

**The American
Federation of
Teachers
and the CIA**

by George N. Schmidt

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with [Central Única de Trabajadores de Chile](#)
and you'll see why.

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Introduction

Substance is reprinting my short book “The American Federation of Teachers and the C.I.A.” in its original form (save for an increase in page size and an increase in price) after several years of renewed interest in it.

I was at first pleased—but surprised—to find that intelligent and committed people were still interested in this brief study nearly a quarter century after it was researched and written. Looking back on the 26 years we have been publishing the teachers’ newspaper *Substance* in Chicago, however, it should not have been as surprising as it first seemed to me. There is the same connection across generations now as there was when my generation struggled to locate and learn the history of American radicalism during the Orwellian brainwash of the early 1960s.

Those who grew up, as I did, in the working class towns of industrial America during the 1950s were cut off from our past, often by our own parents. We were denied access to the legacies of protest and militancy that had a long and honorable tradition in the United States of America. The unions had been built by others. Civil rights was for rich college kids and black preachers. Feminism was not for our mothers or sisters. And woe betide our brothers (or sisters) if their sexual preferences deviated from the “Leave it to Beaver” orthodoxies of the mass media—or the even more viciously policed barriers to love erected by the Archbishop of Newark.

Our histories were not our own. Born in places like Elizabeth, New Jersey, and raised in Linden, New Jersey, we were supposed to view militant labor radicalism, the anti-war movement, civil rights activism, feminism and the vast poetries and potentials of human affection as something alien and subversive. The outsiders who practiced such things were not welcome on our block, or on Broad Street in Elizabeth, or on Wood Avenue in Linden. The people who wrote books *about* us were not our neighbors.

The children of American workers were not supposed to think subversively about the reign of American capital, either at home or abroad. The propagandists who brought that world view to the minds of children like myself 50 years ago are still working today. This little book is about some of them, and how they do their work among teachers.

The people who tell America how to think about itself today are telling us that those industrial places where most of us live are rendered realistically in the media. They tell us that “The Sopranos” is a better way to understand white working class people from Elizabeth, New Jersey, than other methods. Certainly no one is to go to the area and walk through downtown Linden, Rahway, Elizabeth, or Freehold and visit our high school classrooms, gyms and sports fields. Brainwashing is a long discussion for a different time, but it is quite relevant to why we are reprinting this little book about one union at one moment in history.

In order to make people do what they want, any ruling class first has to make people think that a certain way of viewing the world is the only way.

Conversely, in order to act more clearly and liberate ourselves, we have to develop critical thinking skills quite different from the ones presently sanctioned in our schools. We have to counter many of the official lies. As one character says in the movie *Platoon*—“Free your mind and your ass will follow.”

Maintaining the slavery of people’s minds is one of the main jobs of every ruling class. This involves a twofold dialectical process of suppressing (or distorting) the truth and of elevating banal fictions about persistent facts. Together today, these activities are called “Public Relations,” in politics, “Spin.” They are always lies in the service of power. There have been some changes in the tactics used to suppress the truth since this little book was first published, but not in fundamentals. Propaganda still parades everywhere as “news.” The law is still invoked to suppress dissent. It’s still expensive (albeit perhaps not as physically dangerous) to publish and speak the truth about those who run the world. One of the things accomplished by the end of the Cold War was the unleashing of thousands of trained propagandists on the rest of the world. No longer in the employ of the governments that fought the Cold War, these men and women offered themselves for employment to the highest bidder. Truth, again, was to be the first casualty.

A dozen examples could be offered on any single day. In July 2001, anyone who paid careful attention to the media could read that the deceased owner of *Newsweek* was a heroine of free speech and a free press. We could then turn to the pages of *Newsweek* and read that protesters who threw things at police should be shot dead with a bullet in the head. This “They are only getting what they deserve” version of reality has its roots as old as history itself. Less than a week after dozens of peaceful activists from around the world were hospitalized by the brutality of Italian security forces (now led by fans of Benito Mussolini), most of us were supposed to believe that the dissidents got what they deserved.

Those who confronted official lies have long known that the liars usually are better funded and more polished than those who try to bring out unpleasant truths. [*Gone with the Wind*](#) is still more widely read and profitable today than [*The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*](#).

How does all this relate to the republication of a little book written a few years after the last American C.I.A. operative was pulled out of Vietnam (or disgracefully left behind to the not-so-tender mercies of the victors in that terrible conflict)?

Our monthly teachers’ newspaper *Substance* bridges a few generations in the annals of critical reporting. Founded the year Saigon was liberated and Vietnam reunited, *Substance* has continued publishing continuously since. We have been around from the days of the Killing Fields to the years of the [Battle of Seattle](#), the insanity of the [“anti-drug” war](#) on the poor in Colombia, the vicious [official brutality of Genoa](#), and the daily attacks on the poor in all of the largest cities in the United States of America.

And we came under attack, too, from the same people. As readers of *Substance* know, in January 1999 the [“Testocracy” sued me](#) for \$1 million and suspended me from my 30-year teaching job in Chicago’s inner city. Officially, the “Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees” sued us for a million dollars for “copyright infringement.” In January 1999, Chicago public schools CEO [Paul Vallas](#) (praised nationally for his fictitious “miracle” in the city’s public school system), with the full support of Chicago Mayor [Richard M. Daley](#) (the man whose brother ran Al Gore’s election campaign) began the

process of legal maneuvering against us. That maneuvering led to my termination as a public school teacher at the August 2000 meeting of the Chicago Board of Education. Still pending is the claim that our act of publishing facts entitles the Chicago Board of Education to get \$1 million from us.

What was our crime? Publishing a handful of dumb tests that Chicago had just forced its high school students to take. Our crime was publishing facts that didn't jive with the official version of The Truth.

It's been difficult to face off once again against the thugs who rule Chicago today. The assault on my career and the newspaper I edit has also provided me with an opportunity. It has given me the chance to meet a new generation of activists and to have some time away from the daily demands of classroom teaching to study and understand the movements that are growing today.

One of the strange highlights of the past three years was arriving in June 1999 at a conference of the Rouge Forum and Whole Schooling Institute at Wayne State University in Detroit. We had been invited there by people in Detroit who had heard about our struggle in Chicago over the Internet. My wife Sharon and I had driven from Chicago to Detroit and were late.

As we walked up to the sign-in table, I was asked, "Who are you?"

"I'm the guy who wrote that little book," I said. Displayed among the literature near the registration table were a number of photocopies of "The American Federation of Teachers and the C.I.A." I was told that people in Detroit had been reading the book as part of their study of the forces once again arrayed against the rights of the majority of people. Many, I was told, had thought the person who wrote the book was dead or out of political life. In fact, we had remained in the politics of Chicago and its schools, while others had gone elsewhere. We had stayed at the grass roots while others found that their "movement" pasts could be brokered into quite comfortable presents and futures.

Rereading "The American Federation of Teachers and the C.I.A." 23 years after we first sold it at the 1978 convention of the American Federation of Teachers, I am glad for several things. Reading the accounts of the C.I.A. speaker Irving Brown at the 1977 AFT convention still gives me chills. I am glad that the facts we reported then still stand up now. I am glad to have worked with thousands of men and women who had the courage to oppose U.S. imperialism—both abroad and in our own cities—during those decades of the 1960s and 1970s—and beyond. I am proud that I can tell my sons what I did to halt the terrors of white supremacy during the century when it was at its most vicious. It has been an honor to work with those who continued to oppose the atrocities of the "system"—even in the sugar-coated forms that were being prepared then (and which would be unleashed after the Reagan presidency began in 1981) and the cloying, trendy seductiveness of the "New Democrats" who ascended to power under Bill Clinton.

A great deal has happened since 1977 and 1978, when this book was researched and written. Most notably, for those interested in the topic covered in this book, was the collapse of Soviet-style Communism and its replacement by a brand of rapacious capitalism, often led by criminals and former intelligence operatives, throughout the former Soviet Union and across what was once called the "Eastern Bloc."

There have been attempts by the U.S. business press to present the nastiness of privatization and the [“free market” in Russia](#) as something unique, as if it stems from a Slavic gene. Even a brief but honest history of capitalism in its various national inceptions shows that the abstract “market” preached by professors is really closer to the drive-by version practiced in places as diverse as Moscow, Manila, Los Angeles, Chicago, Santiago or Mexico City.

Who are they kidding? Capital bares its fangs behind the apologetics of those who abstractly preach about “free markets” and a “free world.”

This little book is about what one American trade union did during one period in its history. Why is it relevant today? I would argue that the international corporate capitalism practiced by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency during its Cold War heyday is the predecessor to the “globalism” that is generating a new generation of protest today.

Similarly, the class collaborationism of many trade union leaders is part of that process of subordinating people across the planet to the global reign of unbridled capital. The saga of the American Federation of Teachers and its subordination to the agendas of America’s corporate leaders continues today in the union’s reluctance to support militant trade union organizing throughout the United States and, especially, in those nations where working people are most clearly the victims of globalization.

The American Federation of Teachers today is also the main union supporting the corporate drive—led by those we call the “Testocracy”—to subordinate the desires of the majority of people for democratic public schools to the agenda of the ruling class. Just as during the Cold War, we are presented with “accountability” for the majority of people while those who run things are only accountable to themselves.

The growing international [protest movements against “globalization”](#) and the vicious attacks on these movements—and especially on their leaders—are nothing new in the ongoing struggle between capital and the majority of humanity. Hopefully, the republication of this small book will help to put some of the less visible portions of the history of our struggles into perspective.

During the coming years, much more will need to be published about these issues. The republication of “The American Federation of Teachers and the C.I.A.” is meant to provide people with one additional tool for understanding the facts of history, rather than the glib generalizations which serve only those who wish to abuse humanity and the history we are all creating.

Thank You Again

One of the things that's necessary at a time like this is to offer some "Thank You's" to men and women who made this ongoing search for the facts of history possible, both then and now.

The introduction to the 1978 edition of this little book mentioned only one person by name in the Thank You's. Others can be thanked now, sadly posthumously. I will limit that thanks only to those who were supportive back when "The American Federation of Teachers and the C.I.A." was first being written and who are not here to see the republication of the book they felt was necessary to get the whole truth told.

The first group of people whose names need be mentioned were all leaders of unions and much more.

The most important person assisting in the research for the book was [Sidney Lens](#), a paramount and courageous activist, union leader, and man. Sid Lens helped a generation of radicals understand that opposition to the thuggery of capital didn't require a simplistic choice between loyalty to the American Empire or dogmatic adherence to the thuggish Stalinist or Maoist simplifications. Sid's memory of the men and women who organized the Cold War for the AFL-CIO was a resource that cannot be duplicated. His numerous books and other writings still provide essential information for anyone who wants to understand those terrible days, when Sid and his wife traveled Europe.

It was Sid who made it clear we had to begin with the devastation that followed the Allied victory over Nazism in Europe. With his help we could check out the first cooperation between the nascent CIA (when it was still the old OSS) and the Nazi intelligence organizations in those opening days before the "Cold War" even had a name. In the name of The Free World, even before the guns had stopped firing, our "side" was providing haven for the worst fascists, anti-Semites, racists, and white supremacists in history—provided they help "us" against the Soviet Union and mass organizations (especially unions) in Western Europe.

But Sid Lens wasn't the only activist who helped with this little project. Others, now also gone, provided inspiration and assistance, often without asking public acknowledgement.

Chicago's **Lester Davis**, who edited the newspaper of the Chicago Teachers Union, is also long gone. A [founder of the AFT Black Caucus](#), Lester kept many of us informed about the antics of the Shanker administration of the American Federation of Teachers during the 1970s. It was Lester's privilege to describe for me the official behind-the-scenes reception to this little book. Lester told me how Sandy Feldman demanded that the AFT sue me for libel at the AFT executive council meeting that followed the 1978 convention where we first sold this book. And Lester also told me how Al Shanker realized it was far better to allow a little book to circulate than to give its author the right to defend the truth behind that book. I'm sure that Lester's friend and fellow Panamanian organizer Paul Robeson remained proud of Lester in all that.

Other men (and women) who organized and led The Black Caucus of the Chicago Teachers Union—and from there, the American Federation of Teachers—deserve to have special recognition in any

history of the American labor movement, but instead their names are barely a memory today. Simeon Vocational High School print shop teacher [Hudson Wadlington](#), who chaired the subversive Black Caucus luncheon at the 1977 AFT convention, should have gotten the job of printing this little book in its first edition, but he was too busy. Hudson's soul was deep, and his departure to what his faith knew was a greater place left a void that still cries out to be filled.

More complex was the role played by Chicago Teachers Union Treasurer [Glendis Hambrick](#), another of the old timers from the shops who helped pull together the Chicago Teachers Union out of the divisive disarray caused by a century of white supremacy in Chicago, and in our unions. Glendis Hambrick served as Treasurer of the CTU and was part of the local "bureaucracy" we organized against here. He was also part of the movement that brought Chicago's local of the American Federation of Teachers to the point where Chicago had more black tenured teachers in its public schools than Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and Cleveland combined. Legacies of working class leaders are measured in the lives of the men and women who don't write the history books. The 30 years of true diversity among the teachers, principals, and other administrators who worked in Chicago's public schools during the last third of the 20th Century is the legacy of Glen Hambrick, Hud Wadlington, Lester Davis, and others. The current attack on black teachers and principals by the "New Democrats" who run Chicago—especially by Richard M. Daley and Paul G. Vallas, cheered on by Bill Clinton—would not have been tolerated a dozen years earlier.

Finally, among those who led the local union, there was [Jacqueline B. Vaughn](#). While I was researching this book, some of my colleagues suggested that Jackie Vaughn was a "CIA agent" because she had risen both locally and within the ranks of the AFT to the point where she represented the union internationally. I rejected that suggestion and did not include even its shadow in the book that you hold. Years later, I personally witnessed part of the transformation of Mrs. Vaughn as her stature as president of the Chicago Teachers Union (1984-1994) presented her with more and more opportunities to fight for justice both locally and internationally. Listening to Jackie Vaughn report on a visit to South Africa in the days before Nelson Mandela was released from Robbin Island and apartheid finally broken convinced me that Jackie Vaughn had not been a conscious collaborator with Irving Brown and the African American Labor Center. Since her death, that fact has become even more apparent. The "New Democrat" leaders of the Chicago Teachers Union and the leaders of Chicago have written the most prominent woman labor leader of the second half of the 20th Century out of the city's history books. Given the disgraceful attacks on public education in Chicago since the year after Mrs. Vaughn's death, it's almost an honor to be dishonored by such people and the propagandists who support their distortions of history.

[David Selden](#), who was unseated as President of the American Federation of Teachers by the "Progressive Caucus" organization, is already noted in this book (see Appendix B). American unions have to remain on guard against people who attack leaders who have all the human virtues. The propagandists for our adversaries can always find nits to pick and foibles to highlight. David Selden's assistance with this book, based on his firsthand experience, was invaluable. Sadly, he died without leaving behind his own book of details of the kind that future generations will need to understand the complexity of the role of U.S. unions in the new imperial world order.

All of these union leaders knew lessons that many in my generation of activists had never known

(because of their privileged class roots) or had deliberately distorted and forgotten: *The only thing worse than a “bad” union for working men and women is no union at all. The ruling class is annoyed by our words, but they fear our united action.*

And, most of all: *They hate the word “Strike!” and the thousand deeds that accompany it.* And so, the histories have been rewritten. The greedy are now held up as leaders, and their greed is hailed as the single best virtue men and women can aspire to. Solidarity, community, family are all subordinated to the illnesses that ooze from the unfettered market that now dominated our lives.

Two other men, now both deceased, helped inform the understandings that allowed this little book to exist. They worked directly with *Substance* here in Chicago and deserve to be thanked for how their own lives and works helped us understand the complex issues about which I tried to write.

Lester Czernik’s tragic and untimely [death in 1996](#) left us with another of those voids that can’t ever be filled. Lester was born into the refugee camps of Europe in 1946. He was literally a new hope—born in the face of the vast carnage of post World War II Europe to two Polish refugees who had served as slave laborers during Nazism. Through hard work and a dedication to public service, Lester quickly rose to become one of the leaders in his chosen profession. His work in community mental health in Chicago was pioneering in more ways than I can list here.

During the years this book was written, Lester’s wife (now widow), [Terry](#), edited *Substance*. For those of us at *Substance*, his consistent and understated support was a tower of strength. Lester also helped remind us that the complexity of European history in the 20th Century could not be oversimplified to a “good guy and bad guy” version of reality. Lester’s family had suffered under the brutality of the Nazis’ treatment of the Untermenschen. Both his mother and father had been slaves. They served as a reminder that the victims of Nazism were legion across Europe, and that not all of the victims of greed and unfettered capital were in the Third World or subjected to the Final Solution.

At the same time, those of us who might have apologized more quickly for the regime that followed the Nazis had to be reminded that Poland under Communism was not a Utopia. I know that Lester’s wife Terry (who still serves on the *Substance* staff) and son Glen will always be discovering new things to honor in his memory. Foremost among them is that commitment to the complexity of truth that Lester embodied both in his friendship with all of us and in his professional work.

Jimmy Stewart died a year before Lester Czernik. Jimmy’s commitment to Chicago, to his family, and to the public schools was just part of what made him a great man, or, as *Substance* said of him after his death, a “hero.” His ability to see beyond and through the lies that had put him as a young man in combat in Vietnam helped steel him for a lot of the battles for the truth that he would wage, quietly, within the vast bureaucracy that ran Chicago’s public school system.

For the better part of a decade, Jim Stewart made annual visits to my classes to discuss the experience of the Vietnam War from the point of view of a combat veteran. He helped ensure that a new generation of young people had a more realistic look at that experience, and at the complexity of things about which I wrote in “The American Federation of Teachers and the C.I.A.” I’ve often wondered, as the events of recent years have unfolded, what Jimmy would say of the former neighbor he used to defend

against our more dogmatic colleagues. Because Jim Stewart had been raised a block from the home of the Daley family in Chicago's Bridgeport community, he was able to bring to our work a unique insight into the human side of Chicago politics. Jim's courage stood alone among most of his generation. Instead of using politics to his personal advantage, he chose to serve in combat in the Mekong Delta area of "South" Vietnam. He could easily have used political clout to make that year of his life much easier, both when it was lived and later, in emotional, intellectual, and (many of us believe) physical memory.

All of the men and women I thank above deserve a book. Looking back on these paragraphs only reminds me how much our many stories need to be told. Even one of the books—about any of these men and women, and their service to truth, justice, and human beings—would be more worthwhile to the generation now organizing against the corporate empire today than a year's worth of the propaganda, celebrity vacuousness, and CEO worship that now passes for information in "Information Age."

The little book that follows is one among dozens of books that need to be written and published so that the latest brainwashes of the latest generation to confront injustice will be a bit easier to navigate. I hope this one helps again.

George N. Schmidt
Chicago, Illinois
August 8, 2001

Acknowledgements

The research that went into this pamphlet was done by members of Substitutes United for Better Schools and the Midwest Research Group. It is continuing. We hope that this study provides the basis for debate and further analysis of the question.

A number of people around the world deserve most of the credit for persistently focusing public attention on the machinations of the CIA in general and within the labor movement in particular. The pioneer of work in the area of the CIA and labor was Sidney Lens, an outstanding leader of the anti-war movement of the 1960's and 1970's whose roots go back to the labor radicalism of the 1920's. For many of us, Sid Lens is one of those most responsible for bridging the gap between the older generation of American radicals and our generation.

Both at home and abroad, a number of tireless researchers and writers have continued to focus on these questions—often at great personal expense. Fred Hirsch, who first introduced the labor movement in California to AIFLD's role in the Chile coup, needs more thanks than he can be given. Rodney Larson of Transnational Features Services has been insistent in his help. We all owe both of these men a debt of gratitude.

A number of helpful individuals prefer at this time to provide their assistance in anonymity. This is understandable, since the vindictiveness of those who deal in the lives of millions is well known. It is hoped that this pamphlet and the debate that follows will increase the freedom—true freedom—for all points of view to be aired in America without fear of reprisal by decent people.

Four groups of people must be mentioned. The substitute teachers of Chicago have helped to inspire this effort. Like their counterparts in the 1930's who built the local unions of the American working people, they have insistently refused to take no for an answer. Denied a voice in union affairs, they have made their enforced silence the loudest of all voices for justice.

A number of the founders and older members of the [Chicago Teachers Union](#) deserve to be remembered, rather than slandered. Their selfless work 40 years ago built a union that, all too often, has become the watering place of "leaders" of less character and integrity than they.

Our students are one of the most important reasons why we cannot let the lies of those in power dominate our lives. Hundreds of high school students in the inner city of Chicago over the past four years have taught me much about education, learning, and the importance of honesty. In our schools and classrooms, they give the lie to the claims of the leaders of our union and the slander of politicians like Dr. Moynihan, who claimed that teaching in their schools and their communities was like being led to Eichmann's ovens. The future must be for them. My fondest hope is that they will learn to make a world where they can live in peace and decency and where the ideas spread by the Moynihans are laid to rest, once and forever.

Finally, to those men and women of the world movement for liberation in the past twenty years, both at home and abroad, who have managed to turn back the power of the dollars and begin to create the

world that we all should be building.

Introduction

In 1966, *Ramparts* magazine published an [article](#) charging that the [National Student Association](#) had been receiving funds from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency for its international work. The following year, both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* charged that William G. Carr, executive secretary of the [National Education Association](#) and secretary general of the [World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession](#), had knowingly accepted CIA money and helped organize a foundation that became a transmission belt for the CIA.

The [American Federation of Teachers](#) responded to the NEA revelations by stating: “The integrity of teachers has been compromised and American educators who go abroad, seeking links with colleagues in Europe, Asia and Africa, will henceforth be under suspicion that they may not be acting independently, but as arms of their government. If so, what makes them better than the agents of totalitarian lands?”

In May, 1967, AFT National President [Charles Cogen](#) called on the NEA to open its books and clear the air. Cogen declared:

Covert CIA financial and political influence of American organizations is repugnant to our democracy. Unless the true extent of such infiltration is known, all international and national operations of the NEA must be suspect.

In a telegram to William Carr of the NEA, Cogen stated:

The AFT has never engaged in any covert activities, nor has it accepted such funding as is here involved, nor has the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU).

In the following months, more disclosures of [covert CIA financing of supposedly democratic organizations](#) came to light. It was also revealed that the CIA was recruiting and possibly spying on the campuses of America’s universities. The AFT and its members protested vigorously.

As a result of the revelations of the CIA’s covert financing of so-called “free” organizations, the CIA itself disbanded the numerous “charitable foundations” which had served as its cover—or at least it claimed to do so. The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the National Student Association, and the National Education Association did in fact sever their CIA ties. But a lot of stonewalling went on before they did.

Ten years after the AFT proudly proclaimed its freedom from CIA influence and money, one of America’s most famous CIA labor missionaries was invited by AFT president [Albert Shanker](#) to speak at the union’s annual convention. [Irving Brown](#), identified in the convention program as the “AFL-CIO Representative in Europe,” was to speak to the Labor Education Luncheon. Brown’s financial relations with the CIA made the NEA’s look like small change. No less a man than [Thomas Braden](#), who had been the director of CIA’s Special Operations in Europe during the 1950’s, had proudly boasted that he had gone to the “vaults of the CIA” to fund Brown’s European adventures.

The invitation to Brown from AFT president Albert Shanker, the support given to Brown's speech by Shanker's assistant Al Loewenthal, and the reception given the speech by the small number of AFT luminaries who actually heard Brown, raise some serious questions about "the integrity of teachers" now working in international programs sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers.

Unfortunately, much has changed since 1967 within the AFT. There was very little free and open discussion of the union's international affairs and labor education programs at the 1977 convention. There was no ringing denunciation of covert subversion of teachers' integrity. Although a vast majority of the delegates to the convention responded to the calls of the United Action Caucus and the Black Caucus of AFT to "Boycott CIA Goods," the issue has not been met. In 1978, the AFT leadership plans further expansion of the union's international affairs programs and the convention is likely to approve the resolutions.

Today, the American Federation of Teachers is three times larger than it was in the days of Charles Cogen's presidency. It is a power in the AFL-CIO. AFT president Albert Shanker sits on the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

But within the union, many doors have closed and many voices have been silenced since the move to elect Shanker national president began in the early 1970's and culminated with his victory in 1974. Members face harassment and intimidation—verbally, to be sure—for the expression of views that don't show the team spirit demanded of the national leadership's "Progressive Caucus." Delegates to national union conventions from the largest union locals—the ones that control the outcome of convention votes—sign "loyalty oaths" pledging to support the caucus line before they are allowed to be slated for the delegations by the leadership. Important votes are published since the secret ballot was abolished at the beginning of Shanker's presidency. Those who vote "wrong" know what they face. While open debates still take place, they are becoming fewer and farther between with each passing convention year. And if the leadership has its way this year, the conventions will be every two years, giving the rank and file still less of a voice in national union affairs.

Parts of the information contained in this pamphlet were originally published in two installments in the newspaper *Substance*, the periodical of the Chicago substitute teachers organization [Substitutes United for Better Schools](#) (S.U.B.S.). S.U.B.S. was founded in 1975 as both a caucus within the Chicago Teachers Union (Local 1 of the AFT) and an organization of substitute teachers. Its primary goal since its founding has been the furthering of the cause of substitute teachers both within the union and before the Board of Education.

But since its founding, S.U.B.S. has also taken up important political issues facing the union, the Board of Education, and the schools. While our primary goal will continue to be the furthering of the basic trade union and economic welfare of substitute teachers, we will continue to take on other issues as well.

The research that went into this pamphlet was done by a number of people, most of whom are members

of the American Federation of Teachers. Since the publication of the first installment of the series in *Substance* in January, 1978, a great amount of information and material has been made available to us. The result has been that the original material—while still accurate in its main lines—has had to be rewritten and expanded. The present work marks a point in the development of our understanding of the questions involved. When we arrived in Boston for the 1977 AFT convention, we did not expect that one year later we would be in the middle of this project.

I apologize for those parts of this pamphlet that may be hard to read. It was hard to write. I hope that as this issue becomes more a matter of debate and record that it will be possible to clarify both the conception and the execution of its thesis. But the thesis, as stated in the title, is unfortunately true. There will be dodges and evasions and, probably *ad hominem*s from both sides. But our job as teachers and unionists is to work for the truth, as well as for the team.

The truth of the history of the AFT will come out. It is today at the same time one of the best unions in this country and one of the worst. We won't get better by ignoring our weaknesses.

In 1974, the American Federation of Teachers elected Albert Shanker as its president and swept into power the leaders of the Progressive Caucus who still run our union. The incumbent president, David Selden, was defeated by a large majority, despite the fact that he had presided over the greatest period of growth and democratic strength in the union's history.

I returned to teaching in Chicago and to the union in 1974, four months after that election. At the time I knew nothing about it.

It's history now, but it may be appropriate to quote David Selden's nominating speech at the 1974 convention to end this introduction. It still rings of the truth, despite four years and many attempts to rewrite our history.

I am running for re-election as president of the AFT and I am running on the ticket of the Coalition for a Democratic Union and urge you to support all the candidates for vice-president on this ticket.

The election is a very fateful one for the AFT. It could, if you vote for my principal opponent, make a change in the direction, a change in the direction of our union at a time when our membership growth is the greatest ever. Our financial condition is the best ever. Our moral influence in the United States and throughout the world is at the pinnacle of success, and yet you are being asked by my principal opponent to change that direction.

Now, what have we done in the past few years that has changed the direction the AFT has taken?

Well, we voted to endorse a presidential candidate, Senator George McGovern, in '72.

I supported that candidate and I carried out your will and my principal opponent did

not.

In '72 we finally got around to condemning the Vietnam War in spite of all the efforts of my principal opponent to keep us from acting on that question.

Now you trust the convention. I trust you and I follow your mandates.

In '72 we endorsed the women's rights amendment, and since that time, I have done everything possible to facilitate AFT preparations in that campaign. I defy my opponent to show a similar record.

Throughout the years, we have been a leader in the civil rights movement. I have, throughout my time in office, constantly expanded the AFT role in civil rights and many times that has been very difficult for my principal opponent.

All of my effort is a matter of record, and efforts to amend or distort it are untrue and can be easily refuted.

This pamphlet is about some of the things that have changed about the AFT since then.

George N. Schmidt, Local 1, 8/14/78

Chapter One: Cooperating Around the World

Direct links between the 430,000 member [American Federation of Teachers](#) (AFT) and the United States [Central Intelligence Agency](#) (CIA) have been forged and strengthened since the election of New York's [Albert Shanker](#) as AFT national president in 1974. Prior to that time, a number of national union staff members had developed relations with the intelligence agency through the union's various international affairs programs. Additionally, Shanker's home local in New York, the huge Local 2 ([United Federation of Teachers](#)) had served as a base for CIA related labor activities through the AFT until Shanker himself assumed the national presidency. It was not until Shanker's faction (the Progressive Caucus) took national power, however, that the weight of the teachers union became a full partner in government/CIA international affairs.

The AFT's CIA connections are carried out through three foundations sponsored by the [AFL-CIO](#), the largest multinational corporations and the United States government's [Agency for International Development](#), AID. The oldest of the foundations, the [American Institute for Free Labor Development](#) (AIFLD), works in the Latin American nations. The African American Labor Committee (AALC) operates in Africa, while the Asian American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI) works in the non-communist nations of Asia. AFT/CIA connections are also carried out through the International Trade Secretariat for teachers unions, the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU). The IFFTU is one of 16 [International Trade Secretariats](#) (OR ITS's). A number of these predate the cold war and function as multinational unions in the face of the transnational corporations, while a smaller number—particularly those founded after World War II—either cooperate with the U.S. intelligence or were actually established by the CIA itself in cooperation with the AFL and later, the AFL-CIO.

In addition to Shanker himself, national union staff members Al Loewenthal and Anthony DiBlasi carry out international trade union work through the AFT which involves the teachers union both internationally and domestically in U.S. intelligence and State Department activities. Other national union personalities who have participated in these activities include [Sandra Feldman](#), [Velma Hill](#), [Ponsie Hillman](#) and [Vito DiLeonardis](#) from Local 2 in New York. Former union staffer [Denise Thiry](#) was among the most active of the AFT's international people until her resignation in 1976. Thiry's work included cooperation with the U.S. government in the [coup d'etat](#) that overthrew the [Allende government](#) in Chile in 1973. Before she was exposed as a police spy in Chicago, [Sheli Lulkin](#), who was co-chairperson of the AFT Women's Rights committee, had also begun to involve herself in international union and "women's rights" activities. National union figures from Detroit, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco have also participated in the international affairs work of AFT since Shanker's rise to power.

The most important domestic organization outside of the U.S. labor movement which cooperates in intelligence and State Department activities and is influential in the AFT is the [Social Democrats-USA](#) (SDUSA), a small "socialist" party based in New York and affiliated with the Social International (the descendant of the Second International). SDUSA members who serve in national leadership posts in the AFT include Albert Shanker, Sandra Feldman, Velma Hill and a significant minority of the union's national staff members at the AFT offices in Washington, D.C. SDUSA, which operates out of offices in the International Ladies Garment Workers (ILGWU) building in New York, has a membership of

less than 5,000 persons. Through its power within the AFL-CIO Executive Council and certain American trade unions, however, and through its connections with the U.S. government's Cold War activities, its influence far outweighs its numbers in the top echelons of organized labor in America.

From this tiny "socialist" grouping are drawn a number of the intellectual apologists for the AFL-CIO's Cold War policies and for the CIA's activities. SDUSA members have secured a number of important staff posts within the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department and in different unions which cooperate in CIA-supported labor activities both at home and abroad. Within its own ranks, the SDUSA includes dozens of members with no direct affiliation to the labor movement whose work aids both public and clandestine foreign policy activity. The most prominent SDUSA members active in these affairs include [Tom Kahn](#), head of the [League for Industrial Democracy](#) (an SDUSA affiliate with offices in the same office), who edits the AFL-CIO *Free Trade Union News*; [Bayard Rustin](#), chairman of SDUSA and a number of other organizations, who serves as an apologist for "labor's" racial policies; [Carl Gershman](#), whose writings invariably back up AFL-CIO international positions; Thomas Brooks, who concentrates on writing "[histories](#)" of American labor from the anti-communist, Cold War perspective; and [Norman Hill](#), director of the [A. Philip Randolph Institute](#), which encourages the training of Black labor leaders amenable to the AFL-CIO leadership's positions.

Allied with the most powerful men and women in the AFL-CIO, the United States government, the transnational corporations, and the CIA, these people are working within the American labor movement to insure the perpetuation of the same Cold War policies that they helped formulate and execute during the last 35 years. The AFT, since 1974, has become their latest ally in that campaign.

Chapter Two: Irving Brown Speaks to the Teachers

The issue of the AFT's relationship to the CIA and government-sponsored international "labor organization" came to a head during the union's 61st annual convention in Boston in August, 1977. Prior to that time, Shanker and his aides had been quietly forging the chains that would insure his faction's dominance in the union and at the same time bind the teachers to government policies both at home and, especially, abroad.

By the summer of 1977, Shanker apparently felt secure enough in his control over the AFT to bring an identified CIA agent, Irving Brown, to speak at the union convention.

Delegates arriving for the 1977 convention found that their official convention program listed the Wednesday luncheon as the "Labor Education Luncheon" featuring [Irving Brown](#), billed as the "AFL-CIO representative in Europe," as speaker.

Despite the fact that the AFT Black Caucus had spent more than six months preparing for its annual luncheon at the same time, the convention program made no mention of it. [Black Caucus](#) leaders arriving in Boston were surprised to find that their time was not even listed in the program, while Brown was prominently featured. The Black Caucus luncheon was to honor [Paul Robeson](#), the famed Afro-American artist, athlete and revolutionary.

The Black caucus and the [United Action Caucus](#) (UAC) issued leaflets urging the delegates to "Boycott CIA goods" and attend the Robeson tribute instead. The UAC leaflet detailed Brown's CIA affiliations. In the controlled atmosphere of the AFT conventions, many honest delegates are afraid of openly opposing the policies of the leadership on the floor or in their voting. Important votes are published and members who vote "wrong" are subject to reprisals. Nevertheless, the boycott was a success. On August 17, 1977, the morning of Brown's scheduled speech, President Shanker announced that the Labor Education luncheon had been rescheduled to a smaller room. Efforts to give away the \$7.50 tickets had failed. Rather than risk the embarrassment of a small turnout in a large room, Shanker fit the room to the expected crowd.

Interestingly, the Black Caucus leadership had been told that the **minimum** they could charge for their affair and still make a profit was \$12.50. Tickets to the Labor Education Luncheon, on the other hand, were being sold for \$7.50. Nevertheless, the Black Caucus tribute drew 50 more persons than the Brown speech and the crowd stayed despite delays in the main speech caused by a "malfunctioning" in the sound system.

Irving Brown: From Communist to CIA

Irving Brown has been working with the CIA since the agency's founding in 1947. He has been described by European trade union leaders as "[Meany's Man in Europe](#)" and the "CIA man in European labor." Prior to 1947, Brown had worked with the [U.S. Office of Strategic Services](#) (OSS) cooperating with the anti-fascist underground in Europe during World War II. Prior to that, Brown had been an American Communist and, during the 1930's, a member of the "[Lovestonites](#)," a small American

communist group formed by former Communist Party secretary [Jay Lovestone](#) after his expulsion from the [CP-USA](#) in 1929.

During the war, Brown's work against the Nazis and their allies had an additional goal: fighting the Soviet Union and preventing the spread of its influence during the war and in the post-war period.

It was difficult to organize for the Cold War while Russia was still America's main ally in Europe. It was additionally difficult to organize against the Communists when the majority of those who were actually fighting fascism (and had been doing so since the [Spanish Civil War](#) and before) were Communists. While many members of the middle and upper classes in the occupied countries either endured the Nazi occupation or openly collaborated with them (like the [Vichy government](#) in France), it was the communists, some of the socialists, and their allies that formed the active core of the resistance movements in occupied Europe.

Furthermore, it was the Soviet Union, through the [Red Army](#), that first stopped the [Wehrmacht](#) in 1942 and had turned around the fascist military before the other allies landed at Normandy in June, 1944. The European left—in both Eastern and Western Europe—emerged from the war with the prestige of the resistance to its credit. To this, the Communists added the prestige of the Red Army's victories over the Nazi machine on the Eastern Front. The Cold War was not a hot commodity in Europe at the end of World War II.

Jay Lovestone, the Ladies Garment Workers Union, and the “Free Trade Union Committee”

But the Cold War was already on the agenda for Irving Brown, Jay Lovestone, and a core of professional anti-communists in the American Federation of Labor (AFL). At the beginning of the war, [David Dubinsky](#), President of the [International Ladies Garment Workers Union](#) (ILGWU), a former socialist who had served time in Czarist prisons before migrating to America from Poland in 1911, sponsored the “Free Trade Union Committee” at the ILGWU offices in New York. Head of the Committee was Jay Lovestone, who had been head of the CPUSA until 1929.

American Communism had arisen after the end of World War I in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. After the CPUSA was consolidated in the mid-1920's, Lovestone, like a number of other young intellectuals in the party, had risen quickly. Dominated by intense faction fighting throughout the decade, the party was split a number of times according to American conditions and, more importantly, the struggle for power within the Soviet Union.

Lovestone's leadership position was assured by 1927 when his clout, [Nicholai Bukharin](#), helped to defeat the “[Trotskyists](#)” and [Leon Trotsky](#) was exiled. The split with the Trotskyists reflected itself in the first major split in American Communism when [James Cannon](#), [Max Shachtman](#), and [Martin Abern](#) formed a faction which supported Trotsky's position and were expelled from the CPUSA. Cannon, Abern, and Shachtman formed an organization of American Trotskyists which first claimed to be an “opposition” within the CPUSA, although the CPUSA had kicked them out. After the defeat of the left in Germany and the consolidation of Hitler's power, the Trotskyists declared themselves independent of

the CP. In 1938, they founded the [Socialist Workers Party](#). During World War II, the Trotskyists themselves split, with Shachtman forming the [Workers Party](#). Shachtman's group would later become involved in the same kind of "international trade union work" as the Lovestonites, but their influence was less important than Lovestone's and will be dealt with later.

Unfortunately for Lovestone, Bukharin's star had reached its zenith. By 1928, Bukharin and the so-called "right opposition" were under attack within the Soviet Union and through the [Communist International](#), the Comintern. In 1929, Lovestone was personally unseated by [Joseph Stalin](#). Upon his return to America, he reorganized his friends into Communist Party (Opposition), which functioned throughout the 1930's as the CP (Opposition) and later as the Independent Labor League.

While still members of the Communist Party, a number of future Lovestonites within the ILGWU had carried out a faction fight which dominated the union's internal politics during the 1920's. Finally defeated by ILGWU president Morris Sigman, the Communists, according to a change in party line in the late 1920's, established independent unions to compete with the AFL unions. Sigman's lieutenant during the so-called Civil War within the ILGWU was Secretary-Treasurer David Dubinsky, a right wing Socialist who would become the union's president in 1930.

Part of Dubinsky's genius as an anti-communist has been his willingness to bring ex-communists into the union fold. After he established his power in the union in 1931, he personally supported the seating of [Charles Zimmerman](#), a Lovestonite who had been one of the fiercest factionalists during his tenure within the CP, as a delegate to the union's national convention. Throughout his career, Dubinsky has shown his willingness to welcome talented ex-communists into his wing of the trade union movement, and the proof of his practice has been their success. Ex-communists became the fiercest anti-communists within both the American and world labor movements during and after World War II. And the most important of the ex-communists sponsored by Dubinsky was Jay Lovestone.

The "[Free Trade Union Committee](#)" (FTUC) was established in 1943 within the ILGWU. It quickly became influential within the AFL as a whole, through the work of Dubinsky and then-AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany. Within the next decade, it had secured a permanent place for itself with the AFL in Washington and Lovestone had once again become a commissar. This time, he was an anti-communist commissar.

The FTUC's propaganda within the American labor movement called for both a cold war and a hot one against the Soviet Union while Russia was still our strongest ally in the fight against Nazism. Working with Meany and AFT vice president Matthew Woll, Lovestone's former communist troops began functioning internationally during World War II. Although Irving Brown was by far the most important among them, three others were to play major roles in the labor wings of the Cold War. [Serafino Romualdi](#), who had worked with the Italian language ILGWU newspaper before the war, became Lovestone's man in Latin America. [Richard Deverall](#) worked Asia, and [Henry Rutz](#) was to become the special AFL representative in Germany after the war.

By the early 1950's, when the Cold War was reaching its zenith, Lovestone had final say over all U.S. labor representatives overseas.

In discussing the work of Irving Brown and the role of the CIA in the American labor movement, it would be incorrect to claim that the CIA “subverted” American labor either at home or abroad during the 1940’s and 1950’s. Rather, the agency was invited in through the front door by men like Meany, Dubinsky and Lovestone, who were pushing for the Cold War long before it was fashionable. At the same time, it would be equally wrong to claim that this “relationship”—which has largely gone on behind the scenes both domestically and internationally—was healthy for the American labor movement or trade unionism around the world. Once inside labor’s tent, the CIA became the camel that wouldn’t leave.

The Work of Irving Brown in Europe

After the establishment of the Free Trade Union Committee in 1943, Lovestone began building the network that would have such vast influence in the post war arena. With the beginning of the Cold War in 1946 and 1947, the TFUC with ample money from the newly-formed CIA and other government agencies, along with some funds from the AFL, set out to split the European trade union movement, insure the correct line among European labor leaders, and establish anti-communist unionism along the lines of the AFL.

Brown was the main man in Europe. By all accounts, he was indefatigable. [Tom Braden](#), now a syndicated newspaper columnist but at the time head of the CIA’s [International Organizations Division](#), stated:

On the desk in front of me as I write these lines is a creased and faded yellow paper. It bears the inscription in pencil: ‘Received from Warren G. Haskins, 15,000, (signed) Norris A. Grambe.’

I was Warren G. Haskins. Norris A. Grambe was Irving Brown of the American Federation of Labor. The 15,000 was from the vaults of the CIA....

It was my idea to give the 15,000 to Irving Brown. He needed it to pay off his strong-arm squads in the Mediterranean ports, so that American supplies could be unloaded against the opposition of communist dock workers. It was also my idea to give cash, along with advice, to other labor leaders, to students, professors, and others who could help the United States in its battle with communist fronts....

In 1947 the Communist [Confederation General de Travail](#) led a strike in Paris which came very near to paralyzing the French economy....

Into this crisis stepped Lovestone and his assistant, Irving Brown. With funds from Dubinsky’s union, they organized [Force Ouvriere](#), a non-communist union. When they ran out of money, they appealed to the CIA. Thus began the secret subsidy of free trade unions which soon spread to Italy....

The first rule of our operational plan was ‘Limit the money to amounts private organizations can credibly spend.’ The other rules were equally obvious. ‘Use legitimate,

existing organizations; disguise the extent of American interest; protect the integrity of the organization by not requiring it to support every aspect of official American policy.’

(from “[I’m Glad the CIA is Immoral](#),” by Thomas Braden, *Saturday Evening Post*, May 20, 1967.)

While the CIA was cooperating with the AFL directly, it was working to split the [CIO](#) as a prelude to “merger” and “labor unity.” The split in the CIO was engineered by labor lawyer [Arthur Goldberg](#), who had directed OSS labor operations during World War II and who worked with the CIA afterwards. Goldberg, a card carrying liberal all his life, later went on to become Secretary of Labor, Supreme Court Justice, and United States Ambassador to the United Nations. But in 1949, his job was to organize the [expulsion](#) of ten “communist dominated” unions from the CIO.

In the same article, Braden reported that [Victor Reuther](#), brother of [United Auto Workers](#) president [Walter Reuther](#) and head of the UAW International division, had acted as a courier for CIA money after the war. Despite the split between the AFL and the CIO in America, the CIA was willing to “cooperate” with labor leaders who were willing to cooperate with it. Reuther later repudiated the CIA. Brown never did.

Brown’s “strong arm squads” were organized into a “union” called Force Ouvriere (FO) in France. FO had emerged from World War II as a small, anti-communist union composed primarily of white collar workers. Through an organization called the “[Mediterranean Committee](#),” Brown and his minions brought in members of the [Sicilian Mafia](#) to break strikes in post war France. The issue at the time was [Marshall Plan](#) aid, which the communist unions were opposing.

One of the most important jobs of the Mediterranean Committee was to gain control of the docks of [Marseilles](#), where Brown’s mafia thugs [broke the strike](#), killing a number of dockworkers and labor leaders in the process. The intervention of Brown and his labor “organizers” is one of the first examples of “dirty tricks” used by the CIA in the international labor movement.

The situation in Marseilles became so rough that the leftist mayor of the city appealed for help from the national government, protesting the work of Brown and his friends.

Brown’s work had been supported with AFL money funneled through the FTUC even before the founding of the CIA. In a March 14, 1946 letter to Jay Lovestone, he stated that he needed \$100,000 to continue his work to split the French trade union federation, the CGT, but that he could “make do” with \$10,000. He got it with the help of Lovestone, Woll, Dubinsky, and Meany. After the CIA was formed and the Cold War begun in earnest, the original money Brown demanded would seem like chicken feed. Braden estimated that between \$2 million and \$5 million went into the effort by the mid-1950’s. Drew Pearson estimated \$100 million!

At the same time that he was working behind the scenes to support Force Ouvriere and similar operations on the continent, Brown also functioned directly as a representative of American labor in European conferences.

A fierce faction fight developed within the [World Federation of Trade Unions](#) (WFTU), which had been formed by the Soviet Union, the trade unions of a number of European countries, and, most importantly, the British trade unions and the CIO after the war. The AFL's goal was to split the WFTU in the same way it worked to split the CGT in France.

Brown was appointed representative from the [International Association of Machinists](#) (IAM) in 1948 to the executive committee of the [International Metalworkers Federation](#), one of the International Trade Secretariats mentioned in the introduction to this pamphlet. Brown's job was to build trade union support for the Marshall Plan, which the Soviet Union and the WFTU opposed. After more than a year of high level wheeling and dealing, the WFTU was split. In 1949, a Free World Labor Conference with delegates from 59 countries formed the [International Confederation of Free Trade Unions](#) (ICFTU). Brown participated as a representative of the Metalworkers.

One of the constant criticisms made by American labor leaders and right wingers of the WFTU is that it is an agency of the Soviet government and is controlled by the Soviet Secret Police (now known as the [KGB](#)).

These same leaders generally neglect to mention that their own "free" labor movement has been similarly controlled by the American Secret Police, the CIA. For the first 15 years of its existence, the ICFTU could be counted on to push the Cold War line of the U.S. government. When it failed to do so and criticized the United States for the Vietnam War, the AFL-CIO [withdrew](#) from it. By 1968, the "free" trade union confederation had become too free for the Americans.

A similar response was taken by the AFL-CIO in 1977 when the [International Labor Organization](#) (ILO) began adopting policies critical of Israeli treatment of Arab labor. In November, 1977, the AFL-CIO and its other American partners in the ILO [officially withdrew](#) the U.S. government's delegation from the organization. According to U.S. representative to the ILO during his speech to the American Federation of Teachers in August, 1977, the ILO had become "too political."

A number of ex-CIA agents have identified Brown's relationship to the CIA. It has gotten to the point where he doesn't even bother to deny the fact. In his book, [Inside the Company, a CIA Diary](#), [Phillip Agee](#) (who has been forced into exile because of his revelations) identifies Brown as the "principal agent for control of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)." [Julius Mader's](#) book, [Who's Who in the CIA?](#) lists Brown in some detail. More importantly, perhaps, virtually every trade union leader in Europe associates Brown with the CIA. Even those who support the "free trade union" anti-communist ideas that Brown has pushed admit that his ties extend much further and deeper than the AFL-CIO.

Nevertheless, the leaders of the AFT in 1977 thought enough of their control of their union (and so little of its members) that they felt confident in listing Brown on the convention program as "AFL-CIO Representative in Europe."

In the pages that follow, we will discuss the CIA's ties with the foundations (AIFLD, AALC, and AAFLI) that are now actively supported by our union. Finally we will return to the questions raised by the AFT, Irving Brown, and CIA unionism.

One of the main questions that needs to be raised in every step of this investigation is “Where does the money come from?” Those who read the [book](#) or saw the [movie](#) *All the President's Men* remember [Deep Throat](#)'s admonition to the reporters: “[Follow the money.](#)”

Unfortunately, in dealing with CIA conduits and CIA money nowadays things are not as simple as they were 15 or 20 years ago. Prior to the social upheavals in the United States in the 1960's, the CIA generally followed Braden's scheme of funneling money through legitimate fronts or setting up quasi legitimate organizations to act as conduits. The ILGWU, the [Jewish Labor Committee](#), and a number of other organizations laundered CIA money on the way to Brown and his friends at the beginning of the Cold War.

Embarrassing revelations of this practice during the 1960's caused a change in the CIA's *modus operandi* in money matters. When it was discovered that CIA money was being funneled into student groups, professional associations, and labor unions through CIA dummy “foundations,” the practice was reorganized. The [National Student Association revelations](#) and the exposure of CIA [funding](#) for the [Congress for Cultural Freedom](#) ended the days of the foundation, as far as can be determined.

Since that time, overseas funding for special projects has been channeled through United States government agencies. The most prominent of these is the Agency for International Development (AID), which is used to provide cover for both CIA money and CIA operatives around the world today.

Norris Grambe no longer signs receipts for money from Warren Haskins today. But Norris' dollars—and he has always had more than enough of them—come from the same “vaults” referred to in Braden's article.

Chapter Three: The American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD)

The [American Institute for Free Labor Development](#) (AIFLD) is the oldest, largest, and wealthiest of the three international labor organizations founded by the AFL-CIO in the 1960's. It is aimed at Latin America.

AIFLD was founded in 1962 as a non-profit corporation. George Meany is president; [J. Peter Grace](#) of [W. R. Grace & Co.](#) is Chairman of the Board. According to Fred Hirsch's excellent pamphlet *Under the Covers with the CIA: An Analysis of Our AFL-CIO Role in Latin America*:

Originally an educational project, AIFLD now operates in several other fields—social projects, credit facilities, social action and “community development.”

The educational phase of the operation is massive. In Colombia and Peru, it has trained as much as 5% of the union membership—far exceeding any AFL-CIO training program in the U.S. In local seminars, people are chosen to participate in area-wide and nationwide seminars; from these are selected the most likely people (often they are not even trade unionists) who are offered [a three-month course](#) in AIFLD's training center at Front Royal, Virginia. During this time the trainee's family receives a stipend and the trainee gets a per diem payment in excess of what he or she would earn on the job. When the Front Royal course is completed, trainees are [returned home](#) where they continue on the AIFLD payroll for at least an additional nine months.

During their nine months of post graduate work, AIFLD's trainees are called “interns.”

AIFLD's educational programs teach trade union history; time and motion study; cooperatives; credit unions; and “Political systems: democracy and totalitarianism.” AIFLD's social programs include housing projects. A 1968 Senate study [found](#) that the strings AIFLD attached to its housing grants were “too high a price to pay” for many Latin American unions. AIFLD demands complete control over the project.

By 1967, AIFLD's annual budget was over \$6 million. More than 90% of this came from the United States Agency for International Development (AID), with the rest coming from AFL-CIO unions and the corporations on the AIFLD Board of Directors.

The interest of the American labor movement in Latin America began under AFL president [Samuel Gompers](#) in the first decades of this century. It was not until the establishment of the Free Trade Union Committee during World War II and its evolution into the AFL (and, later, the AFL-CIO) International Affairs Department, however, that Latin American affairs for American labor were locked into the Cold War.

[Serafino Romualdi](#) was Jay Lovestone's commissar in Latin America until his death ten years ago. During the late 1940's and early 1950's, Romualdi worked through the International Confederation of

Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and various cooperative International Trade Secretariats to carry out Cold War policy in the name of American labor. Romualdi's first job south of the border was to split the Latin American labor movement the same way Brown had split the European movement. In 1946, Romualdi reported to the AFL convention that U.S. government policy-makers, a number of whom opposed his work, were "If not openly allied, they are definitely supporting groups in Latin America who are enemies of the American way of life and who are followers of the Communist Party line."

It is worth noting that Romualdi's charges of "Communists in the State Department" came five years before Sen. [Joseph McCarthy](#) revealed his famous "[list](#)" that nobody ever saw. Romualdi's threat had its effect. The Free Trade Union Committee and the AFL began receiving government support, while the Latin American Confederation of Labor ([CTAL](#)), which had the support of the CIO, came under attack. By 1948 the labor movement was split and minorities from unions in 17 countries formed the Inter-American Confederation of Labor ([CIT](#)). Romualdi's work was exactly paralleling Brown's.

By 1949, [Arthur Goldberg](#) and his friends in the CIO had split it, forcing the expulsion or disaffiliation of the so-called "communist dominated" unions. The CIO [split](#) with CTAL and lined up behind the CIT. The CIT became the "Pan American" branch of the ICFTU. The new organization was the Inter-American Organization of Workers ([ORIT](#)).

ORIT became so identified with U.S. policy that it outlived its usefulness in Latin America within the decade. In 1968, a staff report of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations stated:

...there seems to be a decline in ORIT prestige in Latin America. More fundamental, perhaps, has been the tendency of ORIT to support U.S. government policy in Latin America. ORIT endorsed the [overthrow](#) of the [Arbenz](#) regime (in 1954) in Guatemala and [of the Goulart](#) regime (in 1964) in Brazil. It supported [Burnham](#) over [Cheddi Jagan](#) in Guyana, and it approved the [U.S. intervention](#) in the Dominican Republic. To many Latin Americans, this looks like ORIT is an instrument of the U.S. State Department....

Since the death of Romualdi, the AFL-CIO has been represented in ORIT by [Andrew McLellan](#) of the International Affairs Department. But the Department's main concern has been with AIFLD, not ORIT, since the early 1960's.

Fred Hirsch cites two examples of Romualdi's work through ORIT in the 1950's: Cuba and Guatemala. Prior to the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, Romualdi backed the [Cuban Workers Federation](#) (CTC). In exchange for the right to exist, the CTC gave silent support to the dictatorship of [Fulgencio Batista](#). The leader of the CTC, [Eusabio Mujal](#), kept a lid on Cuban labor for Batista by suspending union elections, removing opposition leaders from union office, opposing strikes and arranging for dues checkoff favors from the dictatorship. After Romualdi failed to make a deal with [Fidel Castro](#), he and his faction in the CTC turned against the new government. When the new leadership came into power in the CTC after the revolution, Romualdi declared it a totalitarian union federation and supported the Cuban unions in exile in Miami.

Five years before the Cuban Revolution, ORIT assisted an admitted CIA operation in Guatemala. In 1954, Jacobo Arbenz was **elected** president of Guatemala and began a program of land reform

programs which threatened the interests of the [United Fruit Company](#). Prior to his election, Arbenz had full union support. Romualdi tried to organize a dual union federation and failed. His protégés then joined General [Carlos Castillo Armas](#) in organizing a [CIA army](#) in Nicaragua (with the help of, among others, [E. Howard Hunt](#)). Armas organized a coup d'état which overthrew the Arbenz regime. Romualdi returned to Guatemala to "reorganize" the labor movement. George Meany announced that the "AFL rejoices in the downfall of the Communist controlled regime." United Fruit kept its plantation. Interestingly, the same CIA bases used to train the Armas forces were used almost ten years later to train Cuban exiles for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Enter AIFLD

While ORIT was running out of credibility in Latin America, various International Trade Secretariats (ITS's) under the CIA wing were gaining. The most important of these in the 1950's were the [Postal, Telephone, and Telegraph International](#) (PTTI), the [Public Service International](#) (PSI), and the [International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers](#) (IFPCW).

The ITS's in the Western Hemisphere had worked closely with the ICFTU and ORIT throughout the 1950's. The American affiliates of the various secretariats represented the affiliation (and political orientation) within the AFL-CIO.

The Public Services International (PSI) played the leading role in the 1964 overthrow of the government of Cheddi Jagan in British Guiana. Six AIFLD "interns" were delegated to work full time on the political general strike that finally brought down the government. Another American active in the overthrow of Jagan was [Gene Meakins](#), who went to the country in 1963 at the request of the [Guiana Trades Union Council](#) (TUC) as a representative of the Inter-American Federation of Working Newspapermen's Organizations, an ORIT affiliate. Meakins, who was given a leave of absence from the UPI office in Denver, served as "Public Relations Advisor" to the TUC during the destabilization period prior to Jagan's ouster.

[Arnold Zander](#), former president of the [American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees](#) (AFSCME), later admitted using AFSCME and the PSI as a conduit for CIA funds during the chaos that brought down Jagan. [Howard McCabe](#), Zander's man in Guiana, received \$450,000 funneled through AFSCME to help finance the strike in Georgetown.

[AFSCME's CIA connections](#) were one of the factors that led to Zander's ouster as national president by Jerry Wurf in 1964. Reflecting on the internal fight within AFSCME later, Wurf stated that Zander's faction "spent very large sums of money. I believe I can make a strong case that it came from the CIA...." The campaign to defeat Wurf and his ticket even involved "dirty tricks." A number of anonymous leaflets appeared. According to Wurf:

They [the Zander people] did other outrageous things. Some leaflets appeared, and though they could not be attributed to anyone, they had the professional touch. In one case the leafletter, one of their guys from New England, emphasized my big nose in an amateurish appeal to anti-Semitism....

Down south they circulated a picture of me handing a check to [Roy Wilkins](#), head of the NAACP....

Despite the dirty tricks, Wurf and his supporters won the election. After they took over the union's offices, one of their first jobs was to sever the CIA tie:

When Wurf first arrived at AFSCME headquarters following the '64 convention, he noticed the presence of what he describes as "trench coat types." One of these men was AFSCME's alternate representative to the PSI, Howard McCabe. When the new president tried to find out from McCabe and his associates exactly what they were doing in the building, he received vague explanations, and was advised to be patient and wait for the proper time to ask questions.

(Billings and Greenya, *Power to the Public Worker*, pp. 146-147)

Wurf and his people decided to ask the CIA to leave. In 1966, the *New York Times* revealed that AFSCME, the Newspaper Guild, and the International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers had been conduits for CIA funds and sponsors of CIA programs.

A similar relationship developed during the 1950's between the [Communications Workers of America](#) (CWA) and ITS, the Postal, Telephone and Telegraph International (PTTI), and the CIA. In the case of the CWA, however, internal politics did not produce Jerry Wurf and his movement for union reform. Instead the CWA, PTTI, and the AFL-CIO produced the American Institute for Free Labor Development, AIFLD.

After a stormy beginning out of a federation of company unions in the Bell Telephone system, the CWA was born in 1947. Its predecessor, the National Federation of Telephone Workers (NFTW), had been founded in 1939 and had grown in strength and militancy during and after the Second World War. By 1947, the federation had changed its name to the Communications Workers of America, an industrial union embracing the majority of workers in the Bell system and its affiliates. The NFTW had not affiliated with either the AFL or the CIO. In 1949, the CWA affiliated with the CIO, largely because the AFL had persisted in raiding CWA union locals through the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The CWA's rise to prominence among "free trade unions" did not begin until after the merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955. A faction fight within the leadership in 1956 found CWA president [Joseph Beirne](#), a former Western Electric worker in New Jersey and one of the founders of the union, facing a red baiting challenge from vice president A. T. Jones. Jones charged Beirne with "defending communists." Beirne's campaign was waged around his record and the question of free speech for a union member from Milwaukee who had been affiliated with the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party.

Beirne campaigned as an enemy of "totalitarianism" who refused to "practice totalitarianism within the union." He won. After the election, the entire Jones faction was reintegrated into CWA leadership and Beirne faced no further challenge from then until his death in 1974.

The origins of AIFLD lie in the relationship between the CWA and the PTTI. According to Thomas Brooks, a writer for the SDUSA newspaper [New America](#), and author of a [recent history](#) of the CWA:

CWA deeds have given life to CWA words in a way that is unique among unions. It has been active in the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International (PTTI), a trade union secretariat representing telecommunications workers in all parts of the free world.

In 1959, however, CWA developed a unique program to give substance to its commitment to free trade unionism. CWA president Beirne, vice president Ray Hackney and Louis B. Knecht, then director District 9, initiated a project to provide direct, voluntary assistance from CWA District 9 locals to communications workers unionization efforts in Ecuador. Eighty locals pledged two dollars a month, which allowed Jose M. (Pepe) Larco, now the general secretary of the Ecuadorean Federation of Telecommunications Workers, to work full time as a union organizer in his country. Since then, CWA's Operation South America has grown, sustaining union activities in thirteen different Latin American and Caribbean countries with all of CWA's twelve districts involved.

(Brooks, *Communications Workers of America*, pp. 239-240).

“Pepe” looks different from Ecuador. During the 1950's the nation had its first decade of civilian rule unpunctured by coups d'etat. In 1960, president [Velasco Ibarra](#) was re-elected president on a nationalist and anti-Yanqui platform. Refusing to break diplomatic relations with Cuba, he attempted to institute moderate reforms in the economy. His attempted populism could not solve the nation's crisis, however. From 1961-63, the country swung to the left. Velasco was dumped by the Armed Forces and [Carlos Julio Arosemena](#) was recognized as his constitutional successor. Arosemena continued relations with Cuba and instituted radical land reform. He had the support of the majority of the peasants and the unions, with the exception of the small, “free trade union federation,” the Ecuadorean Federation of Free Trade Unions, or CEOSL.

In 1962, Arosemena was ordered by the military to break off relations with Cuba or be deposed. He did. Nevertheless, the following year, he offered a toast at a banquet honoring the president of Grace Lines, Admiral McNeil:

To the people of the United States, but not to its government, which exploits the people of Latin America.

At dawn the next day, the presidential palace was surrounded by tanks.

Ecuador has had three [trade union federations](#). The [Ecuadorean Workers Federation](#) (CTE) with 40,000 members in 800 unions, is close to the [Ecuadorean Communist Party](#). The Catholic trade union federation, the Ecuadorean Confederation of Working Class Organizations (CEDOC), was originally anti-communist and conservative based in the Church and the Conservative Party. In recent years, it has taken a number of stands placing to the left of the CTE. The third federation is the [CEOSL](#).

Pepe Larco's telecommunications workers are affiliated with CEOSL. After the 1963 coup d'état, both the CTE and CEDOC militants were persecuted by the junta. CEOSL received the same consideration from Ecuador's right wing dictators that the Cuban Workers Federation received from Batista.

Out of the cooperation between the CWA, PTTI, and Larco came the idea for the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD).

In cooperation with the PTTI, CWA established a school for Latin American unionists at Front Royal, Virginia. At the first graduation ceremony, AFL-CIO president George Meany, CWA president Beirne and a few others gathered around the same table and had an idea which became the American Institute for Free Labor Development organized under the aegis of the AFL-CIO.

Now in its fifteenth year, AIFLD graduates approximately 150 students a year who return to their countries with invaluable know-how about union organizing and union operations. CWA's Operation South America, its involvement with PTTI, its support of Soviet dissidents, commitment to Israel and other democratic forces opposed to Soviet aggression and totalitarianism in all its forms is rooted in a deep concern, perhaps best expressed by AFL-CIO president Meany when he declared, 'We feel that unless there is a free trade union movement, there's always a danger of people losing their freedom—of people becoming chattels or becoming slaves or becoming colonial assets, as it were, of imperialist countries.'

(Brooks, p. 240)

AIFLD At Work

AIFLD is what the AFL-CIO's International Affairs Department people call a "tripartite" organization. [Tripartism](#) means that business, labor and government are all represented on AIFLD. That's supposed to insure that things are worked out cooperatively, rather than through strikes and what has been called "class struggle." AIFLD is the embodiment on the international level of the AFL-CIO's philosophy of collective bargaining and "cooperation." This has been called class collaboration.

In **practice**, tripartism has worked out quite well for the governments and corporations which don't want their countries disrupted by class struggle. In **theory**, it is supposed to benefit the working people of the country as well.

AIFLD is jointly sponsored by the AFL-CIO, 95 transnational corporations, and the U.S. government. As we noted earlier, Meany is president and J. Peter Grace is Chairman of the Board. Mr. Grace is also chief executive of W. R. Grace & Co. W. R. Grace runs Grace Lines, among other enterprises. A military coup d'état ousted Ecuadorean president Arosemena the morning after he insulted the president of Grace Lines in 1963. As AIFLD has proven over the years, it's not nice to fool with tripartism.

A list of AIFLD's corporate sponsors includes International Telephone & Telegraph, the various

Rockefeller interests, the copper companies, and virtually every major transnational corporation with large interests in Latin America.

Like ORIT before it, AIFLD has come to be identified with right wing juntas, exploitation, and “Yanqui imperialism” south of the border. During its 16 year history, AIFLD has given enough evidence to support that charge. At the same time, it has poured out tons of propaganda talking about its good works for the consumption of North Americans who ask about it. AIFLD has also worked with the CIA.

The Money Behind AIFLD

According to AIFLD’s own documents, 92% of its budget comes from the [United States Agency for International Development](#) (USAID). That’s **not** the CIA. Or is it?

By the end of the 1950’s, the heyday of direct CIA subsidies to trade unions and other “free world” projects was coming to an end. In the ‘50’s, Tom Braden could funnel CIA money to Irving Brown and the others in the Free Trade Union Committee through organizations like the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, the Jewish Labor Committee, and scores of “charitable” and “cultural” organizations. At the same time, the CIA established a number of dummy foundations around the country to give “grants” to worthy causes.

Conduits and grants through proprietary foundations became dangerous for the CIA. They could be uncovered by curious journalists, resulting in embarrassment to the recipients, who had been parading around the world as disinterested spokespeople for freedom.

When the National Education Association (NEA), the National Student Association (NSA), the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and a number of other organizations were exposed in the 1960’s as having received CIA money, a new tactic was needed. (Interestingly, it was the American Federation of Teachers that was one of the most vociferous critics of the NEA’s CIA connection when it came out.) The NSA lost all credibility on college campuses when *Ramparts* magazine blew its cover.

Exposures have continued to today. In December, 1977, the *New York Times* devoted four days of feature articles to the CIA’s manipulation of journalists and the media.

As a result, AID became the new “cut out” through which CIA money could be funneled to worthy causes. A broad range of good will programs serves as cover for the nuts and bolts of the operation. When things are going well, AIFLD is spending AID money to shore up “free trade unions” in such “free world” showplaces as Brazil, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, etc. In countries run by right wing dictatorships, the only unions allowed to function are AIFLD-sponsored “free trade unions,” and since “free trade unionism” has to be cleared with the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO, these countries are **really** free. George Meany has said at least a hundred times that the degree of freedom in a country can be judged by whether it has a “free trade union movement.”

Chile is a good example. In 1973, Chile lost its democratically-elected President and regained its “free trade union movement” with the help of AIFLD, the Pentagon, the Chilean oligarchy, the right wing of

the Catholic Church, and a group of freedom loving generals who proceeded to execute at least 30,000 people, most of them trade unionists.

AIFLD and Chile

By the early 1970's, the CIA hadn't had a good coup d'etat in Latin America in almost a decade. There had been a number of small actions since the Dominican Republic was "saved" in 1965, but the last really big event was the [coup in Brazil in 1964](#) which overthrew the [Goulart](#) regime and installed the beginning of a [series of dictatorships](#) that have made Brazil one of the safest places for investment in Latin America. AIFLD, by the way, bragged that its interns had helped.

As early as 1962, AIFLD was active in Chile. [William C. Doherty, Jr.](#) (son of the president of the Mail Handlers Union) led a delegation from AIFLD that met with Chilean labor leaders and offered loans for housing and coops. Doherty was followed by John Snyder and Ester Cantu of PTTI, who set out to organize telephone workers. The thing was, the telephone workers of Chile already had a union, the militant Union of Telephone Employees. Snyder and Cantu were unphased. They were out to organize a "free trade union" along the lines of Ecuador.

They got help from [International Telephone and Telegraph](#), which runs the telephone system in Chile. They were given a list of company employees **by the company**. According to Fred Hirsch, "When Doherty's people won the next union election, the company saw to it that the former militants of the Union of Telephone Employees were fired." Again, free trade unionism meant dual unionism and company unionism. In this case, however, AIFLD's company union went too far. In 1967 it was kicked out in another election. ITT could no longer deal with one of its partners in progress and had to deal with a union of the telephone workers.

Again Hirsch:

On a larger scale, AIFLD employed the dual union tactic used in so many other countries. In 1962, AFL-CIO representative [Morris Paladino](#) went to Chile to make a deal with Jose Goldsack, a leader of the minority Christian Democratic faction of the Central Confederation of Workers (CUT). The tactic was to split the CUT convention. The tiny National Confederation of Workers (CNT) and its largest member, the Maritime Confederation of Chile (COMACH) were to demand admission to the CUT convention. Paladino was to supply all back dues. If they were denied entry, it was to signal a mass withdrawal of the minority. Paladino would pay the rent on a new hall and the first expenses of a new labor federation devoid of leftists.

The deal fell through when Goldsack backed out of the plan. But neither COMACH nor the CNT would disappear. Today the CNT is **the** Chilean "labor movement"—with the blessings of the junta. But that's getting ahead of the story.

Throughout the 1960's AIFLD continued to work among the small unions of the CNT, while the CUT continued to grow. In 1967, the CIA worked overtime to insure the re-election of Christian Democratic President [Eduardo Frei](#), who was glad for the help in defeating the [Popular Unity Coalition](#) which was

backing [Salvador Allende](#). This program of the CIA was disclosed by the [Senate Select Committee on Intelligence](#) in its recent hearings on the CIA.

By 1970, however, Frei's solutions to Chile's problems had failed, and the Chilean people elected Allende with a plurality of the vote (it was a three way race). The Popular Unity Coalition was in power, despite some discussion within the U.S. government of a coup d'etat. It was decided to wait.

During the wait, however, the United States undertook a campaign to "destabilize" the Allende government. The [destabilization campaign](#) was planned by the top level "40 Committee" under the direction of Secretary of State [Henry Kissinger](#). The campaign had a number of elements ranging from the establishment of right wing, paramilitary gangs (called "Patria y Libertad"), cultivation of the military leadership, and labor activity. AIFLD coordinated the labor end of the plan.

While virtually all economic aid and loans to the Chilean government were cut off and the U.S. insured that the International Monetary Fund blacklisted the Chileans, two programs increased: military training for Chilean officers and AIFLD for "Chilean workers."

Since September 11, 1973, it's been clear what the military aid was for. It's been more difficult to get information on how AID's \$1 million in "technical assistance" was spent during that time.

The number of Chileans trained by AIFLD increased 400% in the year prior to the coup!

Who was trained and what was the nature of their training?

Chile: Bosses Become 'Workers'

In 1972, the AIFLD ten year report stated that COMACH, the Chilean Maritime Federation, was "the major labor organization with which AIFLD cooperates." Hirsch quotes Professor Nef, a professor of political science at the University of California at Santa Barbara, on the nature of COMACH:

Its membership is largely maritime officers, many of whom served as officers in the Navy. Even those without naval background spend their first year of training in classes with naval officers.

The officers of the [Chilean Navy](#)—with many heroic exceptions—were among the first to move against Allende on the day of the coup d'etat. Not so coincidentally, the U.S. Navy had ships on maneuvers off the coast of Chile on the day of the coup. Other professional employees associations which were active during the period of destabilization included the Mining Engineers, the Airline Pilots, and the independent truckers.

With more than 2,000,000 members by the time of the coup, the Chilean Confederation of Workers (CUT) had come a long way since the days when Morris Paladino tried to split it. Nevertheless, during the time when CUT was organizing the vast **majority** of Chilean workers into its affiliated unions, AIFLD [sponsored](#) the establishment of a Confederation of Chilean Professionals (CUPROCH). CUPROCH was brought into international prominence when its affiliate among independent truckers

staged a “shut down” in October, 1972. During the shut down, the truckers were reported by [Time magazine](#) correspondent Rudolph Rausch to be doing quite well—for strikers. Eating a meal of steak, vegetables, and empanadas, the truckers bragged they were getting their money from the CIA.

Many of the “strikes” which disrupted the Chilean economy during the period of destabilization were organized by professional associations, not by trade unions. Playing on the ambiguity of the meaning of the word “gremio,” the Chilean professional associations formed “The National Command for Gremio Defense.” In Spanish, gremio can mean either “union” or “guild.” According to Hirsch, “In Chile, a **gremio** is usually an association of employers, professionals, or tradespeople, but it can include both workers and employers.”

Hirsch lists the following leaders of the National Command:

- Confederation of Production and Commerce. George Fontaine, president, comes from one of the wealthiest oligarch families. He was once publicly associated with the Nazi movement.
- Society of Manufacturers, Orlando Saenz, president, “reputed to be the brain behind the Gremio defense; served as liaison with the U.S. Embassy and was a secret director of Patria y Libertad, the fascist para-military organization.
- National Society of Agriculture. Manuel Valdes, president of the Federation of Unions of Agricultural Employers (COSEMACH), organized road blocks in the countryside to prevent land reform. AIFLD trustee William Thayer helped establish COSEMACH.
- National Society of Agriculture. Benjamin Matte, past president, was a director of Patria y Libertad and advocated the murder of all communists.
- Chamber of Construction. Hugo Leon, president, stated: “We will carry on all of our forces to an enormous strike and not give in until the Armed Forces intervene and Allende is finished.”
- Central Work Confederation. Founded by Leon Vilarin, who was also president of the National Command for Gremio Defense, this organization became the labor spokesman for the junta after Sept. 11, 1973. Vilarin was also president of the Confederation of Truck Owners of Chile, even though he owned no trucks.
- Julio Bazan, president of CUPROCH, is a member of one of Chile’s oldest aristocratic families. He takes home \$7,000 a month as a mining engineer.

The above are some of the more prominent “leaders of labor” who worked with AIFLD in the three years of destabilization. Taking advantage of word ambiguity and resorting to downright lies, the representatives of “free trade unionism” in Chile attempted to portray the CUPROCH lock outs as strikes and the protests of middle class housewives as evidence of “workers’ dissatisfaction with the Marxist regime.”

Chileans in exile and international organizations estimate that 30,000 persons—most of them workers and members of the CUT—were killed during and after the coup. Additional thousands were imprisoned by the [DINA](#), the Chilean secret police. Many were tortured.

After the junta, the CUT was outlawed, its unions shut down, and its funds distributed among the Gremios. Thousands have been forced into exile.

At the same time, spokesmen for Chilean labor have been touring the hemisphere, defending the junta. Eduardo Rojas, president of COMACH, has been selected president of the new Chilean labor federation. Another AIFLD graduate, Luis Villenas, is vice-president.

The American Federation of Teachers and Chile

Even before the election of Albert Shanker as AFT president in 1974, the AFT was involved in Chile through the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU).

AFT's representative for Latin America in those days was Denise Thiry, a Chilean who worked in the AFT national office. Ms. Thiry had never been a member of an AFT local (or a teacher for that matter). She was hired to work in the AFT national office in the early 1970's. Prior to that, she had worked for PTTI.

According to former AFT president [David Selden](#):

It was through IFFTU that I first met Denise Thiry. She emigrated to Chile with her well-to-do parents during or soon after World War II from Belgium. In the 1960's, she was working in the office of the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International, which was housed in the headquarters of the Communications Workers of America in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Thiry started working as a secretary, but her linguistic ability—French, Spanish, English, and some German—and her general competence soon resulted in a promotion to an organizing position, working mainly in South America.

From PTTI, Ms. Thiry came into the AFT. According to Selden, he tried to establish an international program independent of AIFLD. It failed. "While the deal was under consideration I suddenly was offered the service of Denise Thiry to head it up."

Thiry represented the AFT in Latin America at the time of the Chile coup. The following year David Selden was defeated in his bid for re-election. Albert Shanker became AFT president. Four weeks after Shanker was elected—and less than a year after the bodies were smoking in the streets of Santiago, Chile—the AFT applied for its first AIFLD grant. Thiry was made director of international relations for the teachers union that she had never belonged to.

One of the people sponsored for training at Front Royal by the IFFTU (at Ms. Thiry's request) was Gilbert Gaston, an administrator in the National Military School in Chile at the time of the coup. Gaston spoke for his graduating class at Front Royal in March, 1974. He had nothing to say in criticism of the Pinochet junta. Afterwards, AIFLD sponsored him to go to Costa Rica to "clarify conflicting rumors about the Chilean situation."

We do know what happened to the Chilean Teachers Union after the coup—it was padlocked and its property was confiscated and turned over to a teachers' "professional association."

The IFFTU reported to AIFLD on the situation after the coup:

The democratic leaders are busy making the necessary contacts to re-organize the teachers under an organization reflecting the traditions of democracy in Chile. During her visit in November, 1973, Ms. Denise Thiry had the opportunity to discuss future programmes now that conditions have changed in that country. An intensive educational programme has been requested, in order to ensure a democratic base for the new teachers' organizations.

Seconding Ms. Thiry's opinion, AIFLD Director William Doherty, Jr. reported on July 1, 1974: "AIFLD will aid democratic, reformist workers to build strong unions in Chile, giving the country a democratic-dominated movement for the first time in many years."

We know the fate of at least one teacher who apparently was not part of the democratic teachers' movement that Ms. Thiry looked forward to. Forty-two-year-old [Marta Ugarta](#), a member of the Communist Party and the Chilean Teachers Union (SUTE), was arrested by DINA agents on August 9, 1976. Several weeks later, her body was found on the beach north of Valparaiso. She had been strangled, her jawbones and both wrists had been broken, and she had numerous contusions.

Pedro Jara had seen her in prison:

Comrade Marta was able to show us her wrists which had turned very dark. There was no longer any skin at some places, and she told us that she had been suspended for many hours during the interrogation. She also told us that she had been "treated" with electric current continuously and that she had been confronted by others.

After Marta Ugarta's body was found on August 27, the junta tried to claim that the death had been the crime of a pervert. The body was so mutilated that dental records were needed to make a positive identification.

1974: The AFT Gets Shanker and AIFL

By the time of the National Convention of the AFT in August, 1974, enough was known about the situation in Chile to move the delegates to pass a resolution strongly condemning the junta and calling on the U.S. government to place sanctions against the junta until basic rights were restored. The motion passed overwhelmingly.

Immediately after the Chile resolution was **passed**, a motion asking the union to investigate AIFLD's relationship to the 1973 coup was **defeated**. The motion, which simply asked for an investigation into charges against AIFLD, was opposed on the floor by [Sandra Feldman](#), a delegate from New York's United Federation of Teachers. In two days, Feldman would become an AFT vice-president, when Shanker's Progressive Caucus was swept into office. On the AIFLD motion, she said:

Now, there are those of us who know something about the AFL-CIO's role in

international affairs, and we know that we feel that the work that the AFL-CIO does through AIFLD is work which benefits workers in Latin America, which teaches the organizing skills including skills in developing their own trade skills and helps them organize free trade unions.

Now, the last thing that the AFL-CIO would be interested in doing is to put down the militancy of trade unions in the underdeveloped countries. It is in the interest of the AFL-CIO for militant free trade unions to develop in the rest of the world, certainly in Latin America, so that the workers in those countries cannot be used as slave labor, at low wages, undermining the wages of workers in the United States.

It is in the interests of workers in the AFL-CIO and in the United States and in the interests of workers in other countries for them to be able to build strong, militant, free trade unions, and that is the kind of work that the AFL-CIO is engaged in in Latin America and other places around the world where they are trying to aid fellow trade unionists.

I think that all this is trying to do is take a slap at the AFL-CIO, and I urge us to defeat it.

[AFT, Convention Proceedings, 1974, p. 87]

Feldman, at least, didn't have to worry about slapping AIFLD in the face. The motion was defeated. The following year, another resolution was introduced along the same lines. It, too, was defeated. By 1976 the annual Chile resolution merely called for a boycott of the "Torture Ship" Esmeralda, which was visiting the U.S. from Chile on a good will tour. That passed.

But by the 1976 convention, a number of things had changed. Most importantly, the AFT had become a part of AIFLD's network of U.S. unions working under contract on "union to union" projects.

Less than two weeks after he was elected AFT president, Shanker began the procedure to get the union officially into AIFLD. In September, 1974, AFT treasurer Bob Porter sent in an application for the AFT's first grant.

By 1977, the AFT was one of seven American unions participating in "union to union" AIFLD programs in Latin America.

Four of these unions—the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC), the Communication Workers of America (CWA), the Glass Bottle Blowers Association (GBBA), and the Retail Clerks International Union (RCIA)—presently receive AIFLD money in the form of what are called "subgrants." This means that they have the right to supervise their own administration of the money. Subgrant recipients are the journeymen of the AIFLD program. They don't need as much guidance.

Three other AIFLD unions—the AFT, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers (ACWA) and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) receive their money through "letters of

agreement.” These unions are required to submit to more direct AIFLD supervision in the administration of their programs.

The AFT hopes to be out of its apprenticeship before long. Already an AFT AIFLD budget of \$100,000 annually is projected by 1981.

Exit Ms. Thiry; Enter Messers Loewenthal and DiBlasi

Denise Thiry did not appear at the AFT’s 60th annual convention in [Bal Harbour, Florida](#), in 1976. Despite the fact that the union’s annual report had a section extolling her work, she had already resigned.

In August, 1978, we tried to find out what happened to her. We called the AFT and spoke with Ms. Carello in the International Affairs Department. When she said that nobody knew where Denise was, we asked whether she had left under a cloud. “Oh, no, we all loved her,” was the reply. Nevertheless, Ms. Thiry has left AFT and is unable to confirm stories that have been printed about her career, including one that charges that she held a party in her home in Washington, D.C. on the night of September 11, 1973, to celebrate the “return of democracy to Chile.”

Thiry’s work was taken over by Al Loewenthal, who works as assistant to AFT president Albert Shanker. It was Loewenthal who introduced Irving Brown to the loyalists who came to hear him rap during the 1977 AFT convention in Boston. Loewenthal’s major areas of work in the union recently have been “international affairs” and cold war anti-communist propaganda.

Al Loewenthal, “Educator?”

According to the 1976-77 “Report on the State of Union” distributed to all delegates and visitors to the convention (and subsequently published in the September, 1977 issue of the *American Teacher*, the union’s monthly newspaper):

Al Loewenthal, Assistant to the President, administers several departments, among them COPE, Legislation, Colleges and Universities, and International Education....

...He frequently represents President Shanker at union-related functions and plays an important role in the continuing development of the AFL-CIO PublicEmployee Department....

Loewenthal represents the AFT on the trade union advisory committees for the Jewish Labor Committee and the National Committee for Labor Israel (Histadrut). He is active with the staff of the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU)

Loewenthal was selected to represent the AFT on a survey team that visited teacher unions in the ASEAN countries, under the sponsorship of the IFFTU....

The IFFTU, like the other “free” labor unions and federations which sprinkle the AFL-CIA Orwellian glossary, has long been associated with the kind of “free trade unionism” that now exists in Chile. Working in coordination with the U.S. State Department’s Agency for International Development (AID) and the CIA’s agents in the western hemisphere, the IFFTU has increased its locals in the Caribbean from two to 19 in the three years since Loewenthal and Shanker moved their operation from New York to the union’s national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Loewenthal’s jobs are both ideological and organizational. On the organizational side, he coordinates “surveys” of teacher unionism in Asia, assists selected trade unionists through agencies like AIFLD, and works with men like Irving Brown to overthrow governments critical of the policies of the United States and the multinational corporations.

Loewenthal’s ideological tasks included bringing French author [Jean Francois Revel](#) to address the 1977 AFT QUEST conference in Washington, D. C. Revel, author of *Without Marx or Jesus*, is a leading European apologist for the United States. Part of Revel’s ideological contribution to the AFT was to tell people that America is doing nice things around the world and that fascism and communism are the same thing.

Loewenthal also works as a liaison with the [Jewish Labor Committee](#). The JLC was formed in 1934 by David Dubinsky of the ILGWU and a number of others who were preparing to leave the Socialist Party. It was partly a response to the anti-Semitism of the Depression and partly a bloc to pressure the AFL leadership to admit a Jewish member. There had been no Jewish labor leader on the AFL Executive Council since Samuel Gompers died in 1928.

The JLC also spent a good deal of its time during the thirties fighting “communism” and Jewish labor leaders who were communists. Since the main anti-Semitic organizations in the world were fascist, and since the communists were fighting fascism a lot earlier and a lot harder than a lot of the JLC’s friends, it was difficult to be anti-fascist and anti-communist in the labor movement of the late ‘30’s.

It was only after World War II that the JLC found its home. It began acting as a front for activities of the Lovestone-Irving Brown team in Europe and a conduit for CIA funds to Brown’s European unions.

According to George Meany’s official biographer, Joseph Goulden:

One group Brown used as a front was the Jewish Labor Committee in New York, which acted as a conduit to get AFL money to Force Ouvriere...ostensibly for Jewish relief, actually for organization. By late 1947 the AFL was sending FO three thousand dollars every three weeks through the JLC....

Considering the fact that many of the professional anti-communists who received Brown’s sponsorship in the post war years had been sympathetic to the fascists—and certainly not opposed to the fascists’ views about the Jewish people—helping Brown was a peculiar way to fight against anti-Semitism.

As part of his role as “educator” for the AFT, Loewenthal makes frequent contributions to the union’s national newspaper, the *American Teacher*. In the November-December, 1977 issue of the paper, for

example, the major book review deals with the book *American Labor and European Politics: The AFL as a Transitional Force*, by Roy Godson, Director of the Georgetown University International Labor program. An entire page of the newspaper is devoted to Loewenthal's review of the Godson book.

American Labor and European Politics presents the Irving Brown-as-Robin Hood version of post-World War II European labor history. Loewenthal's only criticism of the book is that there aren't more like it and that it didn't appear sooner.

Loewenthal recommends the book highly, partly because he seems to believe that we might have to crank up Brown's old cooperation in Europe again soon. He views the rise of eurocommunism and the growing independence of the European labor movement from George Meany's tutelage with alarm and warns:

...at a future date, in the struggle for democratic restoration, the lessons of post-war Europe will find application over and over again....

In the third world, we learn, those lessons are already "finding application." Loewenthal only hopes that that application can be more widespread, and that the American Federation of Teachers can be more active in applying it:

...The emergence of new nations in the aftermath of colonial rule has created newer problems. The tasks are very difficult because everywhere—from the new Caribbean Island nations to the giants on the Asian subcontinent—trade unionists fear the take-over tactics of well-financed Communist operatives, whether of the Moscow, Peking, or Havana types. In country after country, where economics, prove to be shaky, the situation is even more complex. Dictatorships, usually of the military variety, **emerge**, and the trade union movement is hobbled. **Teacher unions, for example are permitted to exist, but within prescribed limits under government guidance.** [Emphasis added]

Teachers unions like the SUTE in Chile are not even mentioned. They are not even permitted to exist "under governmental guidance," as Loewenthal so delicately puts it. Those unions which do exist under the military dictatorships established and maintained with the help of the CIA, the State Department, and the AFL-CIO's Department of International Affairs, practice a "business unionism." "Unions" collaborate with the local dictatorships and work to insure labor peace while the multinational corporations which help sponsor AIFLD exploit the workers.

In Chile, the first educator to come to AIFLD's Front Royal training center after the coup was a man named Gaston Gilbert. Gilbert was an administrator of the police academy of Santiago, one of the centers of the coup.

In fact, "labor leaders" of the kind Loewenthal sponsors live by the grace of their dictators and their dictators' masters in the U.S. Labor leaders that are not favored by the AFL-CIO risk their lives to organize in their native lands.

At the end of his essay on Godson's book, Loewenthal discourses on the renewed danger of Communism (of the "Moscow variety," we are left to assume) in Europe under the guise of Eurocommunism. Loewenthal is upset that the new European Confederation of Trade Unions has recently admitted the Italian Trade Union Federation which is led by members of the Italian Communist Party.

Apparently, European trade union leaders are not as wise as those leaders of the American Labor movement who supported the Taft Hartley Act and other laws aimed at eliminating communists at home after World War II. Irving Brown and his "colleagues" in Marseilles used money sent through the Jewish Labor Committee in New York to hire Mafia goons in Europe to eliminate communists there. Of course, the association between the anti-communist "socialists" of New York and organized crime goes back long before World War II. But that's another part of the story. The mafia has always been a bulwark of anti-communism, just as it has been staunch in its opposition to "quotas"....

Although Loewenthal claims to be "pessimistic," his hope lies with books like Godson's and folks like Brown:

Are we witnessing a replay of 1945-47? Godson lets current grim facts fall into place and the picture is once again grim.

Can the rest of history repeat itself, i.e. the enormously successful role of the American trade unions? Will American multinational corporations operating in Europe agree to collective bargaining, American style? If they do, Godson suggests, all sorts of benefits to strengthen democracy could be the result in European and American unions....

Such benefits to democracy are apparent both abroad and at home. CIA unionism is insuring low wages in Latin America. The multinational corporations benefit. The workers suffer. The same freedom is coming home to the AFT: published votes; suppression of dissident locals....

The working people of New York are being educated by labor leaders like Shanker. Lowering wages and labor peace there, too. Educationally, this is pure Orwell.

But as educators, the leaders of the American Federation of Teachers are working overtime to insure that as many of us as possible have these lessons in our curricula.

Loewenthal's acquaintance with Professor Godson and the Georgetown University program in International Labor Affairs and Labor Economics is not one that came about through a book review.

In fact, the AFT jointly sponsors graduate study programs at Georgetown and Rutgers through the union's Department of International Education. Work done under supervised programs, including one for "graduate credit for overseas travel and study," can be applied to an M.A. in Labor Studies from Rutgers or even a D.Ed. For a year's study at Georgetown, selected AFT members can now receive an M.A. in International Relations.

The International Education Department of AFT, established under Loewenthal's direction in January,

1975, has been moving fast.

What does Al Loewenthal think of the CIA? He says he likes it. While members of the United Action Caucus were leafleting “Who Is Irving Brown” to delegates entering the convention at the Hynes Veterans Auditorium in Boston in August, 1977, he stopped to pick up a leaflet.

“What’s wrong with the CIA?” he asked a member of the New York teachers union, “I’ve been working with them for years.”

Anthony DiBlasi: AFT–CIA Man?

Immediately after the 1977 AFT convention in Boston, the union’s Executive Council met and made several appointments to national union positions.

The September, 1977 issue of the *American Teacher* noted:

Tony DiBlasi has been appointed as the AFT’s International Affairs representative under the direction of Al Loewenthal, assistant to AFT President Shanker. DiBlasi, 39, will be the AFT representative in coordinating IFFTU in Latin America....

Before taking his post with the AFT, DiBlasi was, since 1974, an assistant director for the American Institute for Free Labor Development at AIFLD’s Front Royal training center in Virginia, which offers labor education for South American trade unionists. Previously, he was an AIFLD field representative in Honduras and Ecuador.

Born in Somalia, Africa, DiBlasi spent twelve years in his native country, Italy, before moving to Washington, D.C. He holds a B.S. degree from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and did graduate work in economics and linguistics.

As we noted earlier, Front Royal’s graduates today staff some of the most important union posts in Latin America. Virtually all of them are leaders of unions which exist by the grace of Caribbean and South American military dictators, including the present governments of the two countries where DiBlasi has served for AIFLD.

The unions that AIFLD has supported in Ecuador, for example, have maintained or helped maintain a status quo which, in 1973, meant that:

....84% of all Ecuadoreans earn roughly five times less than that required to support a minimal standard of living....

....54% of the population receives only 9.5% of total income, while 7% receives fully one-half of total income generated in Ecuador.

Ecuador today, along with Honduras, stand among the poorest nations of the world. At the other end of the income spread in these countries stand the local elites who help maintain the power of the

multinational corporations which co-sponsor AIFLD.

Just as we are to believe that turtles fly, we will soon be told of the achievements of “free trade unionism” in the countries that DiBlasi has helped to pacify for multinational capital. AIFLD’s free trade unionism in Ecuador and Honduras is part of the problem, not part of the solution to working people there.

What the future holds for the AFT in international affairs, no one can say. One thing is clear. Neither AIFLD nor the AFT’s special relationship with it is going to go away.

Chapter Four: The African American Labor Center (AALC)

AIFLD's counterpart for Africa is the [African American Labor Center](#) (AALC). The two organizations refer to one another as “sister” organizations.

The AALC was founded in 1965 after more than a decade of tension between George Meany and the Lovestone people, on the one hand, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, on the other, over what to do in Africa. The contradictions within the ICFTU over African policy resulted from the simple fact that the U.S. government and the governments of the former colonial powers of Europe had conflicting interests in the African continent at each step in the struggle for freedom from colonialism. These were reflected in the labor unions working through the ICFTU. Even Force Ouvriere (FO), which had been created by Irving Brown with AFL-CIO and CIA money in France, balked at supporting the AFL-CIO's policies in the French colonies of North Africa. The result was that the AFL-CIO accused the ICFTU of obstructing the work of decolonization and of being soft on communism. AALC—a totally owned subsidiary of the AFL-CIO whose money comes from the U.S. government—was born.

Unlike the AIFLD, AALC does not enshrine “tripartism” in its Board of Directors. George Meany is President and Chairman of the Board. Irving Brown was Executive Director from 1965 until 1973, when he was succeeded by Patrick O'Farrell. The entire Board of Directors is composed of leaders of AFL-CIO unions.

Like AIFLD, the AALC pushes programs of workers education and technical assistance for African union leaders and members. It also makes direct grants and low interest loans to African unions for various purposes. In 1970, the Center paid \$350,000 to build the headquarters of the [Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions](#) (CELU). Former Emperor Haile Selassie attended the dedication ceremonies for the building.

Most of the AALC's projects are less grandiose than the CELU headquarters in Ethiopia. They include mobile health clinics, smaller buildings, office equipment, and technical assistance. AALC “technical assistants” operate today in more than 40 sub-Saharan African nations training African workers in skills ranging from tailoring in Dakar to diesel mechanics in Ghana. The AALC even gave a 16 mm. movie projector to SWAPO, the [Southwest Africa People's Organization](#), which is fighting a guerilla war against the illegal occupation of Namibia (the African name for Southwest Africa) by the Union of South Africa.

The core of the AALC program is “workers education.” Unlike AIFLD, the AALC does not have a Front Royal, Virginia, at which to host large numbers of scholarship students. Most training is done at various locations in Africa itself. A small number of [handpicked leaders](#) are sent to Harvard University, where they study in the Harvard Trade Union Program. After completing their classroom work, they spend time in the United States visiting American unions.

AALC educational work emphasizes collective bargaining and workers' self-help as opposed to strike action. Typical courses in Africa are devoted to collective bargaining, union management (a sample:

“How to Establish a Stable Dues Structure”), and cooperatives. The Center has spent millions of dollars financing African workers’ credit unions and cooperatives.

By the end of 1971, just six years after its founding, the AALC had projects in 31 sub-Saharan African nations and in Tunisia. Since that time, projects have expanded to more than 40 nations.

Since Patrick O’Farrell became Executive Director in 1973, the AALC *Reporter* has given more and more space to the work of the International Trade Secretariats (ITS’s) in Africa. The most active ITS’s have been the International Journalists Federation, the Retail Clerks International Association (RCIA), the International Metalworkers Federation (IMF), and the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU). Much of the work done by the ITS’s in Africa is financed by the AALC, which tightly controls the money to insure political reliability among its subcontractors and its African proteges. In 1972, AALC announced that Force Ouvriere, the French union established with Irving Brown’s AFL-CIO and CIA money after World War II, had established a parallel organization, the Institute Syndicale Cooperation, which would work with the AALC in French-speaking Africa.

Free Trade Unionism in Southern Africa

The AFL-CIO has been on record for almost two decades in opposition to the apartheid policies of the Union of South Africa. AFL-CIO unions have participated actively in boycotting Rhodesian chrome, and the federation has lobbied for sanctions against the two main white supremacist regimes in Southern Africa.

The specific programs of the AALC in Southern Africa, however, reveal a great deal about its intentions and its allies.

Prior to the liberation of Angola from Portuguese colonialism, the AALC devoted a great deal of time and money to programs for Angolan unionists in exile in Zaire (formerly the Belgian Congo). At the end of 1973, the two “exile” Angolan union federations in Zaire merged to form the Centrale Syndicate Angolaise (CSA), which was affiliated with the GRAE (the “[Angolan Revolutionary Government in Exile](#)”).

At the time, there was a minimum of three “national liberation movements” for Angola. The Angolans in Zaire were affiliated with [Holden Roberto’s National Front for the Liberation of Angola](#) (FNLA). The majority of those inside Angola were fighting for [Augustin Neto’s Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola](#) (MPLA), while a tribal movement in southern Angola had been organized into [UNITA](#), led by [Jonas Savimbi](#).

After the MPLA liberated Luanda, the capitol of Angola, in 1975, negotiations began between the three movements towards the formation of a new government. These ended when the FNLA and UNITA attacked the MPLA from the north and south respectively. Troops from the Union of South Africa aided UNITA, while it was charged at the same time that the FNLA in Zaire was under the control of the CIA.

Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon denied any CIA support for Holden Roberto and the FNLA. The

MPLA has since defeated the FNLA “army” and most of UNITA. Angola, under President Neto, is trying to rebuild.

Nixon and Kissinger were lying four years ago. In 1978, the former head of CIA in Angola, [John Stockwell](#), published a book detailing the [CIA’s operation](#) against the MPLA from Zaire. The FNLA, with its affiliated “unions” and army, it turns out, was a CIA operation. With the defeat of Roberto’s army and the establishment of MPLA control in Angola, the AALC’s “free trade union” federation, the CSA, has dropped out of sight.

Similar contradictions exist in Zimbabwe, where American policy has changed since the days of Kissinger only to the extent that U.S. Ambassador Andrew Young is able to speak out forcefully for black majority rule while the agencies of the U.S. government work to insure that it will be the “right” kind of blacks who rule the majority. In 1973 the third world was scandalized (but not surprised) with the revelation that Kissinger had organized a plan for NATO intervention in Southern Africa (called, typically, “[Operation Tar Baby](#)”) to prevent a radical takeover of Southern Africa.

With the liberation of Angola and Mozambique in 1974, the position of Zimbabwe (the African name for the settler state of Rhodesia) changed radically. Even the intransigents behind Rhodesian Prime Minister [Ian Smith](#) admit that some form of “majority rule” will be necessary in the future. The question for the black workers and peasants of Zimbabwe will be what kind of economic, political, and social life they will face with the onset of “majority rule.”

Irving Brown is already working on it. The AFL-CIO’s “freedom fighter” in Zimbabwe is Reuben Jamela. According to Philemon Mabuza, who served for seven years with the [Zimbabwe African Peoples Union](#) (ZAPU) as a guerrilla fighter and who is now living in exile in Britain:

Reuben Jamela was a protagonist during the early sixties for affiliation with the American dominated International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. He was a good friend of Irving Brown, the international representative of the AFL-CIO, the conservative U.S. trade union federation, and was one of the several Zimbabwean trade union movement individuals showered with money by the ICFTU. During its heyday, he was an executive board member of that body.

Much hated by the nationalists, he was stoned at a nationalist figure’s funeral. He is remembered by the workers in Haare, Salisbury, as the man who pulled the rug from under their feet in several wage struggles. He quit his high position in the trade union movement in the early 1960’s, but remained a member of the Salisbury Municipal Workers Union. Like many Zimbabwean power seekers, he has an uncanny way of bouncing back.

Late last year (i.e. late 1977), he announced that he was going to form, with the backing of the AFL-CIO, the Zimbabwean Labour Confederation, a body that could again split the trade union movement if it gained support.

A million dollars can go a long way toward creating a labor leader, even if he has no base among the rank and file and is at odds with his own people. And **millions** of dollars are being spent by the AALC

and the other organizations promoting the AFL-CIO's "free trade unionism" in Africa, just as they are in Latin America.

By 1969, in less than five years, the AALC had officially spent more than \$9 million on its African program. Since that time, the amount spent annually has increased. While much of the money can be accounted for through the organization's "educational" and "technical" programs, a good deal of it is used directly to **bribe** African trade unionists. Brown's methods haven't changed much since he bought a French labor movement of sorts to support the Marshall Plan in the late 1940's.

In an exclusive interview in December, 1977, with Jean Bruck, former Secretary General of the World Confederation of Labor (WCL), Transnational Features Services reporters Rodney Larson and Don Thomson received confirmation of how Irving Brown was spending some of the money supplied to him by the AFL-CIO and AID:

They were influencing these conferences (of labor federations) through important gifts of money—large amounts of money—and the decisions of the meetings and conferences in order to make foremost the influence of the Americans on the African trade unions. They did not leave space for other influence.

Before the meeting would open, Irving Brown and his associates would be the first in the hotel. They were welcoming people and they were giving money to people, sometimes openly in the corridors with one suitcase and plenty of envelopes. They were giving their envelopes and they were giving their instructions to the people of the unions.

And after the meetings, when the meeting was successful in the way they were wishing it to be successful, they were giving additional envelopes to people who had assured their majority in the meetings.

(1977, Transnational Features Service. Reprinted by permission)

The "envelopes in the corridors" almost sounds too fantastic to believe, and perhaps it was when M. Bruck and the WCL faced Brown and Co. during the 1960's. Since the "Koreagate" scandals in Washington, the idea of envelopes in suitcases is not as hard to believe. And the money came from the same place; the American taxpayers through the CIA or its conduits.

Since 1973, the AALC has been developing programs for black workers in the Union of South Africa itself. AALC projects in South Africa are undertaken in the "tribal homelands" and the black provinces of Swaziland and Lesotho. A question could well be asked why the AFL-CIO is permitted to work in these areas while the government of the Union of South Africa kills organizers like [Steven Biko](#).

As early as 1966, Brown was warning the U.S. Congress about the need for stronger measures for dealing with Southern Africa. In testifying before the House of Representatives subcommittee on Africa, he made an analogy between South Africa and Vietnam which sounds more ominous today than it did 12 years ago:

The great involvement of America in Vietnam today (1966) is not unrelated to the need to be concerned about the rising and eventual threat to peace and freedom in South Africa. For South Africa today presents the kind of problem that Vietnam was some years ago before it **became necessary to involve over 200,000 American troops in a war to maintain the rights of people to their own kind of self-determination.** If the Western World had supported the nationalist movement in those early days and helped them to attain their independence in a peaceful and democratic manner, the resort to violence might have been averted by democratic mass movements within the country itself.

Eleven years after he made the above remarks to the U.S. House of Representatives, Mr. Brown stroked the same string in his speech as “AFL-CIO Representative in Europe” to the American Federation of Teachers. At the AFT convention in Boston in 1977, he said the same thing, warning that South Africa could become “another Vietnam.”

Considering the results of American involvement in Vietnam, we need to consider—as Brown told us to—our involvement in Africa. But we should also consider whether we want to drive into the Southern African quagmire with the same chauffeurs who brought us Vietnam and stuck with it until the bitter end. Irving Brown, Jay Lovestone, and the money they have been spending so lavishly since World War II have no more place in a truly free trade union movement than J. Peter Grace and the Rockefeller corporations. In practice, their definition of freedom—whether for Vietnam or Africa—has more to it of Orwell than of the Declaration of Independence.

As we pointed out in Chapter 3, the CIA was forced to reorganize its money conduits after the exposures of the CIA foundation-fronts during the 1960’s. Most observers credit the Agency for International Development (AID) with taking up the slack for the intelligence agency. It is certainly clear that AID is not offering U.S. unions \$40 million to organize the unorganized into “free trade unions” **inside** the United States. In fact, trade union membership in America as a percentage of the workforce is now at its lowest point since World War II and continues to drop. The same Congress that approves the AID package for AIFLD and the AALC defeats Labor Law Reform. Why?

It should be obvious that those who defeat Labor Law Reform for the United States and approve “free trade union” missionary work abroad are working for the same ends. What is confusing is that the people who are **doing** the missionary work don’t see the contradiction.

In 1972, George Meany bragged that 20% of the AFL-CIO budget was now going for international affairs. That’s nothing to brag about in a time when the organizing department has shrunk and unions all over the country are losing members.

Nevertheless, the AFT, which has likewise suffered a drop in membership, is preparing to get on the bandwagon with the African American Labor Center.

Teachers in Africa: Local 2 Takes the Lead

The AFT’s involvement with Irving Brown’s programs in Africa is still in its infancy. The 1978

national union convention is the first to consider a resolution dealing with the AALC.

Nevertheless, AFT members, especially those from New York's Local 2, have been active in AALC work for years.

In 1972, AALC took AFT national organizer Richard Arnold onto its staff to work in Addis Adaba.

In April 1973, the *AALC Reporter* announced that Doug McQuillan, a former member of the Delegate Assembly of AFT Local 2, the United Federation of Teachers, would join the AALC staff as a technical expert.

In October, 1973, the *Reporter* noted that UFT Assistant Treasurer Ponsie Hillman had toured Africa under AALC auspices, visiting Zaire, Kenya and Ethiopia. She also visited Europe and met with Force Ouvriere in France.

On April 22, 1974, the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU) met to discuss Pan Africanism in Zaire.

On June 8, 1975, AFT Vice-President Velma Hill represented the AFT at the AALC "Exchange of Views" in Chouilly, Switzerland.

On June 6, 1976, Albert Shanker, AFT President, joined Irving Brown and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland for the AALC "Exchange of Views" at Chouilly.

From April 16 to 21, 1978, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) Executive Director Vito DiLeonardis lectured on collective bargaining and trade union management in Kenya.

August, 1978, the AFT national convention considers a resolution proposed by the Executive Council on South Africa. Among other things, the resolution states:

The AFT reaffirms its commitment to the work of the African American Labor Center supported by the AFL-CIO. Aid and assistance must be provided to free trade unions which are operating under repressive conditions. As teachers, we offer special assistance to free teacher unions and urge their affiliation with the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions.

(Proposed AFT Convention Resolution #78).

Chapter Five: “Free Trade Unionism” in Asia Company Unions, Counter-revolution and the Asian American Free Labor Institute

The third of the AFL-CIO’s international organizations is the Asian American Free Labor Institute, founded in 1968. Like the AIFLD and AALC, it grew out of the AFL-CIO’s dissatisfaction with the political line of other international labor organizations. It enables the AFL-CIO to work directly with its friends in Asia, unhampered by the “interference” of organizations like the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The American Federation of Labor’s involvement in Asian affairs began during the same period as Irving Brown’s programs in Europe and Serafino Romualdi’s work in Latin America. The program was the same: split the trade union movement in the name of freedom and democracy. The money came from the same places: right wing unions in the United States and the CIA. The tactics are the same: “workers education” emphasizing anti-communism and class collaboration; plenty of money spent in the right places; and a tolerance for the kind of “free trade unions” that can make their peace with dictators, butchers, and corporations.

In the post World War II era, the Asian programs of the AFL were coordinated by [Jay Lovestone](#). The only difference was in the protagonists. Lovestone’s man in Asia was [Richard Deverall](#), a former executive secretary of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU). The ACTU had been one of the main forces in the drive against the left wing unions in the CIO. Deverall was based in Japan. Harry Goldberg was sent to Indonesia in 1951 and remained there for more than a decade. Goldberg was the son of one of the founders of the ILGWU and had been active in the anti-communist New York Teachers Guild during the 1940’s. His wife worked for the ILGWU education department. Morris Paladino, who was to become AAFLI executive director at its founding, had begun his career in the ILGWU as well. He had worked in both the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and AIFLD before going to AAFLI.

Paladino has been identified as a CIA agent by ex-agent Philip Agee. Deverall told George Meany’s biographer, Joseph Goulden, that Lovestone gave him CIA money:

CIA funds also went to the Far East [Goulden writes], sometimes through intermediaries, sometimes directly through Richard Deverall, Lovestone’s representative there. Deverall, who retired from the AFL-CIO after a near-fatal illness in the 1960’s, talked candidly about the process.

“Many times I was in Lovestone’s office in New York, one of those he got from Dubinsky...a man would come in with a stack of crisp new hundred dollars bills. Lovestone would sign a receipt for them. Sometimes he would ask me to take the money to Washington for him, if I happened to be going there within the next few days, and I would pass it on to whomever he directed. Most of it, however, went to support me in the field. I don’t think Meany knew where Lovestone was getting the money. Of course, it’s all common knowledge now, and I don’t see anything wrong with it.”

Deverall said that when he first joined Lovestone's staff, he did not know the source of the new hundred bills, but later "satisfied myself" that they came from the CIA.

(Goulden, *Meany*, p. 130)

Free Trade Unionism in the Philippines

One of Deverall's first jobs was to establish a "free trade union" movement in the Philippines after the war. In 1945, communist and leftist labor leaders in the country had established the Congress of Labor Organizations (CLO). Deverall charged that they had gotten aid from the American CIO, including the West Coast Longshoremen (the ILWU) and the National Maritime Union. At the same time, the ILWU and the NMU were both accused of being communist unions. When American unions helped the Filipino CLO establish its offices in Manila in 1947, Deverall dubbed the building "Kremlin East."

In 1951 the government of the Philippines outlawed the CLO and arrested its leaders. Deverall helped the [United States Mutual Security Agency](#) (one of USAID's predecessors) establish the Philippine Association of Free Labor Unions. The venture was unsuccessful, however.

The biggest American program for Filipino labor in the 1950's and 1960's was the Labor Education Center (LEC) at the University of the Philippines. LEC began as a local institute, but in 1960 its programs were [expanded](#) to make it a regional training center. Its curriculum is much the same as that of AIFLD. Cicero Calderon, the first head of LEC, described some of the center's goals:

By helping to promote the administration and operation of unions along democratic lines, the Center is expected to check the infiltration of Communists into the labor movement. By training effective and responsible labor leaders, the Center is expected to make a valuable contribution in promoting the sound labor management relations which are essential to the economic development program of the country.

According to Lenny Siegel's article, "Asian Labor: The American Connection" (Pacific Research and World Empire Telegram. July-August, 1975): "LEC students are required to have a background free of communism, totalitarianism, and subversion or willing collaboration with such parties or movements."

The center continues to function today. It is no threat to the [Marcos dictatorship](#), which has outlawed strikes. LEC courses frowned on strikes before Marcos came to power.

The "regional" section of the LEC was founded in 1960 and named the Asian Labor Education Center (ALEC). It was created by the U.S. government out of the LEC. The ALEC program has trained unionists from Burma, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, and South Vietnam. Students were originally selected by the U.S. government's foreign aid office in the country. At least one group from Malaya was sponsored by the Asia Foundation, which was shown in the mid-1960's to have been a CIA front.

Indonesia: Good Massacres

After Indonesia won its independence from the Dutch in 1949, the most powerful political parties in the country were the [Indonesian National Party](#) (PNI) and the [Indonesian Communist Party](#) (PKI). Indonesian president [Sukarno](#) was head of the nationalist party and a leader of the “non-aligned” nations during the 1950’s.

The [Indonesian Socialist Party](#) blocked with the large Moslem, [Masjumi Party](#) and organized the “Outer Islands” rebellion in 1957. The rebellion seized much of Sumatra and declared the [Provisional Government of the Republic of Indonesia](#). After the rebellion failed, the PSI, with the help of the [Ford Foundation](#), began working closely with rightist officers in the Indonesian military.

The largest Indonesian labor organization, the All Indonesian Central Organization of Labor (SOBSI), was close to the Communist Party. Beginning in 1951, the Free Trade Union Committee sponsored Harry Goldberg in Indonesia. “Free trade union leaders” from the country were sent for training at Harvard University and at the ILGWU in New York.

Goldberg’s trainees followed the usual FTUC pattern of establishing dual unions and cooperating with management. According to Siegel, however, the attempts met with limited success. It was not for lack of trying on Goldberg’s part. He candidly admitted that he tried to get the CIA to back the PSI and the Masjumi Party, without success. Nevertheless, the CIA did aid the “Provisional Government” during the 1957 Outer Islands rebellion against Sukarno.

Goldberg’s frustrating decade finally met with success in 1965. After an [abortive left wing coup](#) on October 1, the military seized power. It outlawed the PKI, the SOBSI, and a number of other organizations. In the [ensuing terror](#), an estimated 500,000 persons were killed. *Fortune* magazine said: “What matters is that 110 million Indonesians who were in the Communist orbit are now part of the world that is open to our persuasion and our help.” Siegel comments: “It took a lot of intrigue, controversy, and killing to transform the Indonesian labor movement....”

After suppressing the SOBSI, the Indonesian junta moved against Sukarno’s political party and its trade unions. The right wing Federation of Indonesian Islamic Trade Unions (GASBIINDO) was the major beneficiary. By 1966 it claimed 2.5 million members and had become a favorite of Goldberg and his sponsors. The federation’s philosophy was expressed by its president, Agus Sudono:

Islam teaches us that workers and owners of an enterprise are factors of production and distribution for the benefit of all. Because the Islamic philosophy of labor should give priority to the public welfare, Islam always urges industrial peace....

By 1967, labor education was begun with the help of Goldberg, Morris Paladino (then American assistant general secretary of the ICFTU and soon to head AAFLI), and a number of European unions and ITS’s. The massacre of half a million Indonesians had opened the door to successful “free trade union” activity in another country.

Vietnam: Home for AAFLI

“Free labor’s” protégé in Vietnam prior to 1975 was [Tran Quoc Buu](#) of the Vietnamese Confederation

of Labor (CVT). When the Asian American Free labor Institute was founded in 1968, it established its headquarters in Saigon. Between 1968 and 1973 it had trained 8,000 CVT members.

While the leaders of the AFL-CIO supported Buu, he had another relationship as well: he was a CIA agent. According to [Frank Snepp](#), who was the CIA's chief strategy analyst in Vietnam at the time of the liberation of Saigon in 1975:

Station personnel had succeeded in turning Buu into a “collaborator,” and since then we had been able to use him quite profitably, as an instrument for keeping the unions loyal to Thieu and for channeling pro-government propaganda to labor organizations around the world. From time to time station personnel had even helped Buu draft letters to labor leaders in the United States, soliciting their support. No one in the Station's front office seemed bothered by the fact that this was a violation of the CIA charter, which prohibits the agency from dabbling in U.S. domestic politics.

(Snepp, *Decent Interval*, pp. 14-15).

Buu was one of the main people trotted out by the AFL-CIO's International Affairs Department to justify their continued support of the War in Vietnam and the [Thieu regime](#). One of the last fall back positions of the hard liners who supported the U.S. in Vietnam was the “bloodbath” hysteria, which was pushed by both Richard Nixon and George Meany (with the help of Buu) in the early 1970's. Of course, there had been no outcry from the AFL-CIO cold warriors about the bloodbath that was taking place every day in Vietnam during the war, any more than the AFL-CIO had raised an eyebrow when the coup d'etat and massacres occurred in Indonesia.

Buu's “free trade union movement” was sold to Americans during the 1950's and early 1960's much the same way [Ngo Dinh Diem](#)'s government was sold. Diem, according to [Cardinal Spellman](#) and other hard liners who got us into the war in the first place, was “the George Washington of Vietnam.” Buu, according to Meany and Lovestone, was “the Sam Gompers of Vietnam.”

In fact, the Cold Warriors of the FTUC and the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO were fighting the Vietnam War even before the first American G.I. had died. Irving Brown had cooperated with Force Ouvriere in France to prevent French dockworkers from stopping arms shipments to the **French** War in Indochina in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

When Buu died in 1976 in exile, the AFL-CIO mourned his passing. The *AALC Reporter* eulogized Buu as one of the leaders of the Vietnamese independence movement and the founder of its labor movement. It didn't mention his other employer, the CIA.

The AFT and the War in Vietnam

During the 1950's, the AFT had had some contacts with the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO. From February 11 to March 16, 1964, AFT Secretary-Treasurer Irvin R. Keunzli, who was also president of the IFFTU, had flown around the world. Keunzli's trip was called a “vacation trip to visit teachers' unions and study educational problems in several nations of Europe, Asia, and the

Middle East.”

The report of Keunzli’s trip was published in a pamphlet form by the union. [“Flying Around the World on a Labor Education Tour”](#) was a collection of the letters Keunzli sent home during his trip.

The longest stop on the trip was Japan, where Keunzli was hosted by Richard Deverall, the AFL representative in Asia. His report is lavish in its praise of Deverall:

Dick Deverall is one of those devoted AFL men who are working long hours and facing many difficulties and often much suffering in carrying on an active battle for freedom and democracy in foreign lands. His accomplishments—like Fuji Yama—are beyond the description of words. While representatives of commercial companies build fortunes in gold in foreign lands—often by exploiting the people—Dick is building a fortune in the lives of men.

(AFT, “Flying Around the World on a Labor Education Tour,” p. 17)

Keunzli remained the AFT’s main man in international affairs throughout the fifties. A number of former national staff people said that they had thought of Keunzli when it was revealed in March, 1967, that the National Education Association (NEA) had been receiving money from the CIA. But no national magazine bothered to investigate possible CIA ties with the AFT. In fact, the AFT was only beginning to become a significant voice in education nationally by that time. The NEA still had ten times the membership of the AFT, whose rolls hadn’t even reached 200,000.

At the time of the NEA revelations, the AFT was in the middle of its battle to win collective bargaining for teachers and end the hegemony of the Association. AFT president [Charles Cogen](#) called for a full accounting of NEA funds, and the *American Teacher* editorialized on the subject:

The deepest tragedy for teachers, however, came when it was disclosed that some educators had fallen under the CIA spell. Evidence dug up by the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and other newspapers, appears to indicate that [William G. Carr](#), executive secretary of the National Education Association and secretary of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession, knowingly accepted CIA aid and helped organize a foundation that became a transmission belt for CIA money.

Carr’s intentions may have been “honorable.” Teachers who view the East-West struggle as one of primacy may sometimes forget how a democracy should operate, and substitute expedience for principle. If money is easily available for international projects—even if it comes from the CIA—why not take it and put it to use?

Such “gifts” are, eventually found out, as they were in this case. The integrity of teachers has been compromised, and American educators who go abroad, seeking links with colleagues in Europe, Asia and Africa, will henceforth be under suspicion that they may not be acting independently, but as arms of the government....If so, what makes them

any better than agents of totalitarian lands?

During the period of escalation of the War in Vietnam and of escalating anti-war protest, the AFT was quite busy organizing the unorganized and winning collective bargaining for teachers. Under president Charles Cogen (1964-1968) and David Selden (1968-1974), the AFT quintupled its membership. It rose from a rather sleepy union with a fine tradition and offices in Chicago to a powerful part of the labor movement with its offices in Washington, D. C. The overwhelming concern of AFT staff members and active teacher unionists was clearly organizing, not foreign affairs.

During that period, the AFT was represented in the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions by Carl Megal (the union's representative in Washington) and James O'Meara, a union vice-president from Cleveland. Their work was not a major part of the national union's affairs.

Despite its preoccupation with organizing, the AFT was one of the first unions to take a position deviating from the hard line AFL-CIO support for Lyndon Johnson's escalation. In 1967, the AFT officially adopted a position of "no position" on the war. Charles Cogen, who practiced the AFT slogan about democracy in his activities as national president, introduced the AFT position at the AFL-CIO convention in Bal Harbour, Florida:

Acting as mandated by the national AFT convention in August, 1967, Cogen took the floor with a substitute resolution calling on the AFL-CIO to take "no position on the war." Cogen spoke after Herman Kenin, president of the American Federation of Musicians, had introduced a resolution reaffirming the AFL-CIO's "unequivocal support of President Johnson's policy in Vietnam." Cogen told the 1,000 delegates: "There is a great division in the ranks of labor which we cannot disregard. In order to prevent further divisiveness, it is best for the AFL-CIO to take no position on this matter."

(Foner, *American Labor and the Indochina War*, pp. 54-55)

During the debate, Cogen received support from two others. But the AFL-CIO "hawks" easily carried the day. In fact, ILA president [Thomas Gleason](#) bragged that his members would keep in shape beating up anti-war protesters, while Meany from the chair charged that a recent Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace had been planned in Hanoi!

Local AFT leaders took an even more active part in the beginnings of the anti-war movement in the unions during this time. The California Federation of Teachers passed a strong resolution against the war. In May, 1966, even New York's Albert Shanker had been one of 17 labor leaders publicly endorsing the founding of the Trade Union Committee of SANE, the direct predecessor of the Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace.

Despite the AFT's official neutrality on the war, in April 1967, the *American Teacher* ran a paid, full page advertisement headlined "Help Stop the War in Vietnam," sponsored by the Teachers Committee for Peace in Vietnam. The ad caused a great deal of controversy. For almost a year, the ad drew letters to the union newspaper. It was clear, as Cogen had told the AFL-CIO, that labor was split on the

question. But in the AFT at least, the question was being debated freely and openly, with the union's national leadership encouraging the debate and following the mandates of the union's national conventions.

Cogen was a president who practiced the democracy he preached. As president of the United Federation of Teachers in New York from its formation in 1960 until 1964, he was known for his integrity. John O'Neill, a former UFT organizer who was fired from the union staff for disagreeing with Shanker over Ocean Hill-Brownsville in 1968, wrote of Cogen:

Cogen was not particularly dynamic, but he was basically honest and well-intentioned. He had represented the union effectively during its earlier days, including the two strikes of his regime, despite the fact that he was opposed to teacher strikes and found law-breaking personally repugnant.

It was said of him that "if the members decided Charlie should jump off the Brooklyn Bridge, Charlie would jump because that's what the members had voted."

As the union grew in the mid-1960's, Cogen's respect for union democracy was one of the factors that made it attractive to the young militants who did the yeoman work of organizing. The AFT developed a reputation as a free and democratic union in the best sense of the term. We will discuss this in more detail in Chapter Six.

The 1967 convention had voted the "no position" position on the war. The 1966 convention had urged the administration to "achieve a lasting and honorable peace in Vietnam." By 1967, the poles of the debate (as reported in the *American Teacher*) were represented by Al Korach of Chicago's Local 1 and Brian Mulloney of the California Federation of Teachers. Korach argued that "we should use our energies to work for teachers' rights, not waste them talking about Vietnam." Mulloney stated that the War would stall social reforms unless it was ended: "We can't even get through a bill to clean out rats from U.S. slums."

By 1970, the [anti-war movement](#) had gained momentum everywhere, and teachers around the nation were part of it. A union-wide referendum was scheduled by the national convention which would place the question: "Shall the policy resolution calling for ending the 'War in Indochina' through immediate cease fire and systematic withdrawal by June 30, 1971, become the official policy of the AFT?" before the membership.

After the national convention, however, the UFT in New York joined with 18 other locals to **add** another question to the referendum: "Shall AFT reaffirm the 'no position' policy on the war in Indochina as previously adopted by referendum?"

The 1970 referendum to the AFT membership thus included two questions. The membership voted in favor of **both**. By a vote of 21,836 to 17,862, the membership voted for a **cease fire** and withdrawal by June, 1971. At the same time, by a vote of 20,237 to 17,593, it voted to "reaffirm the 'no position' policy."

AFT president Selden (who had been elected after Cogen resigned in 1968) told the press that the results were inconclusive.

In fact, the question added by the UFT and its allies was meant to undermine the first question. By 1970, the UFT, under Albert Shanker, was leading what one former union staff member called, “a delaying action to keep the union from offending George Meany on the War in Vietnam.”

By 1971, members, locals, and state federations took action on their own. Local 1 in Chicago held its own referendum, calling for immediate withdrawal from Vietnam. The vote was 9,760 in favor of immediate withdrawal to 3,543 against. Nevertheless, CTU president [John Desmond](#) supported the “neutrality” position at the AFT convention that summer. Unlike Cogen, Desmond knew what was best for the AFT, even if the CTU didn’t. As we shall see in Chapter Six, Desmond had also begun to plan to give the union a “better” president than Selden.

By 1972, the AFT position had become “immediate withdrawal” despite the stalling of the larger locals. The AFT joined Labor for Peace and took an active part in the Anti-War movement. The union also supported George McGovern’s candidacy against Richard Nixon—except, that is, for the UFT and its president, Albert Shanker. After the 1972 AFT convention, Shanker returned to New York and the UFT adopted Meany’s “no position” position on the Democratic Party candidate for President. Meany and the Cold Warriors in the AFL-CIO had continued to publicly support Nixon on Vietnam. They had endorsed the invasion of Cambodia, the bombing of North Vietnam, and every escalation of the war under the Watergate presidency while the majority of union members had turned against the war. Gleason’s threat about “keeping in shape” by beating up anti-war protesters had been carried out at the time of the Cambodian invasion when New York “hard hats” (who had been paid for their time) staged a pro-war rally and attacked people who disagreed with them.

When Thomas Gleason of the Longshoremen’s Union and Peter Brennan of the Construction Workers gave Richard Nixon a hard hat at the White House in 1970, the old guard was holding firm to the Cold War.

But many of the AFL-CIO’s unions had bucked the official line. After the 1972 election, the AFL-CIO president worked with his allies within the AFT to reestablish law and order. By 1974, the union would have a new regime and the free-wheeling democracy of the Cogen and Selden presidencies would be over. Like its work overseas, the AFL-CIO’s brand of “free trade unionism” would be brought home to the teachers in the form of repressing dissent, supporting dual unionism, and collaboration with the boss. While the AFT was enjoying its greatest period of growth as a union and was in the forefront of the labor movement on social issues, the game plan was being laid to insure it wouldn’t happen again.

Chapter Six: The New York Road to Power

Members of the American Federation of Teachers know that New York runs the union, along if necessary, though often in a coalition with the ten largest locals. In 1977, the [United Federation of Teachers](#) of New York City (Local 2) cast 54,000 votes out of 300,000 in the convention. The [New York State United Federation of Teachers](#) (NYSUT) adds the same number of votes at national conventions, giving New York one third of the voting power in the entire national union.

New York hasn't always been the power over the AFT, any more than the AFT has always been on the right wing of the American labor movement. Both changes took place over a period of years and reflected both the growth of teacher unionism and its weaknesses.

In fact, the national offices of AFT weren't even moved to Washington, D. C. until the 1970's. The move from Chicago to Washington in one way symbolized the maturing the national union. In another way, it symbolizes the victory of one faction within the union and one political vision of American teacher unionism that wasn't always there and won't always be there.

The New York Teachers Union (Local 5, AFT)

In New York City, the first [Teachers Union](#) was founded in March, 1916. It was disbanded in 1964, after the UFT had emerged as the representative of the teaching staff. Between those two dates the Teachers Union reflected all of the currents and splits that took place within American labor.

During the late 1920's and early 1930's a faction fight developed within the union. The leadership of President [Henry Linville](#) and especially the union's legislative agent, [Abraham Lefkowitz](#), were criticized by a faction composed of the rank and file caucus close to the Communist Party and the Progressive Caucus, which was composed of Lovestonites. The history of teacher unionism in New York has since been told from both the left and the right. In 1974, labor historian Philip Taft published his history of the UFT, [United They Teach](#). The book had been written with the cooperation of the leadership of the UFT and reflected their analysis of events. Describing the in-fighting in Local 5 at the beginning of the Great Depression, Taft writes:

Only by surrender could the union administration have appeased its opponents. It would have had to be ready to follow the leadership of the Communist Party and adapt itself to the movements of the party line. *To make matters worse, the steady deterioration of conditions within the schools—increasing unemployment and the misery and frustration that followed—seemed to confirm the Communist analysis of events.* [Emphasis mine]

In the midst of the factional clamor, the union was confronted with actual and threatened salary cuts, the freezing of staff, and dozens of other changes adversely affecting the teachers. Union members accounted for only a small percentage of the total number of teachers employed by the school system. Teachers did not enjoy the right to bargain with the board of education over salaries or other conditions of employment. The only weapons available to the union were protesting in the courts,

appealing to the public, and convincing the board of education, the mayor, or the state legislature that certain policies were unjust or self-defeating. *Union members therefore had an obligation to avoid public criticism of the union leadership while attempting to appeal conditions that were harmful to the organization and its members.*

(Taft, *United They Teach*, pp. 35-36)

At no point in his book does UFT historian Taft outline the program presented by the “Communist bloc,” as he calls it. In fact, the opposition to the leadership of Linville and Lefkowitz was broader than the Communist membership in Local 5, and its list of grievances against the leadership’s programs for fighting the cutbacks of the Great Depression was specific and long. The analysis of “the only weapon” available to the teachers in 1933 sounds like the UFT’s analysis of the “only weapon” available to the teachers in 1975. More facts are needed. Taft’s semi-official history of the UFT doesn’t give them.

Another history, *The New York Teachers Union*, by Celia Zitron, gives a different view of the faction fight described in such general and red-baiting terms by Taft:

Opposition groups were organized. The Rank and File—which eventually secured the largest following—and the Progressive Group were the most important. In response, the Union leadership set up the Administration Group. There were some communists in the opposition. But in the main, there were young teachers on the lowest level of the salary scale, on whom salary cuts worked the greatest hardship; there were teachers who were critical of the lack of action on behalf of substitutes and unemployed teachers and who were moved by sympathy for the millions of unemployed workers in the country; there were many who were deeply concerned about the rise of fascism abroad, its repercussions in this country and the threat of war, and who wanted the union to participate more actively in the antiwar and antifascist movement.

They called for a program of action on behalf of unappointed and unemployed teachers and for their full admission into the Union at reduced rates with full voting rights; for activity in the schools and communities; for mass demonstrations and delegations to counteract the inroads of the depression; and for an organizing drive.

(Celia Zitron, *History of the New York Teachers Union*, p. 24)

The opposition set out to organize the unorganized teachers, whom Taft claims were the basis for the leadership’s unwillingness to put forward a bolder program. By 1932, union membership had reached 2,000 for the first time, out of a total of 35,000 teachers. When salaries were cut in 1932, the opposition called for organizing, demonstrations, and a program broader than that of legislative lobbying.

According to Taft:

The complaints against the Communist bloc arose as a result of the intemperate criticisms it directed at the union officers, its refusal to abide by parliamentary rules, its attempts to prolong meetings until most of the members had left in disgust, and the debilitating effect its attacks had upon the recruitment and retention of members in the union.

(Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 30, emphasis mine)

Again, the official history of the UFT is sparse in detail and long on opinion. Taft also insists on describing the broad opposition as the “Communist bloc.” It is again informative to read Zitron’s account of the same period:

With such distrust on both sides, reasonable discussion was difficult to maintain. At large and noisy membership meetings, opposition leaders demanded a hearing. The Administration charged that business could not be transacted because of the willful obstreperousness of the opposition. The latter, on the other hand, declared that their insistent demands to be heard grew out of difficulty in getting the floor and in obtaining a place on the agenda for items they considered important. There were charges and countercharges, imputing the motives of literature distributed by both sides. In 1933, an attempt to expel five leaders of the two main opposition groups failed to get the needed two-thirds vote at the largest membership meeting ever held by the Union up to that time. (Zitron, *op. cit.*, p. 26)

In the 1935 union election, the opposition slate (which included those whom Linville and the Administration Group had attempted to expel from the union two years before) received 40% of the vote. The Administration Group then asked the American Federation of Teachers to investigate the Local. A three member investigating team composed of AFT Secretary-Treasurer Florence Hanson, President Raymond Lowry, and Legislative Representative Selma Borchard heard the complaints. The majority (Hanson and Lowry) proposed the dissolution of factions and the appointment of a temporary secretary to handle the union’s affairs. Ms. Borchard proposed the revocation of the Local 5 charter and the chartering of a new local under the leadership of Linville and Lefkowitz.

The majority report had the support of the AFT Executive Council until [William Green](#), president of the American Federation of Labor intervened and asked the AFT to expel Local 5 because it was “communist dominated.” The Executive Council duly followed Green’s counsel. However, the 1935 national convention of AFT overruled the Executive Council recommendation and refused to revoke the local charter. Ms. Borchard then went to the 1935 AFL convention and asked for an investigation of the 1935 AFT convention, which she accused of being stacked with Local 5 supporters illegally. Although the AFL recommended that the AFT revoke Local 5’s charter, the recommendation was not passed by the national teachers’ union. Local 5 remained in the AFT.

The former leaders of the New York Teachers Union, Local 5 AFT, left the union. On October 1, 1935, they announced the formation of a new organization, the New York Teachers Guild. It began with a membership of 499 and is credited with being the direct ancestor of the UFT. For the first 20 years of its existence, however, it was, at best, an association of liberals and socialists who refused to remain in the “Communist” New York Teachers Union. In fact, it was a dual union. But since it was an anti-communist dual union, the social democratic and conservative histories of teacher unionism in New York don’t mention that fact.

The New York Teachers Union continued to grow rapidly throughout the remainder of the 1930’s. The monthly membership meetings of the local, which had been replaced by the Delegates Assembly during the last days of the faction fight, were re-established. By 1939, the union had 6,500 members in both

elementary and high schools throughout the city. It also assisted the AFT (which went broke in 1935) and established a 1,000 member AFT college local and a 2,500 member AFT local in the WPA among teachers.

By 1937, the [Congress of Industrial Organizations](#) (CIO) had been formed out of the Committee of Industrial Organization within the [AFL](#). The AFL leadership, having refused to organize the millions of unorganized industrial workers in America into industrial rather than craft unions, had expelled the AFL unions that established the CIO. When the CIO was organized as a separate trade union federation under the leadership of [United Mineworkers](#)' president [John L. Lewis](#), it had the support of the Communist Party and other leftists active in the labor field in the 1930's.

Nevertheless, the New York Teachers Union remained in the AFL and fought to retain its affiliation with both the AFT and the AFL.

During the 1930's Teachers Union members also contributed a great deal to the fight against fascism. A number of New York teachers fought in the [Spanish Civil War](#) against Franco and his Nazi allies. Union members also sent thousands of dollars of aid to anti-fascists.

Another major campaign of the New York Teachers Union was the continuing fight against racism in education, in the schools, and in the country as a whole.

In 1940, Local 5 (which had helped bail out the AFT during its financial crisis in the mid-1930's) was given the national union's annual award for work in the legislative field for its fight "in combating New York State's retrenchment drive." The Teachers Union was also praised by the New York State Federation of Labor.

Nevertheless, AFT president William Green renewed his attack on "communist domination" of the local. In December 1940, the AFT executive council, which was dominated by individuals favoring the New York Teachers Guild, began an investigation into the charges against the local. Rather than allow the issue to come before the 1941 AFT convention, the Executive Council conducted a mail referendum on the question of expulsion of Local 5 (New York) and Local 192 (Philadelphia). The results were against Local 5, and it was expelled from the AFT. Immediately, the AFT issued a charter to the New York Teachers Guild, which became AFT Local 2. At the same time, the AFT constitution was amended to bar applicants for membership "whose actions are subject to totalitarian control such as Fascist, Nazi or Communist."

In 1941, at the time of its expulsion from the AFT, Local 5 had more than 7,000 members. The New York Teachers Guild, which was chartered as the new AFT local in New York, grew from 499 to 1,400 members during the same period. In 1943, the New York Teachers Union affiliated with the CIO as Local 555 of the State, County, and Municipal Workers union.

The Bosses Destroy the Teachers Union with the Support of the Teachers Guild

In 1946, the State, County and Municipal Workers Union merged with the CIO federal employees union to form the [United Public Workers](#), CIO. It continued its programs in the New York public

schools and continued to be the largest teachers union in the city. Storm clouds were on the horizon, however.

After World War II, CIO president [Philip Murray](#) came under more and more pressure to follow the Cold War policies of the government. As we have pointed out earlier, Arthur Goldberg, fresh from his stint in the OSS and a charter member of the CIA, organized with the leaders of anti-communist unions in the CIO to “clean out the reds.” Another major force behind the Cold War drive in CIO was the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, which later gave the Lovestone international office Richard Deverall.

In 1948, the CIO Executive Council ordered all CIO unions to follow its decisions, including its support of Truman in the presidential election campaign. In 1949, the CIO convention expelled 11 unions with a total membership of more than 1,000,000 workers as being “communist dominated.” Among those expelled was the United Public Workers, of which the New York Teachers Union was an affiliate. Immediately, the remaining unions of the CIO, along with the AFL unions, began raiding the “communist” unions in collective bargaining elections. Most of the time, the AFL and CIO raiders had the support of both the government’s National Labor Relations Board and the bosses in their drive to wreck the eleven expelled unions.

In 1950, the New York Teachers Union, which was by then an independent union, still claimed more than 7,000 members. But after 1950, the NYTU membership declined.

The reason for the decline was clearly the attack on the union from all corners: the Board of Education, the organized right wing, and the New York Teachers Guild, Local 2, AFT.

In 1950, the [New York City Board of Education](#) passed the [Timone resolution](#), which specifically deprived the Teachers Union, the largest of the teachers organizations in the city, of its rights in the schools and before the Board. The T.U. was even barred from making presentations before the New York Board of Education. Members of the Teachers Guild also supported the notorious [Feinberg Law](#), which barred communists and communist sympathizers from teaching in the New York schools. According to Taft:

[In the face of the Feinberg Law] The Teachers Guild was faced with a difficult decision—one common to liberal and non-Communist radical organizations—of what position to take on the action of the school department. The guild delegate assembly considered the issue for the first time and decided, by a vote of thirty-four to thirty-three, that membership in an organization should “not in and of itself be regarded as ground for dismissal.”

Four years later (in 1953) the Teachers Guild endorsed the barring of members of the Communist Party from teaching in the schools, but urged that those who had left the party in good faith not be harassed or prevented from teaching.

(Taft, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94)

By 1956, 316 New York public school teachers had either resigned or been fired when they refused to answer questions about membership in the Communist Party. The UFT continued to support freedom of speech, however. For example, in the early 1960's, it defended the right of a teacher at Public School 44 in Manhattan to refuse to take part in practice air raid drills. Other examples abound.

Organizing Against Racism in the Schools

Perhaps the most important difference between Albert Shanker's predecessors in **New York** teacher unionism and their adversaries lies in the fight against white supremacy in the schools.

After the United States Supreme Court found **de jure** (legal) school segregation unconstitutional in the famous **Brown** case in 1954, the national leaders of the AFT were forthright and courageous in their struggle to rid the union of the vestiges of racial segregation. In the late 1950's, the AFT lost almost 25% of its membership when many of the union's southern locals refused to desegregate and were purged from the AFT. In the early 1960's, the national union and its New York local were strong supporters of the southern civil rights movement. In fact, the *American Teacher* received criticisms from union members around the country who felt that the AFT was spending too much time and money on things like the Mississippi **Freedom Schools** and not enough time on "teachers' issues." But the AFT and New York local persisted despite the criticisms. Charles Cogen, Albert Shanker, and other AFT leaders were in on the Selma to Montgomery, Alabama march in 1965. Cogen and Shanker had their photographs taken with **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** The AFT finally hired a full time director (and his wife) to direct its constantly expanding Civil Rights Committee. Every summer during the middle 1960's approximately 10 to 20 AFT members would volunteer to teach in the **Mississippi Freedom Schools**. AFT members donated school equipment and books for the Freedom Schools. All of this support for the southern civil rights generated a pro-black image of the AFT that was widely shared by many people both in and out of the union. Many blacks joined the AFT in preference to the NEA because of the AFT's positive position on civil rights.

When the civil rights movement and the struggle for racial justice and equality moved north, however, many of the same leaders who had been pushing the fight against legal segregation hundreds of miles away found themselves in a more difficult position.

The demands that power to control black schools be shared with the black communities in New York City evoked a strong backlash from many whites. Particularly threatened were the white teachers, administrators and maintenance workers who worked in the black ghetto schools. Instead of organizing against northern style Jim Crow (called **de facto segregation**), the New York City United Federation of Teachers found itself with a leader (Al Shanker) who opted for the white backlash rather than allying some of the powers of the newly won teachers union with the black community.

In contrast, the New York Teachers Union at the time of its dissolution in 1964 could point to a proud, 30-year record of struggling against white supremacy in the school systems. The teachers associated with the TU were leaders in the fight against racial segregation and discrimination in education. Celia Zitron points to the facts:

It is a widely held misconception that efforts of Negroes to obtain better schools for their

children did not begin till the 1950's, as a major component of the civil rights fight, when school integration became front page news. There were already organized movements for better schools in Harlem in the early 1930's, and soon after in Bedford-Stuyvesant. In these, members of the Teachers Union participated, at first as individuals, and after September, 1935, as members of the Union's Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant committees.

(Zitron, *op. cit.*, p. 85)

From this beginning, the New York Teachers Union was an active part of the struggle against racism and racial discrimination in the city of New York. *The New York Teacher*, newspaper of the TU, carried on a continuing campaign of exposing unequal educational opportunity and racism and fighting against them. The Harlem Committee of the union participated in the Committee for Better Schools in Harlem and worked to organize for new and better schools. The Committee sponsored studies, as well as rallies and protests. In 1937, ground was broken for the first new elementary school in Harlem since **1900**. By 1941, four new school buildings had been obtained.

In 1937 *The New York Teacher* exposed the policy of the Board of Education to track Black students into vocational programs and the added policy of the vocational counselors to discourage their Black students from studying for the skilled trades. (It was only during the 1960's—and then only reluctantly—that the building trades in New York **began** to lower the Jim Crow barriers.)

The Teachers Union also worked throughout the 1930's and 1940's to encourage the study of [Black history](#) and Black culture. During the Second World War, partly due to the efforts of the TU, “intercultural education” was established as part of the curriculum. This curriculum included racial and national minorities, immigrants, and anti-Semitism. During the post-war era, a number of the same groups that pushed for the expulsion of the “Reds” from the labor movement effectively undercut these programs.

In 1950, the New York Teachers Union issued a pamphlet entitled *Bias and Prejudice in Textbooks in Use in the New York City Schools*. It became a small classic, despite objections to its criticisms of “liberal” authors as well as conservatives. It was one of the first such studies published.

The two most important contributions that the TU made to equal education in the city were in the areas of faculty discrimination and segregation and its support for pupil desegregation. In 1951, the TU surveyed the public school staff and discovered that only 2.5% of the teachers in New York were Black. Later studies made by the union uncovered the systematic bias of the licensing system, which prevented many Black teachers from becoming fully-licensed through the use of discriminatory oral exams and a “speech test.” De facto segregation of students into “white” and “black” schools was standard practice by the N.Y.C. Board of Education.

Unfortunately, neither the TU nor the broader movement of Black people for equality had much overall effect in New York City. By 1975, after massive layoffs hit the New York public schools, less than 5% of the teaching staff was minority. The following year, when teachers began to be rehired, the percentage rose. But even using the statistics that the New York City Board of Education gave to the

federal government, in 1976 the U.S. [Department of Health, Education and Welfare Office for Civil Rights](#) found only 10% minority teachers in a city where more than 50% of the public school children were from Black and Latino backgrounds.

It is a tragic fact that the UFT to this day is supporting racist hiring policies and attempting to justify them. When HEW's Office for Civil Rights ordered that teachers returning from layoff in 1977 be assigned to better enhance racial integration of teachers in the schools, they were attacked bitterly by the UFT. When New York's Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan compared the assignment of white teachers to Harlem and other ghetto schools to the holocaust, Al Shanker reprinted Moynihan's speech in his weekly *New York Times* column. During a press briefing on the AFT's stand on school desegregation at the 1977 national convention, UFT leader and AFT vice-president Sandra Feldman was asked why New York's percentage of minority teachers was so much lower than that of other northern cities with AFT locals. Feldman responded that Black teachers had been trained in the black colleges prior to the end of Jim Crow and that they just didn't migrate as far north as New York after graduation.

During the [1968 Ocean Hill-Brownsville strikes](#), members of the UFT executive board were quoted as saying:

- We have to adopt a scorched earth policy in Brownsville. If those people hurt us, we have to destroy their schools.
- I don't care if they put police in every classroom in the city. We have to show those people.

Ironically, one of those who was characterized by former UFT executive board member John O'Neill as "the spear carriers for the know nothings"—Vito DeLeonardis—is now training African trade unionists for the AFL-CIO in Kenya! It was DeLeonardis who wrote the picket signs against "mob rule" in Ocean Hill.

The liberal cover for the UFT in 1968 was given by the public relations work of Sandra Feldman and Tom Kahn, both of Social Democrats, USA. Feldman is now an AFT vice-president and prominent in international labor affairs, while Kahn has taken over Jay Lovestone's position as editor of the AFL-CIO *Free Trade Union News*. Both got their training in racist apologetics during the UFT strikes against New York's Black and Puerto Rican parents and children. Since 1968, they've made their debut on the world stage.

It is a fact that every effort to desegregate the New York public schools since 1966 has been opposed or sabotaged by the leadership of the UFT. Like George Wallace before him, Albert Shanker learned in the 1966-1968 period that white backlash paid in power. While paying lip service to desegregation and parlaying a record that was built by its predecessors, the present leadership of the AFT is always aligning teachers with the Board of Education, principals, and maintenance people against the interests of the Black and Latino communities. The favorable AFT image among non-whites, based on AFT support of the southern civil rights struggle, has turned into its opposite.

In the early and mid-1960's, the UFT was "the most exciting thing in the trade union movement."

Under the leadership of Charles Cogen (who became AFT president in 1964) and Albert Shanker, the UFT's militancy and struggle for collective bargaining contracts for teachers led the way for teacher unionists across the country. During the southern civil rights struggle and prior to the Vietnam War, the UFT was one of the best progressive unions in the country.

White supremacy domestically and the War in Vietnam abroad gradually brought the "progressive" side of the UFT to a screeching halt. By 1969, former UFT executive board member John O'Neill could write: "The trouble with the UFT is that it has grown old too fast."

Had the UFT "grown old" or had the Old Politics surfaced from under the unity and good feeling of the new militancy of the mid-1960's? It was clear by the 1974 AFT convention that underneath the new political overcoat, the UFT's leadership was carrying some very old politics.

The Consolidation of the United Federation of Teachers

By 1960, the weakened New York Teachers Union was in no position to unseat the other contenders for leadership among the city's teachers. Neither was the Teachers Guild. Yet within five years, the United Federation of Teachers would become the nation's largest union local.

John O'Neill, who served as an organizer for the UFT until he was fired by Albert Shanker in 1968 for his outspoken support of community control and his disagreements with the tactics of his union, summed it up this way:

In 1960...the Teachers Guild had 3,000 members and worked out of a loft on East 23rd street in New York City....The Guild was a sort of social-democratic protest organization, ineffectual mainly because of its leadership—most of whom were upwardly mobile, found the school system in the main quite satisfactory, and thus had no real interest in organizing teachers against the system. About this time, however, some younger, more militant, non-establishment junior high school teachers in the Guild, allied with a dissident element in the long-established High School Teachers Association, pooled their philosophies and talents and pushed through a merger of the Teachers Guild with a large part of the High School Teachers Association. Thus the UFT was formed. The major architect of this merger was Selden, then an organizer for the Guild....

The merged organization conducted its first strike in November, 1960, the first time New York City teachers had gone on strike. The stoppage lasted only one day and roughly 6,000 out of 40,000 teachers stayed out....Despite the small turnout, the strike led to union recognition and collective bargaining.

(O'Neill, "The Rise and Fall of UFT," p. 1)

O'Neill goes on to describe the image of the UFT in those days: "young, dynamic, honest, and militant trade union changing the life-style of the hitherto stereotyped school teachers at the same time that it was deeply involved in and committed to the civil rights struggle and was on the 'right side' of virtually

all social issues.”

In 1964, the year of Shanker’s election to the presidency of the UFT, the New York Teachers Union dissolved itself and its members joined the UFT to “be in the mainstream of teacher unionism.”

Yet within a few years, the UFT was in the throes of its confrontation with the Community Control Board of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, its staff had been purged, and the union had become notorious.

The consolidation of Shanker’s old politics in the UFT began even before Ocean Hill. One of the first steps was to “politicize” the local union’s staff and make loyalty to the “team” a prerequisite for union jobs. Many of the feisty organizers of the short golden age of the UFT were purged.

Two years before Ocean Hill, Shanker fired Richard Prideaux and Mitzi Bales from the UFT organizing staff. According to John O’Neill:

Those close to the scene are convinced that Prideaux, a Black, was let go because he was too militant in support of Black rights, and Bales, potentially one of the two or three best organizers the union had ever had, was fired because she was an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War.

When one member of the UFT executive board protested the Union’s “scorched earth” strike against the Black community in 1968, he, too, was fired. John O’Neill had been a union man all his teaching career, an organizer from 1960 to 1965, and then UFT Director of Organization.

The loss of independent voices within the UFT leadership was coupled with a net gain in “yes” men and women at the top. From a relaxed and open place in the early 1960’s, the UFT offices were slowly reorganized. The entire staff—from top to bottom—is **loyal**.

The Shanker team doesn’t only use patronage to keep its friends within the union. The UFT (and now AFT) is contributing generously to such worthy causes as the A. Philip Randolph Institute, headed by Bayard Rustin. Rustin paid his dues in 1968 by leading those Black people who supported the UFT in Ocean Hill. The [A. Philip Randolph Institute](#) is one of several organizations affiliated with Social Democrats-USA, receiving largesse from the UFT and AFT treasuries.

Reforming the National Union

By 1970, the Shanker team had undisputed control of the New York UFT. The game had been winner-take-all and the losers were out. The winners were doing very well in New York.

Unfortunately—from the point of view of the ideologues on the “Shanker team” in New York—things weren’t going as well—with the national union, the AFT.

Unlike the New York local, the AFT hadn’t gotten the correct line down from George Meany, Social Democrats-USA, and their allies. The AFT was still **practicing** democracy at home instead of just preaching it at home and abroad.

In 1968, the *American Teacher* had the audacity to publish letters critical of the AFT's stand on community control. Additionally, the union newspaper ran a series about a school in Washington, D.C. where community control was **working**.

A major support and ally of the D.C. community-controlled school was AFT local 6. The moral of the series was that community control **would work if the AFT union worked with the community rather than against it**.

As early as 1968, the Shanker team took aim at *American Teacher* editors [David Elsila](#) and [Patricia Strandt](#), who had the audacity to let the variety of members' opinions appear in the union newspaper. But it would be six years before the job could be done.

The other issue that wouldn't go away was the Vietnam war. After an initial flirtation with the "anti-war" wing of the trade union movement in the mid-1960's, the Shanker team lined up behind the AFL-CIO hard liners.

As the war went on, however, it was impossible for Shanker to keep his troops in line locally, let alone nationally. As early as 1966, the AFT had changed from "supporting LBJ" to a position of "neutrality" on the question. In 1967, union members began organizing for the union to take a position **against** the war.

The details of the Shanker team's delaying action against the anti-war movement within AFT have been covered in Chapter 5.

It was during this period that the Shanker team began planning the ouster of then-AFT president David Selden and his replacement by Shanker himself.

Interestingly, the first written documentation of plans to oust Selden comes from one of the more talented ex-members of the Shanker team, Chicago's [Sheli Lulkin](#). After a stint with the NEA, Lulkin became active in the Chicago Teachers Union in the late 1960's. Energetic and competent, she rose quickly through voluntary union work. Lulkin was always around the anti-war movement.

In 1976, Chicago found out that Sheli was also a police spy who had spied on the Chicago Teachers Union, other teachers groups, anti-war movement, the "ultra-left," the women's movement, religious leaders, and the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Sheli admitted it all in a federal court deposition, and she was removed from all of her union positions except trustee of the pension fund.

Sheli Lulkin, as [Chicago Police Department](#) "Confidential Informant #436" reported on a conversation overheard at the CTU offices. Dated July 12, 1970, the report states that Vivian Gallagher and John Desmond (who at that time were AFT vice-presidents) were disturbed the "radical turn in AFT publications."

A month later, Lulkin reported to the cops that:

...an alliance is being developed between Al Shanker, President of the New York Teachers Union and the leadership of the CTU to straighten out national union leadership. Between the two locals, they control almost half the votes in the national convention.

It concludes that “Shanker and Desmond are going to deradicalize Selden or he will be dropped from the AFT presidency.”

Fortunately (for Selden) the AFT president couldn't be deradicalized enough until 1974. During those years of the Watergate presidency, the escalation of the war in Indochina, and the growing struggles of Blacks, Latinos, and women for equality, it would have been necessary to “deradicalize” the AFT membership, not only its president. Selden's positions on the southern civil rights movement against legal segregation, and his stance against the Vietnam war after 1968, were positions widely supported by AFT members.

The charge of “radicalism” against Selden is cheeky. In 1968, he supported Hubert Humphrey for president. He didn't decide to personally oppose the war until after 1968. But in 1972, he carried out the membership's mandate to oppose the war, and he carried out the convention's mandate to support George McGovern.

Selden's “radicalism” was that he had practiced democracy rather than Meany and Shanker's CIA brand of “free trade unionism.” His sins were:

- He followed the membership's democratic decision to oppose the war.
- He followed the convention's democratic decision to support McGovern.
- He refused to turn the union newspaper into a mouthpiece for the AFL-CIO leadership's line on international affairs or allow it to uncritically support the questionable actions of one local.
- He refused to permit the unconstitutional actions taken against him by the AFT council.
- He was unwilling to be a “team player” when Denise Thiry was foisted on the AFT National office staff by PTTI and the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department.

The campaign against David Selden within the AFT had all the earmarks of a psychological warfare campaign. It was complete with disinformation and all the other tactics used by the CIA itself to destabilize foreign governments and unions.

While radicals in the anti-war movement talked about bringing the war home, Albert Shanker's team and the AFL-CIO brought home the techniques of the cold war against the president and constitution of the American Federation of Teachers.

The Shanker Team Comes to National Power

In 1972, Albert Shanker was one of the 20 AFT vice-presidents. In 1973, AFL-CIO president George Meany announced that a place on the AFL-CIO executive council would be created for a representative of the AFT. But, Meany announced, he wanted AFT **Vice-President** Albert Shanker to have the spot, not AFT **President** David Selden.

Shanker's New York-Chicago Axis, supplemented by ambitious local leaders from elsewhere, moved into high gear on the AFT executive council.

- A publications committee was established to oversee the *American Teacher* and keep Dave Elsila and Patricia Strandt in line.
- The executive council, without authority in the AFT Constitution, made Albert Shanker “first vice-president” of AFT and designated him for the AFL-CIO executive council spot.
- Shanker's aide Al Loewenthal moved back into the AFT national offices and set to work.
- Finally, AFT President Selden received a telegram from First Vice-President Shanker telling him to report to a special meeting of the AFT executive council on December 7, 1973. At the meeting, the majority of the executive council voted to ask for Selden's resignation. Selden refused.

From December, 1973, until August, 1974, Selden was a president without power. Nevertheless, he carried his fight to the membership around the country and through the “Coalition for a Democratic Union,” to the national convention itself.

Backed by the “pledged delegates” from the union's largest locals—with the New York City, NY State, Chicago votes solidly behind him—Shanker was elected president, by a 7 to 1 margin.

The Shanker-dominated AFT executive council gave ex-president Dave Selden six weeks severance pay and a pension of \$7,000 per year.

Since Shanker's progressive caucus came to power in 1974, the following examples of free trade unionism have come to the AFT:

- September, 1974...The AFT formally affiliates with the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD).
- 1974...Denise Thiry becomes AFT International Affairs Director.
- 1974...Abolition of the secret ballot for AFT elections.
- 1975...The *American Teacher* is “deradicalized” with the firing of David Elsila and Patricia Strandt. They are replaced by a member of Social Democrats-USA.

- 1975...20,000 teachers laid off in New York.
- 1976...AFT convention revokes the charter of Worker's Education Local 189 and orders its members to join the nearest local.
- 1977...Irving Brown addresses AFT "Labor Education Luncheon."
- 1977...AFT is the only union in the U.S. to file an **amicus curiae** brief at the U.S. Supreme Court [on the side of](#) Allan Bakke. Delegates to the AFT convention find out that the brief was filed **before** the convention.
- 1977...Laid off New York City teachers begin to be hired back under a moderate desegregation plan. Shanker endorses Moynihan's speech comparing the assignment of white teachers to ghetto schools to the holocaust. New York HEW civil rights team is replaced....

Within a few years, if the trend in AFT continues, our union will bear all the stamps of the free trade unionism practiced by the AFL-CIO leadership and the CIA for 30 years: Perpetual leadership; a controlled press; the abolition of internal democracy and democratic debate; and an ever-increasing number of expensive and secret cold war projects to protect the American empire around the world.

Appendix A: “The American Labor Movement & The International Scene” by Irving Brown

Delivered to the Labor Education Luncheon of the 61st Annual Convention of the American Federation of Teachers, August 17, 1977, Boston, MA

Introduction

What follows is an exact transcription of the remarks made by Irving Brown, billed as “AFL Representative in Europe,” to the 61st annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers.

This speech is not the one that Brown had prepared. His prepared remarks, which were available to the press, were both shorter and more temperate. They focused on the “history” of AFL and AFL-CIO work in the international labor movement and then dwelt in a general way on the world situation and specifically on the “crisis” in the International Labor Organization. At the time, the United States was still a member of the ILO. In November, 1977, the U.S. delegation withdrew from the ILO. The main pressure for withdrawal came from the labor delegation from the United States.

Brown apparently changed his remarks and delivered the following off-the-cuff lecture because his presence at the convention had been attacked by numerous members of the AFT, including both the Black Caucus and the United Action Caucus. The result of the exposure of Brown’s affiliations outside the labor movement was a relatively successful boycott of the Labor Education Luncheon by the delegates to the convention. Less than 200 people heard Brown’s remarks, included among them the “international” labor representatives attending the convention.

Brown’s remarks were introduced by Al Loewenthal, Assistant to AFT President Shanker. Seated at the speakers’ table with Brown were Andre Braconnier, Executive Secretary of the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions; Irwin Polishook, AFT Vice-President in charge of Colleges and Universities; AFT Secretary-Treasurer Robert Porter, and Jules Kolodny, AFT Vice-President in charge of labor education and responsible for organizational work in the Canal Zone and Puerto Rico.

Due to the rambling nature of Brown’s remarks, this transcription does not always flow in sentences. Where necessary, the spoken nature of the speech is indicated by ellipses. Proper names have been rendered as best as possible.

Al Loewenthal

Irving Brown was—he is—authentic in the labor movement. I’d like to put it that way. He came through the shops, not only of one union, but at least three unions—textile and the International Association of Machinists and there’s a third one that escapes me. But he worked with the workers on the line. He knows them; he knows their temperament; he knows their interests and he knows what the needs of the union movement are.

And Irving appears, as far as I was able to figure out without asking him, appears prominently on the

labor scene, in 1947 and '48, almost like a prophet, because in the confusion after World War II—and some of you remember the struggles we came through in the labor movement here on these same questions which are mentioned—when in Europe the prestige of the...of Russia was running high, when the community of Russia and Europe was being talked about and tied together, and under the weight of this kind of almost naïve, simplistic look at where the world was going, the labor movement was almost at the point of being snuffed out, and it was Irving who stood in that confusion and said, “No, we’ve got to begin to help rebuild the European labor movement, the world labor movement, in new ways.” Maybe they were old ways, but newly applied.

I came across a letter that he wrote to the International Affairs Department in which he said to them, after being in Europe and looking around and drawing some conclusions, he said, “There is very little value in merely writing about this situation and not being able to help.” And with that he stimulated the kind of support that’s been flowing abroad and displeases the ideologues, but nonetheless has helped to rebuild not only the European labor movement but much more than that. Some of you will recall that in that same period there was a struggle between those who were for the Marshall Plan and those who were against the Marshall Plan. And there was Irving there, too, that clarified the importance of supporting the Marshall Plan because, if it was not supported by us, then the only aid and assistance that the trade union movement could hope for would be from Russia and that wasn’t to be really trade union support. And they would not have flourished under those circumstances.

And so, it’s important, as we reconstitute our labor education work in the union, to do it in the presence of foreign trade unionists, to do it in the presence of our members who are in academia who teach the subject, who are in contact with the youth, who ought to hear the experiences and ought to know the viewpoint of someone who was a dynamic organizer in this field, was an organizer way back in the IAM’s early period and back in the ‘30s, was an organizer for the UAW and then went on to the world scene. Irving is the kind of person we all know who will work 18 hours a day, 6 days a week, maybe 7 sometimes, or travel extensively and without fatigue in order to move the programs of trade unionism, democratic trade unionism, wherever they will take hold and grow strong.

And so I consider it a pleasure, an honor, to introduce an old, old friend, since we’re both getting kind of old, and a person who we have all followed, many of us have followed for many years with a good deal of admiration...IRVING BROWN.

Irving Brown

Well, Mr. Chairman and delegates to this convention, first of all it’s a great pleasure, and I mean that because I rarely use that term, to be with your organization and especially to be invited by your president and my brother Loewenthal, to speak at this luncheon. I am not usually one who speaks at after dinner affairs or after luncheons. It’s one of the bad habits of living in Paris that one attaches tremendous importance to what we eat and to the conversation that takes place. But I know that is one of the defects that I have developed over the many years of being, I guess, so-called voluntary exile.

And I say this also because I am very happy that I have a chance once and a while to come back and sort of renew my relationships with those who are in the labor movement in the United States and are fighting first and foremost for the objectives of the workers of the United States and the workers of America in the twin struggle for economic and social betterment and also for the development of a

really free trade union movement because, I assure you, whether certain people like it or not, unless the labor movement of the United States and the labor movement of the world are taken more seriously by those who engage in foreign policy, unless they do that, the future of what we call the democratic or free world is greatly in danger. Because the major thrust of those who represent systems of totalitarianism who are denying the right of free trade unions, who in their own countries suppress any kind of free trade union movement, are precisely those who are spending all of their time and their effort and their energy and money to control and dominate trade unions in the free world. Always we are dealing in the world scene from the point of view of labor with those who are attempting through the free trade union movement, through the labor movements of the world in the name of freedom, in the name of the legal guarantees of the democracies, they are attempting to use those systems in order to destroy democracy, or, as Hitler once said, "We will use legality in order to introduce a system of illegality."

And this is what it is all about. Because, it has been a very instructive few days for me in Washington to hear some of the new geniuses and the new representatives of foreign policy, and some of them are my good friends. Those who are my good friends are usually in agreement with me; that's why they are good friends. But there is a trend that I have noticed in the few days that I have been back, and perhaps this has been true before, as you said in your opening remarks, "what business does labor have to do with foreign affairs?" What business does the trade union have to do meddling in the internal affairs of other nations? Well, I believe that when Mr. Carter spoke, the President of the United States to the United Nations, and said, "There are no internal affairs when it comes to human rights,"...and for us when it comes to trade union rights [applause], but that is not only true for the President of the United States nor for the State Department, but that is also true for the American labor movement and for the trade unions of other countries who are trying to defend, to maintain and to expand what we call freedom, what we call a concept of human rights.

When World War II broke out, no one asked us, or no one questioned whether or not labor should have a role in the struggle against Nazism. No one questioned that in the Office of Strategic Services, the OSS, there was created a labor division, a labor department, which, incidentally, was headed in those days by one of our old friends, Arthur Goldberg. He was a lawyer, but he was from the labor movement. What was the purpose of that organization? What was the role of labor in World War II? Independent of the workers in the shops, independent of what we dedicated or what we contributed with our funds, with our work and with our soldiers, that purpose was to work together with the resistance movement in France, in Italy, in Germany, yes, also in Eastern Europe. Some of us recall those days; some of us are living witnesses of that relationship, and some of this is had especially with our friends from the French labor movement. My friend Rondele is too young to remember people like Albert Geigit of the C.G.T. who was the liaison of the French underground movement with the labor movements of America and England and other countries which had not been occupied. No one questioned the role of American labor its cooperation with the International Transport Workers Federation giving the kind of critical information that was important for the war against the German submarines, against the movement of German ships with our old friend Omar Becu who also comes from the same country as Brother Braconier, from Belgium, but who was a seaman, and I believe was a radio operator. He was in constant contact with us through London and through New York. **With those who were operating in France, in Italy, in Germany, yes, and even in Eastern Europe.** Not as soldiers, not with the protection of uniforms, but risking their lives as part of the underground

movement which became one of the most important sectors of the resistance to Nazism.

Therefore, what I want to drive home here today...if it is true, if it is acceptable in time of war, why isn't it acceptable in time of peace in order to try to avoid war, in order to try to do the things that prevent war from coming about, and war comes about, in the main, in the main, when it's of world wide proportions, from those who represent dictatorial...in our modern times, represent totalitarian regimes.

The history of labor, the history of American labor, the history of all labor movements more or less is not only identified with their struggle for their national aims and their national aspirations, but has also been identified as the years have gone on, with their international aims and aspirations. This is especially true of American labor. What is America? What is the American worker in terms of the history of our movement? It's the history of those who came from the areas of persecution, who came from Germany after the defeat of the Revolution of 19...of 1848. It's the history of those who sought new world in freedom. I know it's sort of old fashioned to talk about these days, but remember those who came to America to build the labor movement because they were workers and who were originally socialists when they came from Europe, like all workers and like all movements irrespective of ideology, found that they had to adapt themselves and become part of American history and American development....and that is why the American labor movement, up until World War I, was a movement which, yes, concentrated primarily on internal, domestic affairs, but gradually and slowly got wrapped up into the international arena. Slowly but surely...and one of the great demarcation points is World War I. It's one of the tragic, unfortunate aspects of human history and of labor history, especially in international affairs. I believe there are some doctors who say this is also true of medicine and the advance of surgery that it's the result of wars that some or another labor becomes respectable in terms of being concerned or being given the right to be concerned about international and foreign policy.

And it was in World War I and especially after World War I when Samuel Gompers, the founder of the American trade union movement or the American Federation of Labor, the predecessor of the AFL-CIO, was a member of the delegation of Woodrow Wilson that went to Paris, and succeeded along with our trade union friends in France and other countries to introduce into the Versailles Treaty the paragraph which led to the creation of the ILO. That was a paragraph which said that the problems, the economic and social problems of the world have to be dealt with as important factors in the causes of war and that, therefore, an instrument has to be created to deal with these problems in order to bring some degree of solutions to these economic and social problems that can contribute to the development of war. And as a result, the International Labor Organization was created. As a result of **labor participation in the government delegations** and then putting into the actual Treaty of Versailles the basis which led to the ILO, which became a so-called, what is called a tripartite organization of labor, management and government to deal primarily with the technical problems that workers confront throughout the world and attempt, if possible, to create and establish international universal standards that apply everywhere irrespective of the economic and social system. Irrespective of whether it's socialism or capitalism or what not, the criterion is a concept of freedom of association, basically a concept of human rights, which is the keystone of the international trade union struggle and should be the keystone, the basis upon which the ILO operates, or as Mr. Blanchard has said, the Director General of the ILO, "the supervisory machinery which deals with the implementation of these conventions is the conscience of the ILO."

Now, I refer somewhat to the ILO, first because for many, many years, it has been one of the areas where we are not only in contact, in relationships, working relationship, co-operative relationships, with our friends in Western Europe and in Asia and Africa and Latin America, but also it has been the area where we can, along with management, not only be consulted as you have in the United Nations or in other universal bodies, but where we have the right to speak and the right to vote, and where the primary objective of that organization should be for labor, and where the primary objective is to deal with these basic economic and social problems.

Now you may have been reading in the press in recent months that there is a crisis in the ILO, and there is a crisis precisely because we believe so much in the American labor movement, and I think fundamentally our friends around the world in the labor movement believe it too; unfortunately, in some countries, they are not able to speak as openly as we can about free trade union rights, especially with some of our friends in the third world. Because I think we should be very frank about this question, because unless the ILO, which we think is in grave danger today because it has become more and more an instrument for political objectives, for precisely those who do not have tripartism, for precisely those who do not have freedom of association in their countries, to use this body, to use this instrument for the purposes that they have in mind, which are precisely not tripartism, but actually a purely governmental body. And that is what it's all about.

We cannot go into all the details of what took place last June, but let me say one thing. The most important aspect, the most important work of the ILO that had been achieved in committee was destroyed by that conference by what I call an alliance of the dictators...those who were put on the spot in that committee. It is the one committee that exists...it is the **only** committee that exists in any international body where there is an instrument for implementation of decisions and resolutions dealing with all these wonderful things about human rights and trade union rights. And where they were on the spot, the Russians, the Czechs, the Argentinians, the Chileans, the Arabs, and they went to the conference and rejected that report. And I call this, because it was a tragic thing, because many of you have heard about Chile and a lot about...a lot of people talking about Chile...I'm sure some of the people who have been distributing these leaflets that I read when I came here about Chile, let them telling that their friends from Moscow voted with the Chileans, voted with the other dictators, to destroy this report because they were in the same bed. It was what I call the new Axis: Santiago... Moscow...and after all, you've seen the trading in bodies that is going on between Moscow and Santiago. This is what, I think, is what concerned us.

And we are saying, I just came from a meeting yesterday, the postponement has been dis...the decision has been postponed until October. We met with the Secretary of State; we met with Mr. Brzezinski, the great expert on international affairs for the government, and we agreed to postpone it until October if they can produce something to repair the damage that was done in June. But let's be perfectly clear...I know that's a bad phrase...It shows how much of a foreigner I am that I am not sensitive...

[Another voice: It's one of your democratic rights!]

Well, I am glad that we have democratic rights, at least when we speak up here. Let it be perfectly clear that unless the ILO can restore the machinery which permits implementation on the conventions on

human rights, on trade union rights, then the ILO has ceased, as far as we are concerned, to be of value in the struggle. Because remember everyone is talking about human rights, everyone is talking, making great speeches, but this is the one machinery where we had machinery, so to speak, to implement these decisions, because most of these decisions remain on paper. And you can read even the report of the Director General which I quoted consistently during the conference of the ILO, where he said, "Our experience has shown that your governments, in the main, pay lip service to these decisions. You ratify these conventions, but, in effect you do not observe them." And as I said, I would prefer not to ratify and observe than to ratify and not observe. And I think that is true of the American trade union movement, with all our defects, that we have a fighting movement that makes sure that free trade union rights, ah, remain and human rights remain the cardinal points in our program.

Now let me also, in some of the few minutes I have left, I see I'm running over your 2:00 deadline, to just say a few words about the role of the American labor movement in international affairs. I know I don't have much time. And I had prepared a very long speech, but I was overruled by my former boss, and that's why I'm making this off-the-cuff speech. I'm really telling you as I see it, not from the point of view of one who is an intellectual, who writes about Euro-Communism or writes about these things, but who is, like you, involved in an active organizational struggle. Since World War II, where we fought against a certain kind of totalitarianism, where we were proud to be part of the resistance movement, in the years that developed after World War II, it was necessary to become part of a new resistance, a new resistance which still continues today in Western Europe. The relations of the American labor movement in the war continued after the war in helping in the reconstruction of the trade unions in Germany especially, but also in France and Italy. And we found very quickly after World War II...

[Tape ends mid-sentence. Note: A small segment of the speech was lost when the tape was slipped over.]

...for them to take over the regimes of Western Europe. They were the first kind of destabilizing force. They attempted to destabilize Western Europe. Of course, they knew that any kind of economic reconstruction, any kind of economic recovery in Western Europe was their doom. That is why when you talk about the Marshall Plan, they oppose the Marshall Plan, even though when the Marshall Plan was offered, it was also offered to Eastern Europe. The Czechs wanted it, but they were overruled and vetoed by the Russians. The whole objective after World War II was to destabilize Western Europe, was to keep it in a state of destabilization, because that was fertile ground for the eventual take-over of the Russians or of the Communist Regime.

They failed. They failed because the labor movement, no matter how small it was in resisting, no matter what its number was, the quality was what counted. And we can say today, in France and Italy, and especially in Germany where it's the dominant movement...the democratic forces. But even in France and Italy where it's the minority movement, it's thanks to those minority movements that resisted the Communist movements which still dominate a good part of the trade union movement, but yet, that little splinter, that little quality that they had has prevented, in my opinion, in 1947, '48 and '49, and we are proud. We don't apologize for the fact that we helped to contribute to the development of that labor movement.

Just as at the same time where the struggle for liberation and independence developed in North Africa.... I see my friend here from Tunisia... we were with them. Some of us went to jail even in Tunisia under the French and we supported that movement for liberation. This was one of the great mistakes of the great geniuses of foreign policy in Western Europe, including Washington, where they refused to recognize the moderates who were fighting for liberation and independence. And that is why, in my opinion, in many of these Third World countries, in many of these developing countries, you have opened the door to the totalitarians who are attempting to exploit this fertile ground. That is why you read about Angola. That is why you read about Vietnam. I know it is unpopular to talk about Vietnam. But I know Vietnam from the days of the Japanese War. The people who resisted the Japanese, not Mr. Ho Chi Minh, during the Nazi-Soviet Pact. He was then collaborating. People forget that he became a great militant and a great patriot afterwards when the Russians were attacked by the Nazis, as the Communists in Western Europe became great patriots for France after Russia was attacked by the Nazis, not before. We can go on and on about these things.

That is why we said, "Yes, we have a job to do to work with these labor movements," because they had nothing. The people who were crawling out of the concentration camps of Germany—trade unionists—we had to give them food because they were living on 1200 calories a day under the occupation and they were working 16 and 18 hours a day to rebuild their labor movement. And our friends in France and Italy, with no means at their disposal, and yet facing an enemy, a so-called French Communist Movement, but with all the resources at their disposal from outside because they had a State who was supplying them.

Now these are all the same people who were resisting Nazism. And therefore, when people say, you know, you're anti-communist... what does that mean? We are not anti-communist; we are pro-humanitarian. And the communists are anti-humanitarian [applause].

And remember, remember, some of this unpopularity that we have in terms of helping abroad was not only because we were against the communists, but also because we were in the forefront against colonial regimes. I don't want to mention any names, or even some of our friends in the labor movement in Europe who were not completely happy in those early days about our position on the anti-colonial struggle. So remember this thing. Throw it back in the teeth of those people who say that we are the racists, that we are the colonialists. When we were fighting colonialism, the liberals, or a good number of the liberals of this country, and other people of all kinds of colors, were saying that it was none of our business. This was the internal affairs of France and England.

And so, therefore, we think that we have no apologies to make to anybody about the role we have played, and we believe that if foreign policy in the post-war years had paid a little bit of attention to some of us in the labor movement about the rising movements for independence, the rising nationalist movements... I see our friend here from India. And I was at their first Congress of the INTUC, not from India, but from Malaysia, but his friends from India. And I know his President, Mr. Pepe Lereign [sic], the President of the ICFTU. I know all these people from the very early days when we were there, when these unions were being built, and when some of the new governments who came in after independence were trying to repress this freedom.

So, therefore, we believe that in the struggle that took place after the war for economic reconstruction,

for the Marshall Plan, the labor movement, in conjunction, in cooperation with other labor movements, was decisive in making sure that that was successful. Today we face...this is my conclusion...Today we are facing a very serious situation. We face today the attempt of those who tried to destabilize Western Europe, who tried to prevent the rebuilding of Western Europe, who tried to prevent the Marshall Plan from being a success, who tried to prevent the Common Market from being successful, who tried to prevent NATO from being successful. They failed.

What they are doing today is a result of their failure. It has not been the failure of what we did after post-war. Today it is the failure of the will of the westerners; it is the crisis of affluence with a very serious economic crisis and with now a new turn of those who represent the totalitarian world, whose objective whether it be Helsinki or whether it be Belgrade, where they are engaging us, enmeshing us in the machinery dealing with security and cooperation, but which their major objective is to dismantle the very things that prevented the communist takeover in Western Europe. They are trying to destroy the very Euro-American alliance which is essential for the maintenance of our part of the free world and which is essential for our dealing with the countries in the Third World, in the developing countries. Because it is not through confrontation with our friends in the Third World that we can solve the sins of the past, the sins of colonialism. It is through negotiations. And if we are strong in terms of our unity of the free forces as contrasted to what we must say is a form of disarray, of disunity which exists today between Western Europe and the United States.

And that is why, when we speak out for human rights, when we speak out for the need to help those who are fighting for the preservation of democracy and freedom and human rights, we are speaking out for the only kind of foreign policy that can prevent war. It is not through appeasement, it is not purely by technical armaments, that war comes about. It is where freedom does not exist, where repression and suppression is the rule of law that the danger of war comes.

And today we are facing this in Southern Europe, where our new friends, our new democracies have come alive. There is a great hope and there is great danger unless the free world, unless the free trade union movement continues this tradition back to World War I, back to World War II and the post-war years to unite, to cooperate and seek new ways to create the kind of bulwark which will not only preserve what we have, but can become a force to contribute to a policy, both in politics, in economics and security, that can prevent the dangers we are facing today in Southern Africa, in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Because the return of Secretary of State Vance and the results of that trip are not only discouraging, but unfortunately, I must say, end on a note of alarm, unless, in the next year or two, in these areas, especially in Southern Africa, we cannot achieve a democratic, peaceful solution, we may be, who knows, on the eve of either new military clashes, and especially in Southern Africa, the danger of what could become, very easily, another Vietnam, because unless we have a democratic, peaceful solution, which we must be dedicated to, and the labor movement must become part not only of our relationships with other labor movements but influencing the foreign policies of our governments and certainly many of the employers who are investing in those countries. Unless that is done, we face this very serious possibility and it's important that this be considered along with the good that has been taking and stressing human rights, that this be taken into account when we deal with the issues and not be afraid. Whether it's the President of France or the Chancellor of Germany who criticizes some of the of the remarks of the President of the United States, we should not run away from this issue of human rights, because if that can be done, it is the greatest contribution to prevent war.

It's not the Soviet dissidents who are a threat to peace, it is those who have tortured them, who have expelled them, who have denied them the right, who are the threat to peace and the danger for war.

Appendix B: The AFT International Affairs before the Shanker Presidency (A Letter from Former AFT President David Selden)

Dear George Schmidt:

Thanks for sending me a copy of *Substance*. I found the article on the AFT and the CIA basically accurate, but it contains a distortion which undermines its ultimate effect. The point of view of the piece is that the cold war was a capitalist plot against the workers. This simplistic analysis certainly has an element of truth, but it is also true that many Americans who could hardly be counted as supporters of business interests, and deplored the cold war, supported the containment policy because of the threat of continued encroachment on Europe by the Soviet Union.

I, for one, have never been anti-Soviet; I have hoped that as economic conditions in the USSR improved, Soviet society would be liberalized, in fact. But throughout the 1950s and into the early 1960s I reluctantly concluded that support of the containment policy was the only prudent attitude one could take. If there is to be a viable opposition in the AFT and the CTU, issues which tend to divide, rather than united, must be avoided.

No CIA Involvement in the '60's

While I was president of the AFT the union had no involvement with the CIA, although we did have some involvement with AIFLD. I was particularly alert to the danger of CIA involvement because it had been revealed that during the 1960s the NEA was a conduit for funds going from the CIA to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession. The AFT was not affiliated with WCOTP for two reasons; it was dominated by the NEA, and it admitted organizations of administrators.

AFT and the IFFTU

The AFT was and is affiliated with the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions. Although IFFTU began as an offshoot of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, when that organization was found to have received CIA funds, IFFTU disassociated itself from it. Essentially, IFFTU is the socialist international teachers organization. It is dominated by the Germans, Austrians, and Belgians. It plays no role in the cold war, pretty much following the socialist line of the Western European countries. Braconier, the IFFTU general secretary, is a Belgian socialist who scrupulously avoids letting the organization be used as an instrument of American or any other national policy.

Denise Thiry and the Labor Movement

It was through IFFTU, however, that I first met Denise Thiry. Ms. Thiry is of Belgian birth. She emigrated to Chile with her well-to-do parents during or soon after World War II. In the 1960s she was working in the office of the Postal, Telegraph, and Telephone International, which was housed in the headquarters of the Communications Workers (AFL-CIO) in Washington.

Ms. Thiry started working as a secretary, but her linguistic ability—French, Spanish, English, and some German—and her general competence soon resulted in a promotion to an organizing position, working mainly in South America. PTTI seems to have become a wholly owned subsidiary of AIFLD, which as your article correctly pointed out, gets most of its funds from the State Department.

AIFLD

Incidentally, AIFLD does not engage directly in subversive activity in the countries in which it has programs, although it apparently was used to transmit funds to the anti-Allende unions in Chile. AIFLD operates on the premise that American-style collective bargaining would be best for Latin American workers, and that premise rests, of course, on the concept that capitalism is the most appropriate economic system for that part of the world.

Getting back to Ms. Thiry, however, in IFFTU she was viewed as somewhat of an intruder because she always showed up at world conferences with a retinue of delegates from Latin American teachers unions who formed an automatic voting block. These delegates could not have attended these European meetings without substantial financial assistance from AIFLD. In fact, it was a trade-off; an air ticket and expenses for support.

Chile

I became very interested in the Chilean situation because I had gotten acquainted with four teacher leaders from Chile who were brought to the United States and sent on a nationwide tour so that they could see how AFT locals functioned. The range of opinion of the four varied from extreme left (Trotsky-ist), to rather conservative, but all were proud of the Chilean electoral system. After the coup I tried to reach them by telephone, and when that failed I asked an official of AIFLD to find out what happened to my friends. In a week or so I was shown a report from Denise Thiry which defended the coup and derided my concern about the four teacher leaders, who, she said, were all alive and well and teaching their classes.

While I was still AFT president I tried to establish an international program independent of AIFLD. I had attended an AIFLD-sponsored conference in Bogota, held without permission of IFFTU, and it seemed to me that the delegates were genuine, for the most part. A few months later I tried to interest the IFFTU executive committee in setting up a truly independent Latin American program. This effort failed; the Germans did not want to spend their own money on such a program and by that time my position in the AFT had been so undermined that I could do nothing on my own. However, while the independent program idea was under consideration I suddenly was offered the services of Denise Thiry to head it up. I dutifully reported this offer to Braconier, who was appalled. After I left the presidency, however, Denise was appointed as Director of International Affairs, with AIFLD paying for the program. Later, Ms. Thiry just disappeared. No explanation was ever given, and friends of mine working in the AFT office had no idea why she left or where she went.

The whole AIFLD, CIA, AFT, AFL-CIO and Social Democrats USA web of relationships is

complicated by the Israel problem. American Jews are understandably concerned for the future of Israel, and rightly or wrongly they consider the policy of the Soviet Union to be anti-Israel, at least in its effect. This in turn leads many Israeli supporters to condone activities of the interlocking defense-intelligence labor establishment which they otherwise would indignantly denounce. It is hard to take a balanced view of such an emotional problem.

Fraternally,

David Selden