

# Marxist-Leninist Party Leaflets

## Appendix B Marxist-Leninist Party flyers

### DOWN WITH THE TA ATTACKS ON SENIORITY RIGHTS

On October 29, the anti-transit worker triumvirate of Mayor Koch, David Gunn and John Lawe announced the latest and most serious attack on transit workers. As the New York Times reported, Koch brought Lawe and Gunn together over coffee and cookies at Gracie Mansion and the result was a cordial agreement to tear up the contracted seniority ("pick") rights of some 1400 car inspectors.

Under the new agreement, the "pick" is being maintained, but in a grossly mutilated fashion. The number of C.I. job categories is being reduced from 18 to 6; because of the job combinations, the right to pick a job by seniority is thus greatly reduced. For example, the new "upstairs" category will include car body, lights, heat and ventilation, air conditioning, and miscellaneous electrical; the new "propulsion" category will include responsibility for group switch boxes, motor brushes, shoe beams, etc.

Furthermore, C.I.s will work in teams of 6 responsible for 2 cars under the direct supervision of a foreman. While in name seniority will prevail within the team, in fact the TA gains the right to "ask" a worker to do another job when his own is finished. As the Times mentioned, electricians will end up doing mechanical work outside their current work, training and experience. Moreover, working as a "team" responsible for specific cars will put tremendous pressure on everyone for "cooperative work arrangements"--that is, more work all the way down the line in a stepped-up productivity drive. No wonder that the TA is ecstatic about an end to so-called "job quotas." Now, they reason, the sky's the limit!

It is certain that this is just a first step. Today, car inspectors; tomorrow, car cleaners; and after that maintainers, motormen, conductors, etc. A snake struggling with a large animal does not swallow it whole, but a little at a time. Similarly, Gunn will demand a little here, a little there and before long workers won't have any rights at all. What the TA wants is complete control over every worker, every minute--no, every second!--of every day.

In Gunn's scheme a few bootlickers will be rewarded with favorable jobs while any worker who stands up for his rights or simply has a "bad attitude" may be exiled to a different shift or to the other end of the system--or out on the street altogether. Already the TA tries to put this system into effect by stretching out the time between picks, maintaining a large pool of assigned workers, and designating "special" programs where workers lose bid and bumping rights.

The present Koch-Gunn attack on transit worker seniority rights is but the latest round in a year-long concessions drive mapped out and begun by the previous Ravitch-Simpson management. In the face of these continuous attacks, the TWU leadership has, for a long time, remained passive: it has ignored the terror campaign at 207 Street, the arbitrary putting of people out on the street for half a year, the stretching out of time between picks, the system-wide entrapment of workers by beakies, and the thousands of other "minor" contract violations, safety violations and daily slanders against the transit workers. Lawe and the TWU leadership's sole response to all these attacks has been to plead with Gunn to sit down and talk, to threaten workers who dare to take action, and --at most--to file a few grievances. No wonder many workers say "We have no union."

But now Lawe is no longer passive! He has sprung into action! But on whose side? He has come out actively to join hands with Gunn and Koch in shoving the job combinations, productivity drive and loss of seniority rights down the workers' throats!

In the New York Post forum in early October, Lawe advised the TA management that they could push their job combination scheme simply by changing the title of the job categories. As Lawe said, with respect to forcing the car cleaners to do several jobs, "All you have to do is put the word 'renovate' up there and 'renovate' covers the washing down of the roof, the cleaning of all the lights, the cleaning of all the windows, the mopping of the floors, the sweeping, you name it, and that will be picked as a renovator and this job will be done by our people." And Lawe said this after an arbitrator had upheld the current job categories and TWU seniority rights. So Lawe jumped in to rescue the TA schemes, to give away what even the arbitrator had denied the TA!

Now Lawe has given away the car inspectors' seniority rights; what took decades to win through mass struggle, Lawe has signed away over coffee and cookies. Yet Lawe has the nerve to say, "We still have the right to pick. Our seniority rights are intact." One wonders just what was in the cookies Lawe ate!

Transit workers must not wait for help against this onslaught from others. It is pie-in-the-sky to expect politicians such as Koch (who has attacked city workers for 7 years) or Cuomo (who appointed Kiley) to be of any assistance. Any differences they have with Kiley and Gunn are simply over how best to squeeze more work for less money out of the workers. This is how we should view the city government's recent "criticism" of the TA management: the city merely advised the TA to play it cool for a bit and impose their takebacks through quiet negotiations (like at Gracie Mansion) and through the upcoming contract talks (with the compliant Lawe), so as to avoid an outbreak of resistance from the workers and a possible strike in the spring.

To fight the harassments, speed-up, job combinations and givebacks, transit workers must free themselves from the restraints of the union bureaucrats and take matters into their own hands. They must get organized for struggle. In the spring and early summer maintainers, inspectors and cleaners staged a powerful slowdown and overtime boycott, centered at 207 Street, continuing in the tradition of the previous summer's successful motormen's slowdown. But Lawe & co. sabotaged this fight through a campaign of disinformation, disorganization and threats.

Transit workers have a long tradition of mass action. They have waged a number of powerful system-wide strikes that shook the city. Even in the "quiet" period of the 1970's it was common for transit workers to put down their tools for hours at a time over a single write-up.

It is time for transit workers to put this experience and tradition of struggle to good use. Only the struggle and organization of the workers themselves can overcome the sabotage of the TWU leadership and defeat the TA's takeback offensive.

November 9, 1984

**MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA**  
**NEW YORK METRO BRANCH**  
 P.O. Box A-1060 New York, NY 10116



TRANSIT NEWS UPDATE (Nov. 11, 1984)

The day after this leaflet was produced, MTA Chairman Kiley announced an agreement with the TWU to smash up the long established work rules for car cleaners and to reduce the number of cleaner job categories from 10 to 2! This will push the TA's job combination productivity drive onto the backs of some 700 car cleaners and erode their contracted seniority rights.

As predicted in the above leaflet, the TA is out to extend its attacks to every sector of the transit workers in a planned manner; and John Lawe and the TWU leadership are active collaborators against the workers. Once again it is shown that transit workers must take matters into their own hands, get organized independently of the union bureaucrats and take up various forms of mass struggle to defend their interests.

DON'T PAY FOR YOUR OWN RAISE:

## FIGHT THE GIVEBACK CONTRACT!

Slowly, details are dribbling out about the new transit contract. While Sonny Hall boasts of a contract "better than any city union," the Daily News gloats that workers will be paying for almost a third of their own raise through givebacks. Even more ominously, other givebacks will allow Gunn to step up his job combination, speed-up and intimidation program. What are some of the major givebacks?

1. **WORK RULE CHANGES.** According to The Chief: "Still to be worked out is complete language of the contract pertaining to work rules, which is especially important because the new zipper clause insisted on by the MTA will end the era of oral understandings in some practices not covered by the contract...86 or 87 such practices are under discussion and within 45 days decisions will be made thru negotiations as to which will be incorporated into the...contract and which will be discontinued."

Yet the union stonewalls and insists that there are no givebacks in work rules--because they will be imposed later! And if 87 items are left to be settled after the vote, just what are we voting on anyway? A blank check to Gunn and Sonny Hall to decide our fate in 45 days!

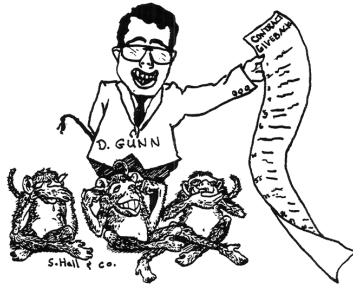
This will not do! The 87 items are not just minor "outmoded" practices, but vital issues to all transit workers. Gunn and Hall have left these items till after the vote precisely because the work rule changes will be so bad for transit workers that we would reject the contract outright if we had the chance to vote on them. We must see these changes before the vote!

2. **LOSS OF CIVIL SERVICE RIGHTS.** Previously, workers had the right to take a Step 5 disciplinary proceeding to a Civil Service Trial Board. Under the new contract, workers lose this right and must go to the arbitrator. Given last year's experience of grave penalties for minor infractions, this change must have Gunn dancing in the street. Although workers will have the right of appeal, in practice the courts never overrule an arbitrator's decision.
3. **NIGHT DIFFERENTIAL CUT.** Freezing night differential pay will take tens of millions out of workers' pockets. By the end of the contract, the differential will be reduced to 8%, and a precedent will have been set for paying differential as a small fixed sum rather than as a percentage of pay.
4. **OVERTIME CAPS.** Another "still to be decided" item is exactly how much above his base wage a worker will be allowed to earn in overtime. Obviously, this affects older workers quite a bit, reducing their pensions. It may also mean that mandatory overtime will be forced on workers who have not yet reached their cap.
5. **LOWER STARTING PAY.** Besides being grossly unfair to new workers, this provision increases the TA's incentive to replace experienced workers with new hires. A new worker taking 36 months to reach top scale will save the TA almost \$15,000. City firefighters rejected their first contract precisely over this point.

In the face of these facts, the TWU officials continue to insist that there really are no givebacks, that the work rule changes don't amount to anything, etc. Meanwhile, they refuse to issue any details about the contract, and every indication is that workers will never know that they are voting on.

Can it be that there is no time for a meeting to discuss the contract terms? Then how is it that Sonny Hall found time to hold a shoppate meeting at 207 Street

TA's David Gunn & TWU  
Local 100 Exec. Board:



see no evil, hear no evil, speak no  
evil...about the contract givebacks!

Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

the day before the contract terms were announced, when he could (conveniently) be shielded from sharp questions about the givebacks? How is it that no shopgate or other mass union meetings have been called since the settlement to discuss the terms?

To ask these questions is to answer them. Sonny Hall and the TWU bureaucrats want to keep us ignorant of the contract givebacks. They want us to vote blindly without any discussion. They want to impose another "mystery contract" like in 1982.

Transit worker must not sit still for this! We must take up the fight against the imposition of this contract. We must demand and organize for mass meetings to discuss all the contract details, all the open and hidden givebacks, before we cast our votes.

Pass this leaflet around to spread information about the givebacks. Expose and denounce the treachery of the union hacks who hide the bitter facts behind rosy generalities and outright lies.

NO GIVEBACKS!

GET ORGANIZED TO OPPOSE THE CONTRACT SELLOUT!

July 8, 1985

**MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA--NEW YORK METRO BRANCH**


P.O. Box A-1060 New York, NY 10116



*Visit*

**Marxist-Leninist  
Books and  
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Regular hours:  
Saturday noon-7pm

2 blocks north of Canal St.,  
between Varick and 6th Ave.  
Across from Film Forum

By subway: IRT 1, IND (A--and E)  
to Canal St.



# A VOTE FOR KAGAN IS A VOTE FOR RANK+FILE ACTION

Two weeks ago, Billy Salicrup, a car cleaner in the Barn, was seriously injured and almost killed. This was no unavoidable accident. Here's what happened.

CTA Salicrup, along with three other cleaners, was assigned to move fully loaded tool lockers using a walker forklift. This was out-of-title work. Even the arbitrator ruled so a year ago. But management considers the ruling inconvenient, so it ignores it. And our union leaders, who have known what was going on for months, go along with the injustice.

After CTA Salicrup and the other cleaners went to work with the forklift, management decided to pull 2 men off the job. Nothing must stand in the way of increased productivity, after all!

Struggling with an unfamiliar job, the two men were not strong enough to keep a top heavy locker from falling over, crushing Billy Salicrup in the pit. The TA is fully responsible for the near-death of our brother worker.

This incident took place in the Barn, but it is completely characteristic of our day-in, day-out problems in the Main Shop. Abuse of management power...Ordering work out of title or out of bid job...Creating unsafe conditions to speed up the work...These things happen all the time in our Shop. And our union leaders do nothing.

This is an outrage! It's an outrage that out-of-title work goes on without a whimper of protest from the Shop Committee. It's an outrage that Billy Salicrup's injury was not met with an immediate response, blaming management for the injuries and organizing action to put a halt to the TA's abuse of power.

But these things were not done. And this illustrates why I am running for Vice Chairman of the Shop Committee.

Times are tough in the Shop. Management gets away with murder: unhealthy and unsafe work, elimination of work rules, seniority and pick rights; 4 years of petty and vindictive harassment -- little grating incidents that have no purpose but to show "who's boss". The word from Jay St. to 107th St. is, "Anything Goes".

But this is only part of the story. We also have to blame our union leadership for its complete capitulation. Everyone knows that our downtown leadership is in bed with the TA. Lawe and Hall give us two terrible giveback contracts and another on the way unless we stop it. Hall agrees to Binding Arbitration so he can hobnob with the MTA Board of Directors and receive the Cuomo/Koch/D'Amato seal of approval. Our leaders act more like corporate executives than genuine representatives of the workers. They can never and will never organize us to fight back.

And it's no different in the Shop. No matter what happens, at best we hear only one answer from "our" Committee: Grieve It! But I say this is not enough! One t thought about Billy Salicrup should convince anybody of that.

This is why I am running in the Committee election. To give voice to the sentiments of those of you who've had enough of "our" union leaders holding us back. Who are not content with simply filing grievance after grievance. Who want to fight back!

It was only a few years ago we fought back all the time. We had the initiative. Management couldn't get away with 10% of what they do now. But constant thrusts by management wore us down. And the union leaders stood aside and even helped management. We got caught between the rock and the hard place.

This is no time for despair or nostalgia. We need something different: Not reliance on the union's leaders, but organizing ourselves, the rank and file workers, to turn the situation around. This requires a fight. I don't promise miracles, or that we can turn things around overnight. There are no shortcuts. We face long hard work -- the fruit of years of betrayal and disorganization.

We must organize ourselves on the shop floor for rank-and-file action. Already, around the shop, we see small fights breaking out. CMEs on the Bench winning over the 1-in-6 for ML King Day. CMAs in Overhaul refusing to burn asbestos tile. Fighting speed-up in almost every gang. Let's build up these small battles and link together those of us who stand for rank-and-file action.

Let's use this election to make known our opposition to the betrayal of the union leaders. Let's use this election for spreading the word for rank-and-file action and for linking up all of us who are sick of the givebacks and want to fight back. These are important first steps in regrouping and regaining our confidence to challenge the TA tyranny.

## MARC KAGAN - VICE CHAIRMAN

# New York Workers' Voice



Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

New York Branch

P.O. Box 1060 NY, NY 10116-1060

February 12, 1992

## **Transit workers shut B'klyn Bridge, Lay seige to union hall!**

Chanting "No Contract, No Peace" and "A Just Contract or Shut It Down!", 1,000 angry transit workers closed down the Manhattan-bound Brooklyn Bridge at the height of rush hour Wednesday night.

After marching from Jay St. to City Hall, over 300 workers took the train up to TWU headquarters, where a Conductor/Tower meeting was scheduled. There, a panicky Sonny Hall called out the NYPD to protect himself from "his own" members. As we write, the TWU building is being shielded by 30 squad cars and over 100 police, who are refusing workers entry.

Prior to marching over the bridge, over 500 transit workers picketed and rallied for an hour in front of TA headquarters. Shouting "Vote No!", they militantly denounced the medical co-payment and the lump sum payment instead of a raise. Angry words were directed at Sonny Hall and his Executive Board flunkies who sold us out.

Down Jay Street and all along the march, excited transit workers grabbed thousands of anti-contract leaflets and hoisted hand-made picket signs. They proudly plastered their hats and coats with bright red stickers proclaiming, "Defeat the contract sellout! Organize to fight!" Hundreds more stickers were grabbed up to post around the system.

With this one bold stroke, these workers dramatically served notice on the TA, Sonny Hall, and David Dinkins. And in a few hours, they changed the rules of the game. Sonny Hall can no longer claim full control over the situation. The TA can no longer expect to simply shove this giveback contract down our throats without a whimper of protest.

And last night, 1,000 workers cut their teeth on what it means to fight. In one evening the question before all transit workers changed from "Can we fight?" to "What next?" and "How best to show our strength today?" These are exciting and memorable developments.

All transit workers can be proud of this fighting 1,000.

They showed not only our anger, but also our ability to be organized and disciplined — a potentially strong fighting force. This kind of forceful expression of our outrage is unprecedented in recent times. It revealed outrage in two directions: towards the takeback offensive of the TA and towards the thoroughly sold-out TWU bureaucrats at the top.

It is a tantalizing glimpse of the way forward — to independent action, to mobilizing large numbers of workers, to tapping their spirit to fight the TA. But by no means were these particular workers "extraordinary" or special in any way. They simply did what needed to be done.

Today, as word of this action spreads, transit workers will find we have new options inconceivable just 24 hours ago. No longer are we faced with the choice of accepting Sonny Hall's terrible contract or having it shoved down our throat by an arbitrator. New possibilities now open up before us.

It is likely that the next days will see a rash of work-to-rule and slowdowns on the roads. Just last month, train operators on the #1 line forced a change in their pick when a work-to-rule forced 14 cancellations and 114 late trains. Now workers throughout the system — not just in RTO — can take up the spirit of the Brooklyn Bridge 1,000. Now that the iron is hot, it is time to take action before Sonny Hall and the TA can take damage control measures.

*Fellow transit workers: seize this moment to get organized against the sellout contract and against the traitor Sonny Hall and all his flunkies!*

The Brooklyn Bridge action shows clearly that we *can* fight this rotten contract. We *can* fight the TA. We *can* fight the plots of the TWU bureaucrats. This is no time for business as usual. We urge all workers to discuss today, not only what is wrong with the contract, but what we can do to fight it. To find ways to organize actions in our shops, gangs, and on the road.

**Down with the sellout contract and the sellout union officials!  
Get organized and fight!**