

# Attacks on IBT pave way for Reagagate

by Richard Magraw

Barring full-scale government interference, Roy L. Williams, international vice-president from Kansas City, will become the next president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) at their convention in June. The death of Teamster president Frank Fitzsimmons and the recent endorsement of Williams's candidacy by his potential rival, Jackie Presser, the international vice-president from Cleveland, would normally be enough to ensure Williams's success.

But forces around the Socialist International, as well as their Trojan Horse conservatives, exemplified by the Heritage Foundation, have chosen the issue of a Williams Teamster presidency to attempt to blackmail Ronald Reagan into undercutting his own labor support.

Over the next several weeks this issue will determine whether President Reagan follows through with his mandate for a labor-industry alliance to rebuild the country, or whether he will be trapped into an antilabor stance.

The prospect of a powerful Teamsters union led by Roy Williams, whose style is more like Jimmy Hoffa's than Frank Fitzsimmons's, has brought together every Fabian journalist, union dissident, and Justice Department official to try to prevent Williams from taking the presidency. The "trial-by-press" media are barraging the American public with a rehash of unsubstantiated charges and innuendo of corruption and "organized crime" connections dating back to the McClellan Committee and Robert Kennedy's Walter Sheridan-run "Get Hoffa" unit of the Justice Department.

Unless the Reagan administration takes on this renegade Justice Department operation against the Teamsters, they will find themselves with a choice between accepting indictments which have no merit, but which will drag the White House into the muck, or rejecting the indictments and leaving the administration open to "Reagagate" charges of coverup.

## Pendorf and the media

The potential Williams indictments are based on the so-called Pendorf (Pension-Dorfman) investigation. Pendorf had long been considered a dead case, even by

the unscrupulous Carter administration, for lack of evidence. It was revived when Williams began to figure prominently in the bid for the Teamster presidency.

The media have put the Pendorf story on the front pages in an effort to pressure the Reagan Justice Department into moving for indictments against Williams. The May 11 *Washington Post* featured a front-page story noting "any indictment of Williams now could be an embarrassment to the Reagan administration because of its close connections with the nation's largest union." Gossip networks in the media assert that Williams could be indicted in Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Kansas City, and Las Vegas.

Evidence linking Roy Williams to any wrongdoing is at best purely circumstantial, such as association with persons who might be indicted. The *Washington Post* admits that the Justice Department had "investigated but declined to prosecute Sen. Howard Cannon (D-Nev.)," Williams's supposed partner in crime.

The level of media pressure on the Justice Department reached outright harassment levels when the *New York Times* Washington, D.C. night editor, Irvin Molotsky, called the head of the Criminal Division, Assistant Attorney General D. Lowell Jensen, at 11:00 p.m. to badger him about whether or not they would indict Williams—after Jensen had said that a decision would not be forthcoming for several weeks.

At the same time, the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (SPIS) is rushing into print a booklet on the Teamsters, corruption and "organized crime" with a chapter on Roy Williams. Morty Steinberg, former Buffalo Organized Crime Strike Force chief and counsel to SPIS, stressed that the booklet would be out in time for the Teamsters convention.

The Senate Labor Committee, whose minority head is Kennedy, is still staffed by Walter Sheridan. Sheridan continues to keep up the scandal pressure on the Reagan administration through investigations into the Department of Labor and the Teamsters Central States Health and Welfare and Pension Funds.

Finally, the orchestration includes the Teamster dissident organizations PROD (a Ralph Nader creation) and TDU (run by the International Socialists), whose spokesmen are liberally quoted by the media, and themselves conduit Justice Department slanders.

A break from the media smears appeared in Jack Anderson's May 13 column, which blew the whistle on the FBI's illegal business transactions. Anderson cited a July 27, 1978 memo written by Assistant Attorney General John Harmon that "discusses ways to lend a protective legal cover into the FBI's outlaw activities." The column describes how the FBI broke existing laws by creating businesses, making loans, and making profits that were used to finance "sting" operations in Abscam and Brilab.