

50 PER CENT NYC WAGE CUT MODEL FOR CITIES

NEW YORK, N.Y., Dec. 15 (IPS)--After receiving what the New York Times referred to as "marching orders" from the Rockefeller-controlled New York City banks, the administration of New York City Mayor Beame moved hand-in-hand this week with leading trade union officials to implement Rockefeller's urban model for this depression. Beginning immediately, tens of thousands of city workers will be laid off and recycled back into the workforce through "public service" slave labor jobs at approximately half their former wage. Public employees who maintain their present jobs will also have their wages drastically reduced. All will be subjected to an intensive productivity campaign.

Legislation is presently being rushed through Congress to appropriate at least \$2 billion for such "public service" jobs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program. Not accidentally, these jobs fall in the same general categories in which layoffs have been slated. While annual pay under the CETA program has been averaging nearly \$7500, many of those to be axed are earning twice that amount. Many will be hired back into their old jobs, but at CETA wages. And even this abysmally low \$7500 wage scale will shortly begin to plummet, quickly reducing the standard of living of New York City's working class to half its current level.

New York's budget crisis has been directly orchestrated by David Rockefeller through the New York Times and city Comptroller Harrison Goldin. As early as Nov. 4, Chase Manhattan Bank made known its refusal to purchase short-term notes issued by the city. Picking up the cue, the Times printed a front-page article Nov. 25, "Experts Fear Growth in Costly City Debts," which city finance officers claimed caused the collapse of bond prices in the following day's sale.

The city planned to return to the bond market with \$600 million notes Dec. 2. On Dec. 1, after repeated consultation with the Technical Debt Advisory Committee, a small select group of representatives from the leading Rockefeller banks, Goldin deliberately sabotaged the bond issue with his announcement that Beame had vastly underestimated the actual city budget deficit by \$220 million. The \$600 million note issue finally sold for a record-breaking 9.5 per cent.

On Dec. 11, Mayor Beame informed the public that the previously announced 1,510 layoffs would be insufficient. An additional 7,300 public employees would have to be laid off.

After raising a phony hue and cry and fingering each other's members as more easily expendable, municipal trade union bureaucrats, led by AFSCME's District Council 37 Executive Director Victor Gotbaum and Sanitationmen's President John DeLury, announced that, in true Nazi Labor Front fashion, they would

henceforth assume the responsibility for crushing the workforce themselves, and that they should be allowed to decide how and where the layoffs were to hit. Most importantly, they stressed that the only real solution was the massive infusion of public service jobs.

Whether or not the plan goes through -- and questions have already been raised as to its legality -- the stated cuts represent only the tip of an enormous iceberg for city workers. According to figures released by the City Comptroller's office, the reductions account for only 38 percent of the current deficit of \$570 million. Even worse, the New York Times warns of a \$1 billion deficit for next year, and has editorially indicated that cutbacks of 75 percent of the workforce might be required.

Meanwhile, pressure is mounting for an across-the-board pay cut for all public employees. Beame started the ball rolling by suggesting that the unions agree to pay cuts of up to 5 percent. He helpfully explained that these could also come in the form of either payless workdays or unpaid vacations.

This demand was soon echoed by a coalition of over 60 black and Hispanic organizations; of these, some exist and are directly funded by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations.

In fact, some city employees themselves are falling for Rockefeller's suicidal "critical choices" for across-the-board 10 to 20 percent pay cuts in the hopes of averting wholesale layoffs. Sensing that their leaders have thrown them to the wolves, they desperately offer themselves up one limb at a time rather than be eaten whole.

Not accidentally, New York City launched a productivity drive among public employees Nov. 30. Heading up the drive for the Beame administration is one of the most despicable criminals in the Rockefeller stable, Deputy Budget Director Robert Bott. Bott spent the years 1964-65 as an adviser to the CIA-installed fascist government of Brazil, setting up the new regime's overall fiscal management program. Through the programs which Bott helped develop, the Brazilian fascist regime was able to reduce the average wage by 45 per cent over the short period from 1964-71. Now this butcher intends to perform his magic for the Rockefellers by grinding up New York's working class.

Rockefeller knows that between Bott and ex-State Department agent Gotbaum, this productivity drive will be in good hands. When asked by an IPS reporter what he thought about his Brazilian experience, Bott replied, "I enjoyed every minute of it." When asked if working for such a government, which Bott himself labeled a "military dictatorship," posed any moral dilemma for him, Bott answered, "No I had no problems at all working for such a government."

Bott's problems are only just beginning.