offered Ford labor's co-operation "for the asking." But, he cautioned, the new President's popularity would depend on his abandoning the "big business and banker-oriented" economic policies followed by Nixon. Failing that policy change, Kirkland pointedly joked, "Mr. Ford will soon prove to be an Edsel." In a similar vein, Steelworker President I. W. Abel testified before the Joint Economic Committee of Congress that Nixon's resignation did not solve everything. "American workers and the American people," Abel told Congress, "are in deep economic trouble, and they are looking to this Congress and President Ford for relief."

The kind of relief that Abel, Kirkland and other unionists want, is unlikely to come from a Ford-Rockefeller Administration, and without that help on the economic front, labor's march into the Republican fold will remain an unfulfilled, though constantly repeated, prophecy.

ANOTHER FORMER PRESIDENT suffered a setback in court this summer. Former Teamster President Jimmy Hoffa lost his suit against the Justice Department in Federal District Court in Washington. When he was released from prison in 1970, Hoffa was prohibited from participating in union politics until 1980. Hoffa charged that there was collusion between Nixon Administration officials (particularly Charles Colson) and present Teamster boss Frank Fitzsimmons to keep Hoffa from holding union office. The court, in a major setback for Hoffa, upheld the terms of his pardon, and the bar remains to his union activity.

Don't count him out, though. He'll be back in court to appeal the decision. Interestingly enough, many left-leaning Teamsters are hoping that Hoffa wins his suit and is ready to challenge Fitzsimmons at the '76 convention. They want to dump the always embarrassing and inept Fitz, and, while Hoffa is no liberal, many Teamsters see him as providing more "breathing room" for those to his left.

THE FRANKLIN NATIONALIZED BANK—Congressman Henry S. Reuss of Wisconsin has suggested a public takeover of the notorious Franklin National Bank. In a July 11 letter to Federal Reserve Chairman Arthur Burns, Reuss pointed out that the Federal Reserve had shored up the shaky bank (which lost over \$66 million in the first five months of the year) by advancing more than \$1 billion in credits. He also protested federal plans to "contribute hundreds of millions" to induce a larger bank—Barclay's of Britain or the Bank of America—to merge with the Franklin National. Instead, Reuss suggested, the Franklin National should be "operated by a public agency . . . in the public interest." Just as the Tennessee Valley Authority has served as a yardstick for private utilities, a public bank could offer a model of banking service. Besides, Reuss argued, the new Franklin National could allocate loans to less inflationary, more socially desirable projects, like housing instead of stock market speculation, serve average income depositors better, and turn over its profits to the public.

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