

BUSING

A FIGHT FOR EQUALITY

January 1st marks the 111th anniversary of The Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. All historians agree that this was a partial measure in approaching the Negro question of that time. Because slaves were private property, the Union armies often returned runaway slaves to their masters. Slaves who reached the Union lines with the intention of fighting for freedom for themselves and all bondsmen were rejected.

The governments of France and England were sympathetic to the Confederacy. Their support to the slavers' rebellion was unhampered by any moral issues since both North and South upheld slavery. At the same time the lower Army ranks and the increasing restlessness of the slaves was in fact making the Civil War a war for the destruction of bondage. The forces around Lincoln were threatened with isolation. In order to save their political necks a series of quite partial measures was taken.

On April 10th, 1862, the government offered to compensate all slave-owners who would set free their slaves. Such a half-hearted effort fell on deaf ears and the antagonisms developed further. On June 19, 1862, Congress prohibited slavery in all the territories. This radical measure nullified the Dred Scott decision and untied the hands of the militant wing of the Republican Party.

It was clear that based on the previous measures more radical ones were possible. The serious objective military situation on the one hand, and the growing resolve and militancy of the democratic forces on the other, pushed Lincoln into the position of making the declaration. With the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation 3,120,000 slaves in Confederate territory were declared free. This was the greatest expropriation of private property in history.

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This series of partial measures was won by radicals who clearly understood that each victory, no matter how small, would cut the ground out from under the conservatives and clear the path for bigger and more important victories. In fact, it was the above series of measures that made possible the 13th Amendment (which outlawed slavery throughout the country).

As regards the struggle for the complete emancipation of the Negro people and the relationship of this struggle to the overall fight for socialism, we are still faced with tactical decisions. These decisions include: should revolutionaries fight for reforms that seem very minor, or should revolutionaries fight only on the strategic level?

In the current struggle over busing this question has sharply come to the forefront. Some revolutionaries, especially Anglo-American revolutionaries, have objectively joined the worst enemies of progress and the Negro people in their "principled" stand against busing. The reasons for this position are minor; they range from the defense of the neighborhood school to the substitution of sloganeering for thinking. Such an example is "to oppose what the enemy supports" or to "swim against the tide." However, it is easily seen that the subjective base for these so-called revolutionaries is their chauvinism that has convinced them that they know what is best for the massive revolutionary movement of the Negro people.

In order to really understand the overwhelming importance of the busing issue, it is necessary to look at the recent events in the evolution of the struggle. First of all it should be reaffirmed, and it is a sad commentary that it needs reaffirmation, that the Negro masses hate segregation, have consistently fought against it and will continue to do so. We must also reaffirm that the communist movement hates and struggles against segregation with all its might; no matter if every person in the country declares himself for segregation in any form, we consistently fight against it.

During the past thirty years the often unsupported struggles for the "little" things -- the right to eat at a public lunchroom or the right to vote -- were the mobilizing tools that slowly drew tens of millions of Negroes

and Anglo-Americans into the struggles that culminated in the armed mass uprisings of the 1960's. The point we are making here is that it was the partial reform struggles that provided the base for the mass movement. It should also be clear to all that if the communist does not struggle to lead the spontaneous reform movement he cannot lead the inevitable mass struggle.

Secondly, it should be clear to all that every revolution is fought over legal principles. Anyone who ignores the "legal" struggle and wants to participate only in so-called revolutionary work is simply a sectarian who must be driven out of the movement.

The political victories in the field of civil rights, especially the 1954 school decision, were utilized to strengthen the Negro People's Movement. Reactionary elements sensing the vital

Support Committee for Jarum, which was organized around the issue of the closing of the Jefferson Ave. Assembly Plant. It is made up of a coalition of factory and community activists whose prime objective is open protest against the Chrysler Corp. and a mobilization of other activists for such actions.

The confrontation with the City Council took place on Dec. 18th. It was spearheaded by the Workers Action Coalition for Jobs (WACJ). Three demands were placed before the council:

1. That the Common Council must hold a public hearing on unemployment and the allocation of CETA funds. (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973)
2. That the Common Council must fully implement the present CETA funds in Detroit to provide the full 700 jobs allocated.
3. That the Common Council must call on the U.S. Congress to provide additional funds to the Detroit area and expand the present funding at the expense of the military budget, so that every unemployed worker, male and female, is provided with a decent job at a decent income. Also, that these jobs create quality schools, better housing and better health facilities for all workers in the Detroit area.

The Common Council was confronted by nearly 80 people with petitions demanding jobs with 20,000 signatures. Although 3 demands were put forth, only the first one was addressed by the Common Council. Forced, by the mounting struggle of the working class, the Common Council will hold a public hearing on jobs, Jan. 17th, at 2:00 p.m., at the Common Council Auditorium. 700

importance of the school decision set out to overturn all civil rights and anti-segregation laws. These reactionaries chose for their first target the school decision. For them it was a natural because of the emotional aspects of this struggle. However, we would be very poor communists if we were, for one moment, to assume that the goal of these reactionaries and fascists was to overturn the school decision. Their goal is to repeal every law against segregation and drive the Negro people back to the lynch rope, menial tasks and second class citizenship.

This strategic question makes it absolutely necessary that the busing battle be won. Objectively, any persons-- especially Anglo-American radicals-- who for any reason oppose busing, must be branded for what they are-- white chauvinists and social fascists.

sent situation.

The tactics of the bourgeoisie are clear. Through their labor lieutenants, in this case, particularly the Teamster leadership, every attempt is being made to divide the working class. They pit Teamsters against auto workers and city employees and further through the press to turn the whole of the working class against the undocumented Mexican national workers. The Detroit News and the Freepress, in the Sunday, Dec. 29th editions, both carried headline stories on the question of undocumented Mexican national workers, claiming that over 30,000 of these workers hold jobs in the state of Michigan.

But our tactics must also be clear. Our strength lies in organization. The fight back of the working class in Detroit has taken many forms-- the petition campaigns, the formation of unemployed councils and even in some cases, incidents of violence due to the frustration and desperation of our class. Every worker across the country must fight to organize unemployed councils. We must raise the issue of unemployment in every organization that we belong to. We must make our voices heard to the bourgeoisie. We must tell them that we will not accept their solution to unemployment which is to blame the undocumented workers in this country and try to further divide our class. We must show them that we will not bear the burden of their crisis of overproduction. Only as a united, organized working class can we defeat the bourgeoisie in their attempts to strangle us both politically and economically. The building of unemployed councils is an important part of the United Front of the Working Class Against