

## LABOR PERISCOPE

### One strike ends, another drags on

As we go to press, the nearly two-month strike by 18,000 machinists that shut down United Airlines, the nation's largest commercial carrier, appears to be over.

Leaders of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) report that the contract is being overwhelmingly ratified.

Various reports peg the new contract as being in excess of 30 percent in wages and benefits over three years. While exceeding the Administration's 7 percent wage-price guidelines, the pact also appears to exceed the contract between machinists and Trans World Airlines reached last October. Spokesmen for Inflation Czar Alfred Kahn had previously indicated that they would accept a contract similar to the TWA settlement, since they viewed that pact as a "pattern settlement" for the industry, and since it went into effect prior to the guidelines.

However, one source close to Kahn confided, "I'm not so sure we could do anything to the IAM or United even if we find the contract outside our guidelines. ... Let's face it, the whole program is a shambles. ..." Kahn in an interview with the *New York Times* said he didn't see any hope for the present program if the inflation rate stayed above 10 percent: "We might as well give up. ..."

Other sources report that the Administration is taking a "good hard look at some very unpopular

options," including mandatory controls. "It looks like we are going to have to come up with something before the auto contract," an aide to Kahn stated. The contract between the auto industry and the United Auto-worker expires in mid-September.

Meanwhile, another strike forced by the Carter austerity policies is dragging on.

Spokesmen for the United Rubber Workers and Uniroyal, the nation's third largest rubber company, said that they would come back to the bargaining table this week in another effort to settle the now three-week-old strike.

URW leaders continue to charge that government interference, aimed at holding the contract within the 7 percent guidelines, is the principal obstacle to a pattern-setting pact for the rubber industry; but other sources indicate that Uniroyal's rationalization policy and company politics are also playing a disruptive role. Some industry people expect the strike to continue into the summer.

#### Steelworkers union under CFR seige

Vice President Walter Mondale and National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski met two weeks ago for several hours in a closed-door session with the Ex-

ecutive Board of the United Steel Workers. USW spokesmen later announced that the Executive Board had decided to support the proposed SALT II treaty, in a break with the national AFL-CIO leadership.

The Executive Board took some other actions which left many local Steelworker leaders confused. For example, many local leaders expected a ringing reaffirmation of support for nuclear energy development from the previously strongly pronuclear USW leadership. Instead, the board called for a crash program to develop solar energy.

The *Pittsburgh Press*, whose editors are thought to be leaning toward support for NATO Supreme Commander Gen. Alexander Haig in the 1980 Presidential race, says that the USW under President Lloyd McBride is "beginning to resemble" the United Auto Workers union in its policy formulations. This shift toward "left social" issues and away from strong support for nuclear energy is most important, commented the *Press*.

The USW might very well soon find itself in the camp of Doug Fraser's UAW and Wimpy Winpisinger's machinists. This grouping is the cornerstone of support for Ted Kennedy in the labor movement. McBride, who was elected USW President in 1977 over UAW-backed environmentalist Edward Sadlowksi, will probably never sound like solar freak Winpisinger, but some USW leaders point out that his current silence on nuclear power hurts almost as much. One USW national leader has said it may take a year before the union does anything on the nuclear energy issue—though he assures people that "we are still pronuclear." Many local Steelworkers leaders are growing impatient. "We didn't put McBride in office for this garbage," said one.