

LABOR PERISCOPE

Truckers' strike triggers 'crisis management' scenario

The violent national "shutdown" by Mike Parkhurst and Bill Hill's independent truckers has triggered a scenario that could quickly lead to a "crisis management" Federal Emergency Management Agency dictatorship in the U.S. With logistical support being given by Parkhurst's command center in Van Nuys California, the truckers are deploying according to the following profile:

- **Choke off fuel supplies.** Fuel depots and distribution points have been targeted in several states, shutting off the already slowed flow of gas and diesel fuel; blockades of truck stops which supply interstate truckers—including Teamsters—are underway in nearly 40 states, again shutting off or restricting access to needed supplies of diesel fuel.

- **Choke off food supplies.** Timed to coincide with the harvests in California and Florida, the independents have at this writing virtually halted most shipments via truck by these two key agricultural regions; some have been diverted to rail, but the national rail system simply cannot handle the volume. Food is spoiling; meat is rotting; and dairy products are being dumped because they cannot be transported to market. Department of Agriculture officials call the potential losses "breath-taking, almost too much to be believed. ..." Shortages will develop unevenly. Small towns not serviced by chain stores—whose private truck fleets continue to run—will be hit first, as will the

smaller, local stores serving ghetto areas in the East and Midwest. This situation creates the potential for food riots.

- **Random terror.** Sniper incidents along interstate highways have risen to more than several hundreds a day, with sections in the Rocky Mountain region resembling shooting galleries. At least one driver has already been shot to death, and several critically wounded. This terror—despite some arrests and national guard deployments—is forcing many drivers who do not support Parkhurst's operation to shut down for fear.

Rubber Workers accord exceeds Carter guidelines

The United Rubber Workers and Uniroyal, Inc. reached a tentative agreement early this week on a three-year contract, ending a six week strike. The agreement could pave the way for an industry-wide settlement in negotiations that involve 58,000 URW members.—it is very close to a tentative agreement reached last Friday with the B.F. Goodrich company, the fourth largest tire maker in the nation.

According to Peter Bonmarito, the URW president, the agreements with Uniroyal and the B.F. Goodrich Company substantially exceed the "voluntary" federal wage and price guidelines aimed at holding settlement this year to no more than 6.5 percent.

The Firestone Tire and Rubber Company has signed a "me-

too" letter agreeing to be bound by the terms of whatever agreement the union designates as its master contract. This leaves the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, the industry's leader, the last company among the Big Four tire maker without a settlement.

The Rubber Workers settlement includes what is described as a very lucrative Cost of Living adjustment formula, a one cent perhour increase for every 0.26 percent increase in the Consumer Price Index. The rubber formula is regarded as the best obtained yet by any major union.

Although there has been no official reaction so far from the Presidents Council on Wage and Price Stability, the settlements with Uniroyal and the Goodrich company probably mean the voluntary program is finished, some industry sources say.

The Administration's wage guidelines program is likely to be even more seriously challenged when the one million member United Auto Workers Union opens contract talks later this summer with the Big Three auto manufacturers. Doug Fraser, the UAW's president, has termed President Carter's guideline program a meaningless scrap of paper that would have no bearing on the union's talks with the industry. The UAW, Fraser states, will seek at least to match the URW in winning a new COLA formula for its members.

In addition to the UAW contract talks, several electrical unions and the construction trades are opening new contracts talks this month, and what emerges is likely to further challenge the President's program.

—L. Wolfe and M. Moriarty