

**Kansas City Democratic Conference**

**A victory—and some problems—for reformers**

by JACK CLARK

"Now they'll have to say that 1974 was a fluke, too. McGovern people dominated in 1972, only the kooks and crazies cared about the Charter, but by 1976 all these New Politics people will have disappeared."

The main battle of the Democratic Charter Conference was over; the Charter was adopted, and Alan Baron, the director of the Democratic Planning Group, was joking with friends. For two years, Baron operated a clearinghouse and a warning center alerting reformers across the country of the efforts to "roll back" the 1968-1972 reforms in delegate selection and party openness. With the adoption of the Charter, the reforms were institutionalized instead.

The big fight billed in advance between the trade unionists and the McGovernites, between the "mainstream" of the Democratic electorate and the ideo-

Conference opened. Evans and Novak, the syndicated shills for everyone from Arab sheiks to Henry Jackson, commented on the study in their column. Forty-five percent of the delegates would be, according to the study, solidly with CDM and "regular" positions on all Charter issues. Another 15-20 percent would be somewhere between the "regulars" and the "New Politics." The sorry remainder (a mere 35-40 percent of the Democratic Party) would be reformers.

On the two votes where it mattered, suspending the rules to permit the final compromise on affirmative action language and on the new language itself, CDM was unable to muster more than 15 percent of the Conference. And the votes CDM could get came less from trade unionists and Party stalwarts than from unreconstructed Dixiecrats. In fact, the only delegates to speak directly against affirmative action language were: Joe Waggoner, a conservative Congressman from Louisiana and ardent opponent of black civil rights; and Al Shanker. When, on behalf of the Daley machine, Illinois State Senator Cecil Partee endorsed the affirmative action language, even the CDM pretense of speaking for the Party regulars became ludi-

*(Continued on page 3)*

**DSOC convention**

The Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee will hold its second convention in New York City on January 24, 25 and 26.

A Friday night meeting on "Socialism and the Current Crisis" at the Eugene Debs Room of the Martin Luther King Jr. Labor Center (310 West 43 St.) will officially open the convention. Details on speakers will be available by January 10 from the DSOC national office, 31 Union Square, Room 1112, New York, N.Y. 10003, telephone 212 255-7315.

Business sessions of the convention will be held Saturday and Sunday, January 25 and 26 at the Commodore Hotel, next to Grand Central Station. Two major topics, socialism and the international capitalist crisis and organizational priorities for the DSOC, will head the convention agenda. In addition, there will be workshop discussions on: the Middle East; affirmative action and quotas; the economy and wage-price controls; and electoral politics.

Only elected delegates will have voting rights at the convention, but observers are welcome to attend.

logical fanatics of the Party's left wing, never materialized. Instead, the categories were shattered, and the Party's hardline anti-reform wing was totally isolated. The Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM) issued a study of the political composition of the delegates to the conference weeks before the

**Chicago banks on CAP  
to fight redlining**

by MILES RAPOPORT

"The city is coming back!" That's the new cliché heard around Chicago and other old urban centers. And for downtown businessmen and affluent condominium and townhouse dwellers, benefitting from a spurt in commercial and residential construction and renovation (financed partially through urban renewal funds and tax deductions), the cliché may be true.

But families in Chicago's older neighborhoods face the continuing decline of their communities. Solid but aging housing stock deteriorates; businesses decline; so do schools and other city services; crime increases. Flight to the overpriced suburbs follows, and rapid racial change results from that. A good unhealthy dose of race hatred grows from there as whites look for someone to blame and find only their new neighbors.

People in those old neighborhoods, though, have

*(Continued on page 7)*

**S**ERVICE Employees President George Hardy put his foot prominently in his mouth at the labor caucus meeting the night before the convention opened. Hardy, following the Barkan line, was urging the caucus (which seemed to have a reform majority) to avoid a caucus position on the Charter issues. To emphasize his point, Hardy noted that, after all, "we're all free, white and 21." Some black trade unionists, including AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Bill Lucy, the president of the Black Trade Unionists Coalition, didn't like that formulation, so Hardy apologized. "Excuse me. I should have said, 'we're all free, white and colored, and 21.'"

**A**S the convention ended on Saturday, AFSCME President Jerry Wurf and AFL-CIO Director Al Barkan happened to be walking down the same hall. Wurf said something to Barkan, whereupon the irascible COPE operative turned and yelled, "All right, you won, you bastard. Don't rub it in."

## *Kansas City clips*

**W**HITHER New York politics? While even Dick Daley made a gesture to the emerging groups in the Party at this conference, the attitude of New York regulars was less clear. Outgoing state Democratic Chairman Joe Crangle formally led the delegation this time and came across to everyone as a reformer (which he never has been). But incoming state chairman, Pat Cunningham, did not even try to make that impression. And Al Shanker, a growing power in state Democratic politics, emerged as everyone's bete noire at this conference. On one occasion, Cunningham, a Carey appointee, and Lt. Governor-elect Mary Anne Krupsak clashed. Cunningham was lobbying delegates furiously

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### **THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT**

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to stand fast against the demands of the black and women's caucuses. He implied to wavering delegates that he spoke with the authority of the new Governor. Krupsak (who passed up the opportunity to lead the delegation so that she could protest the state committee's failure to appoint women and blacks) caught word of those tactics and appeared on the floor herself. Carey, she explained to delegates, took no position on Charter issues except that delegates should decide for themselves. As Lt. Governor, however, she did take a position, strongly in favor of strengthening the affirmative action language. Cunningham clearly lost the round. When Shanker rose to speak against the final affirmative action compromise and accused the conference of "caving in to the threat of a walkout," he was audibly booed. The loudest booing came from the New York delegation.

**N**OBODY thought it was unusual that organized socialists were seated. Five DSOC members were elected to the conference (Mike Harrington and Marjorie Gellermann, New York; Carol Drew, Massachusetts; Doris Kolvoord, Iowa; and Niilo Kopponen, Alaska). Our delegates and other DSOC members worked closely with the reform caucus. We also distributed more than 3000 NEWSLETTER copies. Our ideas were well received. Perhaps that's because the NEWSLETTER was the only document there which addressed itself to the economic and social crisis and to the immediate procedural issues of the conference. DSOC member Nancy Shier was flabbergasted when Barbara Milkulski told *her* to read the NEWSLETTER because "it had some great stuff in it." Massachusetts Congressman Robert Drinan "liberated" an argument in favor of the mandated mid-term conference directly from our pages.

**W**E were all impressed by the number of unorganized socialists who were there. It really showed at the Friday panel on the economy. Almost all of the remarks from the floor were anti-corporate, but some delegates openly advocated public enterprise to compete with the private sector and a redistributive income policy. Michael Harrington got a brief chance to speak from the floor. He identified himself as a socialist and in reply to Charles Schultze, and Senator Henry Jackson, he said that our current economic crisis had less to do with "bad luck" than with the structural problems of the economy and called for the socialization of the energy industry. He got an enthusiastic round of applause, and even a laissez-faire advocate agreed with his analysis (but not his program) publicly.

**T**HOSE of us who weren't delegates stayed at the President Hotel, an old flea bag re-opened just before the convention. The reform headquarters, staffed by the Democratic Planning Group and ADA, was there, too; so was the Jackson for President operation. As the reform office was closing down Sunday, the mimeographer turned to DSOC staffer Frank Llewellyn to say, "see you guys in '76 at Miami." "Yeah," Frank replied, "I think you'll see more of us." □

## Kansas City...

(Continued from page 1)

crous. Before the Conference even opened, CDM pretensions of speaking for "labor" were destroyed. A Thursday night meeting of the labor caucus turned out to have a reform majority.

So, the Charter Conference proceeded as though the hardline anti-reform faction never existed. No radical new departures were made, but the opening of the Democratic Party continued, and the past gains were codified. The supremacy of national Party rules over state parties was established firmly; affirmative action will be followed "in all Party affairs," with particular concern for women and minorities; and a Judicial Council to settle pre-convention disputes was mandated.

The gains on the procedural reforms are important, but more significant for the Democrats' future was the strength of the reform forces at the Conference. As Baron pointedly joked, the reformers, the "New Politics" people are here to stay.

And the reform forces are getting stronger for three separate but related reasons:

- The New Regulars. For over a year, newspaper accounts had suggested that the mid-term Conference would be a return to the past. Labor delegates and Party regulars were being chosen to go, and clearly the reform forces faced a rout. What no one in the mass media noticed was the character of the "regulars," their recent political history. The Iowa delegate caucuses offer an instructive example. No sooner had the initial caucuses been held than the *New York Times* reported a "shift to the right" among Iowa Democrats. Party regulars and trade unionists would dominated the delegation. True enough. But the Party regulars were anti-war Democrats in 1968. Many of them supported Muskie in 1972 (hence the tag "regu-

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## Capital quotes

Concern over creeping 'socialism' contributes to President Ford's reluctance to 'take a 180-degree turn' toward battling recession, instead of inflation.

"So says Treasury Secretary William E. Simon, Mr. Ford's chief economic spokesman. Mr. Simon believes the fight against inflation must remain paramount to avoid erosion of the free-enterprise system.

"Massive deficit spending to stimulate the economy and curb unemployment, Mr. Simon says, would leave the U.S. with a worse inflationary problem than it faces now, once recession had been licked.

"Years of deficit spending by the federal government, the Treasury chief told this newspaper, involving a mushrooming of federal programs, already has started the nation down a path leading toward socialism."

—*Christian Science Monitor*  
December 13, 1974

lar") but most supported McGovern when Muskie's candidacy faded. All rallied to McGovern in the general election. These same regulars formed the backbone of Richard Clark's hopeless but successful new priorities candidacy for the U.S. Senate. Nor is Iowa atypical. The peace and new priorities activists of the 1960's have moved into public and party offices in state after state.

- Blacks, women and Latinos. These three caucuses spearheaded the reform forces this time. All three groups are achieving electoral success which gives an institutional leadership to the caucuses and creates an impetus for more women, blacks and Latinos to become politically involved. So, in 1976, national figures like Mary Anne Krupsak, Bella Abzug, Barbara Mikulski, Ron Dellums, Barbara Jordan, Yvonne Burke, Jerry Apodoca (new Governor of New Mexico) will be back and in positions to speak for and lead (or compete for leadership of) their constituencies. On the grassroots level, the impact of the Kansas City Conference, with its support for strong affirmative action, is likely to bring more women, blacks, Latinos and other minority group activists into Democratic politics. Finally with more people paying attention, the '76 convention will have larger contingents of women, blacks and Latinos in the delegations.

- The Liberal-Labor Alliance. Six of the unions which participated in the Labor for McGovern effort actively sided with the reform forces—on issues other than the mandated mid-term conference—in Kansas City. The unions include: the UAW, AFSCME, the Machinists, the Communications Workers, Graphic Arts International and the Hotel and Restaurant Workers. Delegates from those unions clearly outnumbered the voting COPE partisans at the Conference, and some of the labor delegates were also active in the minorities' and women's caucuses. In fashioning the final compromise on affirmative action language, labor leaders from the UAW and AFSCME played a major role. And the reform unionists provided a bridge to some old liners in the Party; one report has it that Leonard Woodcock convinced Mayor Daley to accept the final affirmative action compromise. The cooperation between trade unionists and middle class reformers offers the most hope for the future of the Democratic Party. Such cooperation is *not* entirely new, of course, but the extent of the alliance and the sense of unity between the labor reformers and the new constituency liberals is new and promising.

In one sense, though, Kansas City was a dream convention for the Coalition for a Democratic Majority. CDM has always advocated a party run by elected officials, trade unionists and other institutional leaders. That's exactly how things went in Kansas City. The institutional leaders, the New Regulars, had reform credentials. Some of them were operating on behalf of the women's caucus or the black caucus, but the leadership and the direction came from elected and party officials and trade unionists. And Al Shanker and CDM cried "foul."

The account so far sounds absolutely Panglossian. There were problems in Kansas City, problems which

will grow in importance. No Presidential candidate there showed the kind of broad support needed to rally the Party in '76. Jackson and Bentsen who shared the spotlight at a Friday panel on the economy were quite unimpressive. Morris Udall lobbied delegations with stale jokes.

The unity at Kansas City was impressive, but some of it was totally phony. The best example was Barbara Jordan's warm introduction for Senate Whip Robert Byrd. Byrd, a former Klansman who has continually opposed basic human rights, and Jordan have no politics in common. Readers of this NEWSLETTER and George Wallace, similarly, share very few political values. To embrace a Democratic unity which brings all of us together is to embrace a lie or an illusion.

Curt Gans, in an Op-Ed piece in the *New York Times* touched on the most vexing problem at Kansas City and beyond: a continuing conflict between traditional Democratic politics and policies and the views and values of the new Democratic constituencies. Roughly stated, it is the conflict between New Deal policies and "the greening of America." Between the

quality of life and the quantity. Between the failure of liberalism and the defense of liberal policies. Unlike the divisions which grew from the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement in the Democratic Party, the new issues do not draw clear lines across issues or constituencies. Gans defines the conflict as between the new constituencies of the '60's and the people around the AFL-CIO national staff. It's certainly a familiar dividing line, but one wonders what specific programs and policies the fight can be conducted around. On jobs, on health care, yes, on clean air, there is far more agreement than division (though neither side perceives it that way) between the AFL-CIO and the new constituency liberals. And while there will be splits on specifics of policy, if there is a basic division between the two, both quantity and quality will lose to the corporate Right.

Perhaps, just perhaps, the strength of the reformers at Kansas City will lead the way to what Barbara Mikulski advocated: bringing together the coalition of the '30's and the coalition of the '60's to form a dynamic populist coalition for the 1970's. □

## *Half a cheer for Democrats' economic program*

by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

The most important thing about the Democratic Party's economic program adopted at Kansas City is that it exists.

Going into the convention, Democratic National Chairman Robert Strauss and his allies were determined that 2000 Democratic delegates were going to meet in the midst of the greatest economic crisis since the '30's without discussing any issues or any program. The leadership was so fearful of any policy by an elected assemblage of Democrats—shades of "Europeanizing" the Party!—that they were going to shun an opportunity to present a clear-cut alternative to President Ford's disastrous ineptitude.

Because progressive trade unionists, led in this case by Jerry Wurf of AFSCME, protested against such a preposterous agenda, a resolution was drafted and a one hour discussion on the economic crisis took place.

The program itself resulted from consultation among all major elements in the Party and contained considerable trade union input. The actual draft was written by a Democratic National Committee staffer and shows the strengths and weaknesses of a "consensus document." It contains much good material but is utterly inadequate to meet the current crisis.

The Democrats endorsed the principle of a public employment program. After the Conference, Congress passed into law the Emergency Job Act of 1974. With unemployment rocketing toward 7 percent or higher, practically everyone was for this proposal by the end of December. But Ford's version was pathetically weak, and the House-Senate conference, which reconciled conflicting versions of the bill, tended to adopt the stronger provisions put forward by Congressional Democrats. The public employment program put forward in Kansas City, then, had an impact. But what

Congress passed is a far cry from what is immediately needed: a law providing work for anyone laid off or unable to find a job in the private sector.

Secondly, the Kansas City Democratic program put the Party on record in favor of wage-price controls. Some trade union delegates were, understandably, suspicious or hostile to this proposal. They fear that any controls, under a Ford Administration, would be used against workers and to the benefit of big business. There is little detail in the language of the Conference's resolution, but there was a clear effort to meet labor's objections. The proposed controls are to extend to profits, rents, executive compensation and prices as well as wages. That, of course, is the AFL-CIO demand for any controls that might be imposed. In addition, the Democrats called for permitting wage catch ups and price roll backs. The Conference proposed taking the administration of the controls out of Ford's hands and setting up of an independent board. At an issues discussion Stanley Sheinbaum, an economist and reform leader in California, spelled out how the independent board could be chosen. The President, the Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader in the Senate would each, according to Sheinbaum's proposal, appoint three members. The Board would, of course, have a 6-3 Democratic majority.

The Conference also voted to revive the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, a New Deal institution which lent money to faltering businesses during the Great Depression. A revived RFC could conceivably be a way to shore up small businesses. More likely, it would make government money available to large corporations, and, in the "public interest," create another form of socialism for the rich.

There were other Conference proposals, some good (for sweeping tax reform, for example), others bad.

But there were remarkable omissions. A public employment program and redistributionist controls are indeed part of a program to meet the current crisis. But without structural change, these measures become stopgaps to deal with a catastrophe which will go on and on. If, for example, the oil executives who, with the aid of government subsidies, made the American economy as wasteful and vulnerable as it is are left

in control, the Democrats cannot pretend to be addressing the crisis. There was nothing of this seriousness in the Kansas City resolution because issues of structural change can not be treated in a potpourri document seeking a lowest common denominator.

So the Democratic Party does not have an adequate program. But it has recognized that a program is needed. That's not much, but it *is* progress. □

## Women, minorities gain new Party power

by MARJORIE GELLERMANN

"You must send people—women, minorities and youth—who have been excluded from the Democratic Party in the past. The most important issue at the convention will be maintaining the gains we have made since 1968 in opening up the Party to everyone who wants to participate. It won't work if the only people there are those already inside who then decide to bestow participation on others. We must have people at this conference who are fighting for themselves as well as for others. Because people who are struggling to get in will fight very hard in a very special way for their own survival—in a way that others cannot."

That was last spring, and I was speaking before a screening panel that was selecting people to run for delegate to the Democratic Charter Conference in Kansas City. I have just come back from that Conference where I saw just how necessary the presence of women and minorities was. The gains we made—and they were real gains, though the hard work of implementing them lies ahead—were won because blacks, Latinos and women were there, fighting "in a very special way."

We also won for another reason which usually doesn't count for much—we were right. We were really talking about moral issues of justice and fair play. And at a convention where the participants' first loyalties were not to specific Presidential candidates, the delegates could listen and respond to what we had to say. Most of them did. In fact, when some labor leaders and Party leaders temporarily opposed the positions of the minorities' and women's caucuses, they found that they couldn't sell their position to their own delegates.

Our presence at the conference gave us an understanding of our own strength within the Party. When the Democratic Governors, at their conference in Hilton Head, North Carolina, before the convention, endorsed the language of the Mikulski Commission on Delegate Selection for inclusion in the new Charter, the entire Party breathed a sigh of relief. The Mikulski language, the result of 18 months of hard work and hard compromise, was widely accepted within the Party. Only the conservatives and the hardline anti-reformers around the CDM were opposed to incorporating it into the Charter. But the affirmative action guidelines hadn't worked for this Conference: only 7 percent of the delegates were black, less than a third were women. And when challenges to the most unrepresentative delegations failed just before the Conference opened, the women, blacks and Latinos realized that guidelines which could not be enforced were meaning-

less. All three caucuses demanded the deletion of Section 6 of the proposed affirmative action article, the section which dealt with burden of proof. We considered it absurd that in a challenge to an all white, all male delegation, the burden of proof would always be on the challenger to prove positive discrimination without even being able to use the composition of the delegation as *prima facie* evidence.

There was considerable uproar about not upsetting the previous compromise. When leaders of the black caucus told Strauss that they found the language difficult to live with, the Chairman was exceedingly blunt. "If you want to walk out," he told the blacks, "walk out. If you want to ride out, I'll order bicycles." But other Party leaders were more concerned. The Southern governors, in particular, put pressure on Strauss to work with the blacks and women to avert a crisis. Finally, Strauss, the governors and representatives of reform-minded unions sat down with representatives of women and minority groups to work out the compromise on Section 6 which eventually passed.

That, of course, represented real change. Before this conference, women and minorities had been outsiders trying to put pressure on the real decision-makers in the Party. This time we were on the inside helping to shape the actual decisions. At no other time during the conference was the acceptance of minorities and women and the recognition of the rightness of our demands so clearly acknowledged as they were in the procedure for the final compromise on Section 6.

Our shift in status was also recognized by others. When the compromise was finally struck, special meetings of the three caucuses were held. Some white male delegates grumbled that there was no caucus for them, no one was informing them of what was going on. Later, on the convention floor, Al Shanker denounced the "deals in smoke-filled back rooms at this convention."

While one may savor the irony of such statements, they are a reminder that the Party is still in need of change. For the objective of the women and the minorities and the reformers at this convention was the creation of a Party truly open to everyone who wants to participate. A Party where no one feels—or is—excluded from the decision-making process. Congresswoman Bella Abzug really said it best before the conference opened. Our larger goal, she told the women's caucus, is to strengthen the whole Party so that women, minorities and all other Democrats can work effectively to deal with the issues confronting this country and the world: the economic crisis, war and peace, meeting all human needs. □

# Greece: whitewash and a 'new' Caramanlis

by JIM BROWN

*Skyros, Greece.* The parliamentary candidate walked down the narrow street between the white cube houses. He had flown in by helicopter to greet the villagers on this small Aegean island. He even shook *my* hand, not realizing that I was a foreigner. But he didn't need that extra vote. He was born here and could count on the votes of relatives and friends. More important, he belonged to Constantine Caramanlis' party, and Caramanlis already had the aura of a national hero. So with little difficulty, the Skyros-born candidate was swept into one of the 220 seats (in a 300 member House) won by Caramanlis' conservative New Democratic Party on November 18.

*New* is the operative word here. Everyone talks about the "new Caramanlis." The confident Prime Minister of today, it is said, is not the same man who was widely believed to have been involved in a 1961 voting fraud. Nor is he the man who petulantly left the country in 1963 for eleven years of self-exile after his party failed to gain a majority at the polls. His mixed record on civil liberties is no longer mentioned. Greeks tell me that he is both more mature and more liberal. They insist that he has not been covered with that whitewash which villagers here use to make the most cracked walls sparkle in the sun. "He will not leave us this time," they say.

At the moment there is no reason why he should. His overwhelming victory at the polls gives him almost total power. Earlier he had talked about strengthening the executive. Post-election reports, however, indicate that he is dropping his Gaullist aim in favor of a modest presidency and a strong premier.

## Cyprus in Greek politics

Greece's most serious problem, Cyprus, was not an election issue. Many Greeks who were not informed about election issues chose Caramanlis because they knew they did not want war with Turkey and believed that he had returned to Greece last July to save them from just such a disaster.

But all the candidates said the same things about Cyprus: it must be independent and unpartitioned, with Greeks and Turks participating in the same government. The Turks must return all the land they took during the last war. Just how the probable failure to fulfill these goals will affect the Caramanlis and future governments remains to be seen. After the elections, Caramanlis called a meeting with opposition parties to discuss Cyprus. That's a new kind of gesture in Greek politics, but the consultation is far more significant than any probable action on the Cyprus situation.

A sinister reason for the New Democracy landslide was the voters' fear of a CIA-backed army takeover if

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## The King is dead

The referendum on the monarchy turned out to be no problem at all. The question seemed to arouse more interest outside of Greece, possibly because of the "romance" of lost thrones. Most Greeks, though, regarded King Constantine's departure as one of the few good things to come out of the Papadopoulos years. Despite constitutional restrictions, the royal family had constantly meddled in Greek politics since World War II. And Constantine fell into further disfavor when his inept counter-coup failed to dislodge the Colonels in 1968.

The Shah of Iran, a good friend of Constantine's, financed a lot of pro-monarchy publicity prior to the referendum, but it didn't make much difference. Most people seemed so sure of the outcome that they didn't even bother to discuss it.

—J.B.

a Left party won a parliamentary majority. The Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement Party (PASOK) suffered from the widespread rumor that a victory of its leader, Andreas Papandreu, would never be tolerated by the U.S. State Department. After seven years of military rule, few were willing to risk the possibility of another army coup. "Caramanlis or the tanks" was a slogan often repeated in private in the weeks before the election.

Greek socialists were also held back by their lack of unity. The Left split into three different parties and could not present a solid front to the voters. Some socialists would not accept Papandreu as their leader. They abandoned PASOK for either the Center Union New Forces Party or the United Left (made up of two Communist factions).

The distrust of Papandreu centers mostly around his personality and background. Despite approval of his attacks on U.S. foreign policy, Greek socialists look with disfavor on his American education, passport, wife and even his American accent when he speaks Greek. He is simply "too American for Greece," a democratic socialist friend of mine told me recently. "He moves too fast and makes too many promises he cannot fulfill."

It will probably take the Greek socialists, many of whom were imprisoned or exiled under the military junta, several years to re-organize themselves and re-define their positions.

Meanwhile they watch Prime Minister Caramanlis closely to see if he exercises his enormous power judiciously. They and other Greeks would be reassured to hear him express sympathy, at least once, for students and workers who died resisting police and tanks at Athens Polytechnic. For there has been no clear answer to the question that relatives of the dead have spelled out in flowers on the Polytechnic gates: "Why?" □

## CAP...

(Continued from page 1)

decided that their fate is determined less by acts of God than by specific decisions by banks, savings and loan associations, insurance companies and developers. Led by the Citizens' Action Program (CAP) Congress of Community Organizations, small homeowners in those neighborhoods are organizing to keep the financial institutions from choking them off.

"Redlining" is the popular term for disinvestment in older urban neighborhoods. In earlier, blunter times, loan departments had maps with red lines pencilled around areas where no home mortgages, home improvement or business loans would be made. In the 1960's, the maps with the red lines disappeared, but the practice, firmly rooted in a corporate impulse for low risk, high return investments, remains.

Black neighborhoods have been redlined for years. More recently, the banks and savings and loan associations have written off blue collar and ethnic neighborhoods based on 15-20 year projections of decline. The projections, of course, become self-fulfilling prophecies. Once no conventional mortgage or home improvement loans are available, sellers have trouble finding buyers. Sale values drop. Blockbusters and real estate speculators enter the picture to make quick cash sales. Absentee ownership increases. The only mortgage money available then has to come through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and that Great Society program has proved to be a disaster. The housing industry wrote large sections of the mortgage subsidy program, and their priorities favored quick profits over stable neighborhoods. In fact, the law makes it financially attractive for mortgage companies to make bad loans and follow with fast foreclosures. Since the Department of Housing and Urban Development guarantees every cent on the loan with fat fees to the lender, more turnovers add up to more profit. And to boarded up slums.

CAP, a coalition of black and white community groups around the city, decided in late 1973 to take on the major issue of neighborhood deterioration. Begun in 1970 by associates of Saul Alinsky, CAP won several early victories around the pollution issue. In 1972, CAP began a thus far successful drive to block construction of the Crosstown Expressway.

The 1973 decision to work on reversing neighborhood deterioration was also a decision to try to reverse the pattern of small local community organizations struggling and sometimes winning on this or that issue but being swamped by the continuing decline around them. So, at the 1974 CAP Convention, attended by 3,000 delegates, CAP's slogan became "Save the City—Save the Neighborhoods."

CAP had already prodded the Federal Home Loan Bank Board to survey where major financial institutions received their savings and where they made their loans. In one Northwest neighborhood, mostly Polish Catholic but with some recent Latino influx, residents had over \$70 million in deposits but received only \$2.5 million in loans. That return of 3.6¢ on the dollar contrasts with an average suburban return of 31¢ on each

dollar saved. Clearly, the hard earned money from this blue collar neighborhood was being funneled into suburban real estate.

### Greenlining: a response to redlining

That information gave CAP organizers an idea for an additional tool, "greenlining." People are asked to sign "Greenlining Pledge Cards" which say that they will move their money from irresponsible institutions and into those who sign "community contracts" guaranteeing to meet community loan demands. Greenlining simply means organizing a neighborhood's money.

CAP has taken the program up aggressively. Local affiliates have canvassed door to door, conducted "pledge Sundays" at local churches and collected pledges at the doors of target Savings and Loan associations. People are already aroused about the issue, and they relate easily to the strategy. Realtors and other local business people, hurt themselves by the cut-off of loans, have rallied to the greenlining campaign. Local Catholic churches have become the pillar of support for the campaign. Pastors and parish leaders have taken the issue on as their own—much to the dismay of the financial interests. Letters of warning from savings and loan associations telling their customers to avoid people trying to bilk them (by getting them to sign a greenlining pledge) carried less legitimacy than front pages of parish bulletins urging support for the campaign.

To date, pledges worth over \$760 million have been collected. That's not enough money to affect giant downtown banks, but it will put tremendous pressure on neighborhood savings and loans which have neglected their own areas to finance suburban and lake-front housing. Six S&L's on the Southwest side gave full disclosure of loans after \$30 million in pledges was collected. Negotiation of signed contracts is next on the agenda. April 6, the date of next year's CAP convention, has been set as the deadline for S&L's to sign or face withdrawals.

With these contracts, Chicago's communities can assure themselves of enough money to maintain and upgrade neighborhood property. In fighting redlining and attempting to stop FHA abandonments of black neighborhoods, CAP has achieved a rare working relationship between blacks and whites. Working together, black and white neighborhood activists are fighting their common problem: disinvestment in their neighborhoods. The new sense of neighborhood security, combined with the experience of racial cooperation, may open the way to neighborhoods which will allow some ethnic diversity without panic and resegregation.

Perhaps most important, a new issue has been injected into Chicago politics: should the city's financial resources be used on behalf of the downtown and suburban interests? Or should they be used to benefit black and white working people in the city's neighborhoods? CAP's organizing could change the answer to that question over the next few years. If we succeed, "the city is coming back" will cease being a cruel lie to the majority of Chicago's residents.

*Miles Rapoport is on the staff of CAP.*

# Jimmy Higgins reports . . .

**THE HOPS OF WRATH**—A new, and quite promising labor-backed boycott has recently begun in the San Francisco Bay Area. Charging that Coors Beer distributors are out to break their beer drivers' local, the Bay Area Teamsters have initiated a consumers' boycott against the notoriously racist and anti-union brewer. The minorities' communities are naturally essential to the boycott, and Teamsters' Local 888 has been working overtime to reach out: they drew up an affirmative action plan, well received by the minorities' communities but less appreciated by Coors and the distributors; and the local Teamsters have broken with their state and national leadership to support the United Farm Workers' lettuce, grape and Gallo wine boycotts.

**STEELING AN OFFICE**—Ed Sadlowski won a campaign to become director of the Steelworkers' largest district back in April, 1973. Crude ballot box stuffing deprived him of that victory so he got the election run over again and monitored by the Labor Department. With somebody else counting the ballots, the old officialdom couldn't win, so they did the next best thing. They tried to make Sadlowski's victory meaningless. When the new director moved into his Chicago office last month, he found it stripped nearly bare. The checkbooks were gone, so were the files and many of the desks. Defeated District 31 Director Sam Evett had them all shipped to international headquarters in Pittsburgh. And the Pittsburgh office has yet to answer a Sadlowski letter. That's just the beginning of Sadlowski's troubles. He inherits a staff put together by Evett and former Director Sam Germano, which is politically and personally hostile to him. One staffer went so far as to upbraid a public official for being too friendly to an oppositionist; that was after Sadlowski won. The old guard leadership strategy is clear: cut Sadlowski off, make him ineffective in the District and defeat him next time around. If that strategy is followed, Sadlowski is willing to fight in the courts, and to operate through shop committees.

"**THE RICH GET RICHER** and **The Rest Pay Taxes**" is a report issued a few months ago by the Massachusetts Public Finance Project. It concentrates on state and local taxes in Massachusetts and shows in painful detail just how each of the taxes—property valuation, the sales tax, excise taxes, even the income



tax—is regressive on its own, and how the system as a whole works to redistribute income from the bottom to the top. The report is available from the Massachusetts Public Finance Project, 360 Washington Street, Lynn, Mass. 01901.

**RHODES TO POWER**—The Socialist Workers Party scored its greatest electoral triumph to date in the November elections. Nancy Brown Lazar, the Trotskyist candidate for Governor of Ohio polled more than 100,000 votes, three percent of the total ballots cast. In doing so, the SWP helped former Governor John "the Murderer" Rhodes return to the State House. Lazar's high vote total can be explained partially by her listing on the ballot, not as a Socialist Workers candidate, but as an independent. Some voters certainly pulled that independent lever thinking that they were supporting George Wallace's American Independent Party. But, Gilligan supporters note, Lazar ran strongest in college communities, and without her in the race, Gilligan could have captured enough of those votes to reverse his narrow (11,000 votes) loss to Rhodes. Rhodes is, of course, the old Nixon crony who sent the troops to Kent State; Gilligan, who is as close as American politicians come to social democracy, had been prominently mentioned as a Presidential possibility for 1976.

**SOCIALISM AND PEACE** found a forceful new advocate on December 19 when the Dick Cavett interview with George Meany was aired (the show had been taped about three weeks earlier). Meany repudiated his support for Nixon's and Johnson's Vietnam war policies. "If I'd known then what I know now, I don't think we would have backed them [LBJ and Nixon]." Later in the show, Meany had kind words for those who had advocated "socialistic" ideas later incorporated into the New Deal. Maybe, he speculated, we need more of that "socialistic" thinking. On wage-price controls, Meany reiterated that labor does not like or favor them but will support an "equitable" program of controls. Interestingly, John Kenneth Galbraith followed Meany on the show and said that he agreed with 90 per cent of what the AFL-CIO president said.

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