

FOR PEACE, EQUALITY AND SOCIALISM

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All Out for Solidarity Day!

Labor is under attack. Programs and legislation that the unions fought for and won are being dismantled by the White House and an alliance of Republicans and "Boll Weevil" Democrats in Congress. Wages, working conditions, job security and collective bargaining itself are all being threatened by the drive of the monopoly corporations for bigger profits with the full support of their friends in Washington. The double whammy of unemployment and inflation continue to eat away at the living standards of working people. While all working people are feeling the pinch, minority workers in particular are being dealt the heaviest blows. Besides the fact the budget cutbacks and the recession minded promotion of unemployment fall disproportionately on minorities, attacks on affirmative action, desegregation, voting rights and other democratic principles aim at deepening racial inequality. Similarly, women stand to see the limited gains they have won over the last period swept away by the rising tide of monopoly capitalist reaction. As the response to the Air Controllers strike indicates, Reagan and Co. intend to resort to repression to intimidate labor into submission.

LABOR FIGHTBACK

But Labor, in growing alliance with its natural allies, is fighting back. The most important expression of this fight-back is Solidarity Day, a massive protest scheduled for Washington on September 19th. Solidarity Day has the potential to become the largest demonstration since the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington. Politically it could, besides demonstrating a new militancy on the part of the unions, mark an important step toward a new coalition of progressive forces in opposition to the rightwing offensive.

In issuing the call for Solidarity Day, the AFL-CIO leadership was responding to growing pressure from below, from millions of rank and file trade unionists concerned about their jobs and livelihoods. As early as last year the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists passed a resolution calling for a mass demonstration in Washington. This spring a meeting of progressive trade union forces in Western New York issued a similar

call. Central Labor Councils all over the country have been passing resolutions in favor of mass action against the cutbacks.

Historically, the top AFL-CIO leadership has resisted such proposals, a reflection of the bureaucratization of the top echelons of the unions and the strength of the philosophy of labor-management harmony or class collaboration. In 1975, for example, the AFL-CIO Council as a whole refused to support a mass demonstration for jobs called by the Industrial Department of the Labor Federation. And the wing of the AFL-CIO that did sponsor the demonstration made only token efforts to organize the ranks and did even less to reach out to groups outside the labor movement.

This time round things are different. While support for the action among affiliated unions is inevitably uneven, the AFL-CIO appears to be making a serious effort to build the event. Substantial organizational resources are being made available. March organizers are reaching out to both unions and progressive forces beyond the labor movement. On June 19th the AFL-CIO



issued an invitation to all other organizations "that have common concerns and share a common commitment" around the issues of jobs and social justice to join in sponsoring the demonstration. Mainstream Civil Rights forces like the NAACP and PUSH have responded positively to this call and are pledging a major mobilization for the action.

Approaches are being made to community organizations, the women's movement and peace forces as well and broad support is developing among these sectors.

These positive steps need to be recognized and fully supported. At the same time the vagueness of the politics of Solidarity Day, particularly the failure to target the racist attacks on minorities in a sharp way and the virtual liquidation of the issues of war and peace, are serious obstacles to uniting labor's ranks and forging the broadest possible alliance of popular forces. An effective defense of labor's interests cannot be carried out without opposing forthrightly and aggressively the growth of racism, the escalation of militarism and the drift toward war.

PEACE AND RACIAL EQUALITY MUST BE ON AGENDA

To date, march organizers have not formulated specific demands and have instead projected Solidarity Day as a generalized protest against the Reagan economic program and for "jobs and social justice." Spokespeople have indicated that the program will address a range of specific issues including jobs, housing, interest rates and voting rights. But there is no indication that there will be demands and slogans that target concretely the attacks on the struggle for racial equality. This is a reflection of the strength of racism within the AFL-CIO hierarchy. While the federation favors equality in the abstract, many unions have either opposed demands for affirmative action and desegregation, to cite two important examples, or dragged their feet when it came to real support. Racism is the principle means that the

monopolists utilize to divide labor from within and isolate it from the movements of national minorities. The working class as a whole cannot go forward as long as its minority members can be singled out for unequal treatment.

Similarly full funding of social programs and real efforts to meet the economic and social needs of working people are incompatible with the present escalation of military spending. Nor is a foreign policy based on repressing the democratic aspirations of workers throughout the world, be it El Salvador or South Africa, consistent with the needs of U.S. workers. Unfortunately Lane Kirkland and the top leaders of the AFL-CIO are long time advocates of a guns and butter policy and fervent supporters of an international anti-communist crusade. This viewpoint is yet another expression of their collaboration with the exploiters of labor for it is the monopoly corporations who benefit from such a policy. It is on this issue that we can expect the sharpest resistance from Kirkland and company.

Nevertheless the growing involvement of anti-racist and peace forces in the Solidarity Day action provides a basis for pushing the AFL-CIO on these questions. In addition progressive forces both inside and outside the unions can influence the character of the action through slogans and agitation which links up the cutbacks with the racist offensive and the drive toward war.

We need to be demanding a transfer of funds from the military budget to social programs, cancellation of the MX missile, the Neutron Bomb, passage of SALT II and a serious commitment to arms negotiations. We have oppose U.S. support for the repressive military Junta in El Salvador and the steps toward U.S. intervention in South Africa represented by the Walker Amendment's threatened repeal. At home we must affirm our commitment to equality concretely. We must

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Letters To The Editor...

PWOC - "The New Dogmatists"?

Dear Comrades:

We are writing to cancel our sustainer-ship to the Organizer. We would however, like to maintain our subscription. In doing so we want to lay out our political reasons and hope that you will take them seriously.

For a number of years we looked to the Organizer as being the best American communist newspaper. We used to anxiously await its arrival and we made use of it at our workplace. We felt it represented an advance for the communist movement as far as its ability to apply Marxism to the issues of the day. So its with sadness that we have to say we no longer feel the same respect for the Organizer or the PWOC.

Since the campaign against white chauvinism has been a watershed, let us begin with our feelings about your coverage of that phenomena or should we say your lack of coverage. Just as in the OCIC there was no serious attempt to centralize the ideological struggle around the campaign, so the Organizer failed to present opposition perspectives from within the OC. This is particularly serious given the widespread exodus out of the OC. At a time when so many were leaving, a responsible approach to the struggle would dictate an article or articles from OC opposition or ex OC forces. To sum it up a la Newlin and say "the base of support for the campaign is narrow" hardly does justice to what has gone on. If the campaign was such a watershed (as you feel it was and is) then doesn't the tendency deserve a real debate on what transpired. You disagree with ex-OC forces but to dismiss them with snide, disparaging comments or unsubstantiated charges of abandoning Marxism-Leninism hardly enlightens our movement.

Also to fail to comment in the last two issues about the widespread losses suffered by the OC, the PWOC, the BOC and other fusion party building forces seems to us a dishonest silence about what has gone on in the campaign. Or is the rest of the move-

ment "so gross" it doesn't matter? Your silence is bluff because let's face it, the OC, the PWOC and others are shells of what they once were.

Your non-coverage of what's gone on with the campaign leads us to the deeper problem - your ultra-left line. The PWOC has become the new dogmatists. Some symptoms of this include: 1) your overestimation of objective conditions - specifically your view of the U.S. workers movement. 2) your overestimation of the communist movement's development, 3) your view that right errors are the main danger in the anti-revisionist movement and 4) your absolute intolerance toward opposing viewpoints in the tendency, a sectarian intolerance not justified by the level of development of the movement. On a more general level the PWOC has failed to evaluate critically any of the lines it has developed, especially its trade union line and the fusion line on party building. These became sacred cows, a new dogma, not a guide to action.

While much more needs to be said, we hope the PWOC is able to step back from the recent period and recognize what a disaster it has been. Once again the PWOC needs to target ultra-Leftism as the main danger. Failure to recognize this will only lead the PWOC further down the pathetic and well travelled road of irrelevance.

In struggle, J.B. and C.B.

P.S. We think the merging of For the PEOPLE into the Organizer was done in an unprincipled fashion. Coming on the heels of a subscription drive to For the People (in which we among others subscribed) and never receiving word from For The People about the change is a ripoff.

The ORGANIZER Responds:

J.B. and C.B. raise a number of points. First, while we agree the quality of debate in relation to the cam-

aign in the Organizer leaves much to be desired, we disagree that we have failed to offer the opposition a hearing in the paper. Since the beginning of the campaign we have printed twice as many letters critical of our views than letters which have supported them. Indeed every letter that we have received that raised new or substantive criticisms has been printed. We also printed an article, at our own initiative by the rectification forces critiquing the campaign. It remains our policy to publish articles critical of the perspective of the PWOC on the campaign or any other important question. The plain fact is that we have not received a single article for publication from any opposition forces, inside or outside the OCIC, even though on a number of occasions we have made it clear we would welcome such an article in order to advance the struggle. Thus unless the comrades believe we should write the opposition's articles for them, it seems to us the responsibility for the paucity of such articles in the Organizer rests with the opposition and not ourselves.

Secondly we do not believe the Organizer has made any secret of the losses in membership suffered by the OCIC, the PWOC, or other "fusionist" forces. In just the last issue we discussed our problems in meeting our production schedule as a "result of resignations from the PWOC" and characterized these resignations as "one aspect of the split in our movement over the campaign..." No one denies the fact or the extent of these losses. The question is what is their political significance.

Thirdly we have the charge that the PWOC are the "new dogmatists," degenerating into ultra-leftism and sectarianism. This has become the rallying cry of the opposition. But where is the evidence? Comrades J.B. and C.B. cite a number of things but fail completely to be concrete. Where does our view of the worker's movement misunderstand objective conditions? How have we overestimated the development of the communist movement? Why is our view that right opportunism has become the main danger incorrect and ultra-left? These questions go begging. Then



comrades turn around and criticize us for failing to reevaluate our political line. Since this line was developed during the period in which these comrades believe the PWOC was playing a leading role in the struggle against ultra-leftism, we wonder what they think stands in need of reexamination. In our view the fact that the political line of the PWOC has not undergone any major shift gives the lie to the charge of a going over to ultra-leftism. The one area where we have significantly reevaluated and elaborated our line is in relation to party building, where we think the absence of a recognition of the importance of a concerted ideological struggle against white and petty bourgeois chauvinism was the Achille's Heel of the fusion perspective as we held it in the past.

As for the charge of "sectarian intolerance" we think this also is empty of content. Where have we refused to enter into debate over the perspectives of the campaign? Who has run from this debate? Why did opposition comrades in New England write a lengthy document criticizing the campaign and then fail to show up at a meeting called to discuss it? Why have the leading comrades of the opposition refused to meet and struggle with the leading comrades defending the campaign? While the PWOC continues to see itself as part of both a tendency and a movement much broader than itself and the OCIC, the opposition, sometimes in words and consistently in deeds, has chosen to write us off as a degenerate sect, somewhere between the RCP and the People's Temple.

The emptiness of the criticism of our alleged ultra-leftism and the hysteria of the opposition in heaping slander on the supporters of the campaign confirm how deeply rooted our movement's defence of white chauvinism in its ranks really is. The campaign has touched a raw nerve, exposing the

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The Philadelphia Workers' Organizing Committee

Who We Are



The PWOC is a communist organization, basing itself on Marxism-Leninism, the principles of scientific socialism. We are an activist organization of Black and white, men and women workers who see the capitalist system itself as the root cause of the day-to-day problems of working people. We are committed to building a revolutionary working class movement that will overthrow the profit system and replace it with socialism.

We seek to replace the anarchy of capitalist production with a planned economy based on the needs of working people. We want to end the oppression of national minorities and women, and make equality a reality instead of the hypocritical slogan it has become in the mouths of

the capitalist politicians. We work toward the replacement of the rule of the few - the handful of monopolists - by the rule of the many - the working people

The masses of people in the US have always fought back against exploitation, and today the movements opposing the monopolists are growing rapidly in numbers and in intensity. What is lacking is the political leadership which can bring these movements together, deepen the consciousness of the people, and build today's struggles into a decisive and victorious revolutionary assault against Capital.

To answer this need we must have a vanguard party of the working class, based on its most conscious and committed partisans, rooted in the mass movements of all sectors of American people, and equipped with the political understanding capable of solving the strategic and tactical problems on the difficult road to revolution.

The PWOC seeks, along with like-minded organizations and individuals throughout the US, to build such a party, a genuine Communist Party. The formation of such a party will be an important step forward in the struggle of the working class and all oppressed people to build a new world on the ashes of the old.

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Labor Round-up

Baltimore Gas & Electric Attempts to Bust Organized Labor

As the recession deepens, attacks on labor are increasing. Baltimore Gas & Electric recently broke with its past practice and has, for the first time, hired 80 out of state non-union workers to provide maintenance at its power plants in Anne Arundel county.

The Baltimore Building and Trades Council responded in April with on site picketlines of nearly 3000 workers which involved over 50 arrests. It rallied some 2000 workers from 70-80 different locals (including clothing, hospital, and AFSCME) to demonstrate downtown April 24 at the annual BG & E stockholders meeting. As an electrician from Glen Burnie put it, "We pay our monthly bills to BG & E and they spend it hiring out of state scabs to take jobs from local people out of work."

At this protest rally, the President of the Council announced, "It's us or them and we aren't leaving 'til we win. If we back down now and let this anti-union contractor work in peace, that's the end of the building trades." A rank and file IBEW worker added, "We will be back. This is my livelihood and I have to fight for it. . . every time its threatened I have to fight for it."

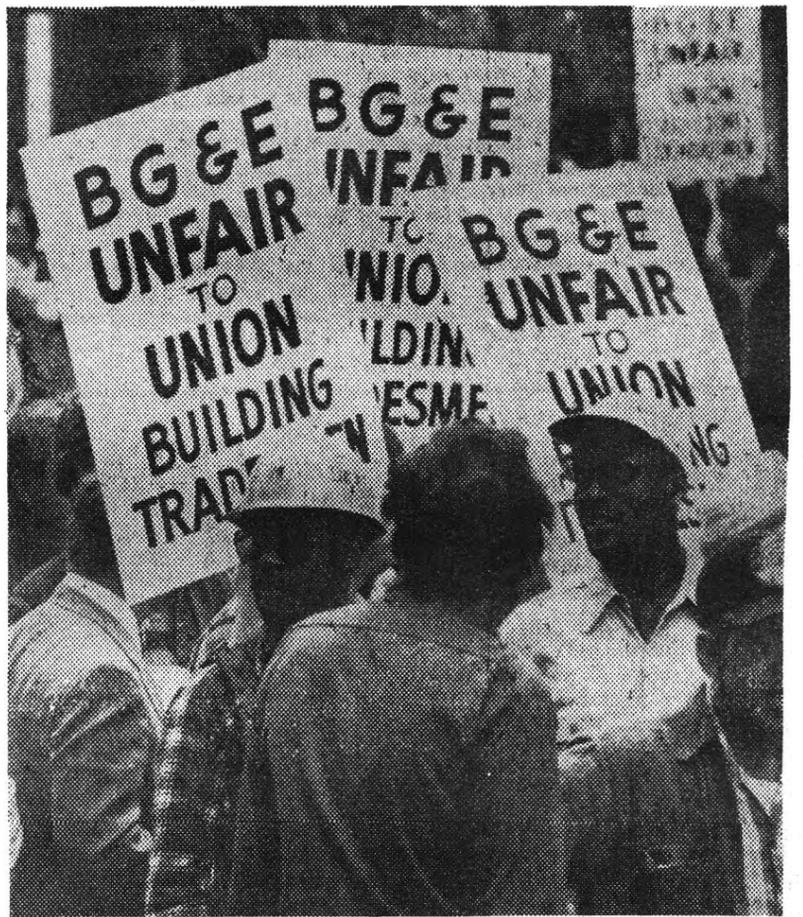
Next, the unions will be developing a plan to "start fouling up the system for collecting bills", according to Edward Courtney, President of the Baltimore Building and Trades Council. At the rally, Thomas Bradley, President of the

Maryland and District of Columbia AFL-CIO warned, "We have 421,000 trade union workers. If they're going to shut off jobs, then we'll have to shut off the cash to pay the bills." However, this tactic will only become effective if the Building and Trades Council wins broad labor and community support.

Breaking with its past practice of racism is key to the trades' moving this effort forward. Baltimore is over 50% Black, yet the Building and Trades locals have only a token number of Black members. This comes at a time when Black unemployment in Baltimore has been 16.6%, more than triple the 5.2% for whites. As the Trades balk at affirmative action programs, they also remain isolated from community struggles, struggles supported and led primarily by the Black community.

The Trades Council's "hands off" policy toward both affirmative action to rectify discrimination, as well as the community struggles for rent control, against police brutality and social service cutbacks (all these things most widely felt by minorities) has compromised its ability to build a broad bill-withholding movement.

BG & E's choice of a non-union contractor is only part of a national trend to "bust" organized labor. From 1969-79, non-union construction has climbed from 20% of the industry to 60%. In Baltimore it now stands at about 50%. Many of



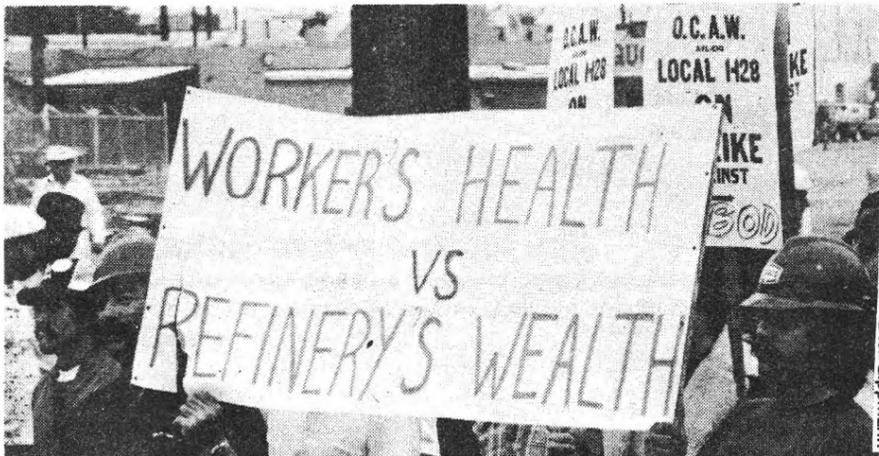
these non-union workers are national minorities who have been systematically excluded from the building trades and the workforce in general. The unions' failure to organize national minorities and women has allowed the construction companies to drive down the wages of all construction workers.

As the organized trades have lost their bargaining position, the Davis-Bacon Act has been completely undermined. This federal law, along with similar state and local laws in Baltimore and other

localities, requires that all government construction contracts pay the prevailing union wage.

There is nearly total non-compliance in Baltimore, yet there has not been a single fine levied for non-compliance by the state of Maryland in eleven years. The building trades are on a self-destructive path, unless the struggle against racism is taken up. If stronger affirmative action programs aren't developed, the trades can only expect further erosion of wages and working conditions.

Mazzochi Challenges OCAW Leadership



The central demand of last year's striking OCAW workers was for fully paid hospitalization and medical care.

Two years ago Tony Mazzochi, a long time health and safety advocate and progressive, ran for President of the 180,000 member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW). Mazzochi lost to Robert Goss by 1500 votes. Since then the union has moved backwards on both the political and economic fronts and Mazzochi is making another bid for the presidency.

In his campaign, Mazzochi is focusing on Goss's disastrous stewardship over the OCAW. The union lost a five month strike last year, failing to win fully paid hospitalization and medical care, the central demand in the strike and one which many other industrial workers already have won. Unlike the 1972 strike when the union leadership waged an aggressive campaign to win public support and expose the greed of the oil companies, Goss waged the strike on the narrowest possible basis.

Goss also moved this year to merge the OCAW with the much larger United Paperworkers, and was prepared to abolish

many democratic features of the union's constitution in the process. Rank and file opposition forced Goss to retreat from the merger. Politically, Goss has supported Ronald Reagan budget cuts, echoing the President in saying, "he's going to cut out a lot of fat, but protect the real needy." The OCAW, not surprisingly, has been losing membership during the last two years.

Mazzochi sums up the consequences of Goss's leadership in this way: "... worst of all, Goss's brand of business unionism has contributed to the overall decline of the American labor movement. Union members no longer truly believe in the trade union movement as a cause, as a social commitment and as a crusade."

SUPPORTS LABOR PARTY

Mazzochi, by way of contrast, does believe that the labor movement has both the responsibility and the potential to lead the struggle of working people for a better life against the monopoly corpor-

ations. Central to his vision is labor taking the political field as an independent force.

"I don't think," Mazzochi told *In These Times* newspaper, "we can organize the unorganized in this country unless we have a separate political apparatus. People will look to the labor movement as it is able to develop a public agenda and as it begins to stand for something. That creates a whole different climate, a whole different image. Then it is not just selling an institution: 'We can get you a few extra cents an hour' - and a lot of unions can't even do that any more. I think we have the capability of exploding in membership gains if we develop an alternative political option."

Unlike some who see hope for labor coming through a capture of the Democratic Party, Mazzochi is unequivocal in favoring a new party based on labor. As legislative director for the union for 12 years he received a first hand education in the nature of the Democratic Party. He characterizes the unity of the two parties around a program of austerity as the "Party of Cancer."

As President, Mazzochi would promote an aggressive posture toward organizing the unorganized (more than half of the petroleum industry and 3/4 of the chemical industry are unorganized) including the involvement of rank and file members of the union in organizing drives. He believes successful collective bargaining requires building alliances with consumers, environmentalists and community groups around corporate focus.

While Mazzochi has a long history as a health and safety militant, he supports his union's position that nuclear power development should continue with appropriate safeguards. And, while an outspoken critic of the corporate greed of the oil companies, Mazzochi does not think

nationalization would be an effective reform.

Mazzochi has been active in the peace movement for over 30 years and was an active supporter of the civil rights movement. He has not made, however, the question of racial discrimination and affirmative action in the petrochemical industry an issue in his campaign.

This election, unlike the last, will be decided at a delegate convention this August. A weakness of the last campaign was the absence of any rank and file organization. Mazzochi relied mainly on support from regional and local officials and thus was in a poor position to challenge Goss in those regions where he lacked this kind of support. This election appears likely to follow the same pattern.



LIP /cpf

AFT Holds Convention as Budget Axe Falls on Education

by DINA PORTNOY

This July, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) held its annual convention in Denver, Colorado. This national union is actually a federation of locals - it does no bargaining on a national level. Of the over 500,000 workers its locals represent, a large number of them work for urban, largely minority, public school systems such as N.Y., Phila., Chicago and Boston.

These are the public school systems which are presently facing the brunt of the attack from Washington, from state and from local governments. The Reagan budget includes an unprecedented transfer of funds from the educational and services budget to the Pentagon. Along with the cut in federal funds for public education, Reagan is also proposing a system of block grants - monies which could be used by cities at their own discretion. This could effectively wipe out, for example, Title I funds in the city.

Further, Reagan has tuition tax credits on his legislative agenda, although it has been put off for another year. This would provide tax credits to parents who send their children to any private schools. For some parents, it would be just enough to take their children out of public school and would support and encourage white flight from our cities' schools.

The AFT is not the only national union representing educational workers. The National Education Association (NEA) represents approximately 2 million teachers. The NEA is not affiliated with the labor movement (AFT is in the AFL-CIO) and until a few years ago saw itself as a professional association and

did not organize any non-professional workers.

Although NEA and AFT have held merger talks, these remain stalled. According to Pres. Shanker of the AFT, this is largely due to NEA's refusal to affiliate with labor. Other observers maintain that Shanker has also held back because a merger with the larger union could very well mean the loss of his top leadership position.

CHALLENGES TO UNION CONTROL

Albert Shanker and his Progressive Caucus have been in control of the AFT for about ten years. Not only does he control AFT but he is also President of the N.Y. local - United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Local 2 - the largest AFT local with about 60,000 members. In the years he has been president, democracy has been increasingly eroded. For example, many delegates, including N.Y. delegates, are bound to vote one way, and N.Y. makes up a large number of the delegates at the convention. Committees no longer report all resolutions which they discuss to the plenary sessions, but only three. The constitutional amendments committee, from which many of the undemocratic constitutional changes have come, is the only committee which is closed to most delegates and its members are appointed by the Executive Council.

However, change is coming to the AFT. The old leaderships of some of the locals have been overturned, or challenged, such as in Phila., Detroit, Chicago, and N.Y. City Colleges. Smaller locals are increasingly making their voices heard, asking for increased democracy and better service. But many small

locals cannot afford to come, and so are unrepresented. At Denver, about 240,000 AFT members were represented, which is only a little more than half of the membership.

IS AFT BUILDING THE FIGHTBACK?

It was clear to all that the focus of this year's convention and of Shanker's address would be the increasing cutbacks not only by the Federal government but by many state and city governments as well. Shanker's position was exposed about a month earlier when he spoke to building reps (shop stewards) in Phila. The Phila. Federation of Teachers (PFT) members are facing 200 contract violations, including increases in class size, loss of pay raises, loss of medical benefits and 3700 layoffs. Shanker told the body, gearing up for a summer of organizing support among members, community and labor groups and a possible strike, that education workers must recognize the "realities" of the crisis we are in. Strikes may no longer be effective was his theme, and he implied that workers may need to consider renegotiating contracts and accepting layoffs. Shanker's idea of building alliances is with business, the very group who is demanding economic austerity in the first place.

Not only education workers are organized by the AFT. Recently, the AFT has been organizing nurses, other health professionals and professional state workers. Although this has certainly enabled the AFT to increase its membership and has provided union representation for these workers, organizing non-educational workers should not replace building a fightback against layoffs



in the public schools or organizing the unorganized education workers.

At the Denver convention many resolutions which spoke to maintaining a militant trade union stance were defeated - never even coming to the floor. For example, Shanker forces argued that encouraging locals to seek no layoff clauses in negotiations would be too much to ask given different local situations. A resolution which encouraged joint bargaining along with other locals in the same workplace was viewed as untenable.

Although Reagan's economic plan calls for cutbacks in education but increases in military and Pentagon spending, Shanker insists that we can have guns *and* butter - education *and* military spending. Shanker, therefore, long a supporter of defense spending, as well as a supporter of U.S. involvement in Vietnam long after other labor leaders had turned against it, has not opposed Reagan's increased military spending. His argument for education funding along with military spending is that the government should have an interest in educating young people so that our soldiers will be more highly skilled for today's technological war machine.

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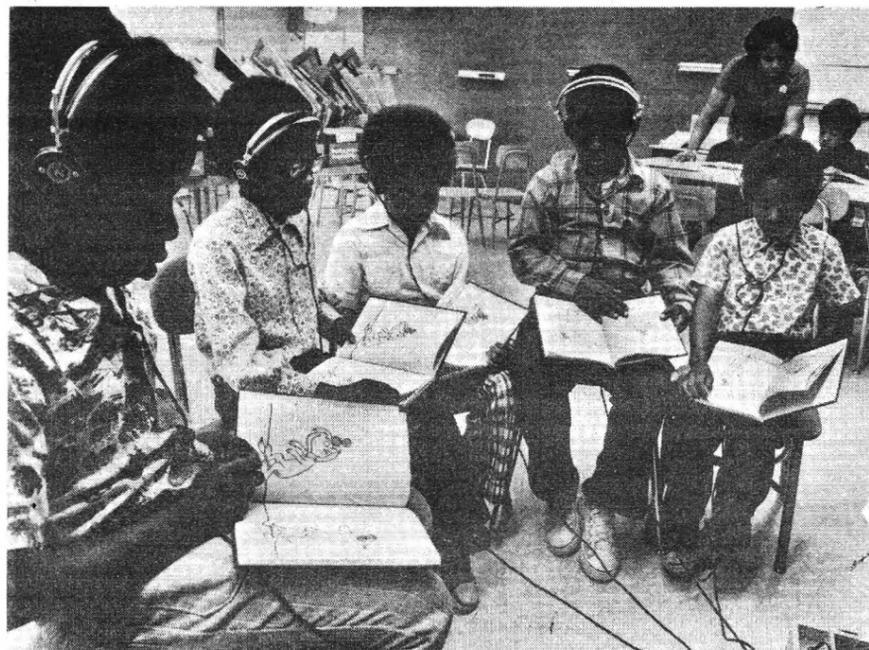
Fight Back Grows Around Philly School Crisis

Philadelphia's school children and school employees are getting screwed. It's not the first time but it is the worst round of cutbacks in the history of this crisis ridden system. 3,700 school employees have been laid-off. Class size will be raised from 33 to 36. Literally hundreds of programs will go under the knife, among them reading teachers, math specialists, counselors, librarians, art, music and physical ed instruction. Money for desegregation and bi-lingual education will be curtailed, continuing a racially separate and unequal education for children. The administration of Mayor Bill Green is undertaking these cuts in clear violation of contracts negotiated with the school system's nine unions.

As usual the cry from City Hall to the State House is "no money." The fact is that the schools have been short changed for years. Of the revenues generated by the last two tax increases only 5 of 180 million dollars went to education. A school system that is 70% minority is unworthy of funding in the minds of the city's rulers. Meanwhile downtown development projects like the Gallery and the Commuter Tunnel, which benefit the business elite, justify spending hundreds of millions of dollars of the tax payer's money.

Nor is it true that there are no new funding sources for the schools. The \$1.00 a barrel refinery tax is bottled up somewhere in City Council. The corporate net income tax, abolished by Frank Rizzo, is another neglected possibility. With the highest wage tax

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Ellsworth Davis—The Washington Post

Remedial reading is one of the many programs slated to go under.

in the nation and excessive property taxes, Philly's working people can't afford higher taxes. The city's under-taxed banks and corporations can and should be made to pay.

The fight to stop the cutbacks and fund the schools is picking up steam. The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) and the other school employee unions have all made it clear they will strike rather than allow their contracts to be ignored. The city's labor movement, recognizing the union

busting threat represented by the attack on the principle of the union contract, is rallying to support the school employees. The PFT, with a new leadership brought to power by a broad rank and file movement in the union, is aggressively taking its message to the community as well, stressing the common interests of parents and school employees in fighting the cutbacks. The union has organized a Save Our Schools week with mass leafletting and lobbying to keep the schools open and union contracts intact.

LABOR, COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

An ad hoc coalition of unions and community groups has developed and is calling for a mass demonstration on September 10th, the opening day of school. The call for the formation of this coalition came from the People's Alliance for Human Needs, the PFT, State Representative Dave Richardson, the Phila. Affirmative Action Coalition, the Kensington Joint Action Council, and others. An August 17th meeting drew both trade unionists and community activists around three demands - no cutbacks in school programs, no violations of union contracts and alternative funding for the schools with no more taxes on working people. Besides calling for the demonstration, the group plans an aggressive lobbying campaign and support for a range of anti-cutback initiatives, including Solidarity Day. The need to combat racism and build Black, white, Hispanic unity as well as labor-community solidarity was a theme of the meeting. While important forces were represented, a major effort is needed to broaden participation if the coalition is to succeed in its goals.

The fight around the schools is the main front right now in the larger battle over cutbacks on the local level. If Green, Thornburgh, Reagan and the monopolists who they front for can be beaten back on this issue, it will strengthen the whole fightback movement as it prepares for the struggles ahead.

Reagan Tax Cut — Score Another for Big Business

Congressional passage of Ronald Reagan's tax program is a big victory for the rich and the monopoly corporations and a major defeat for working people. In his demagoguery aimed at winning popular support for his tax program, Reagan stood the truth on its head. For many the Reagan "cut" will turn out to be a whopping increase. According to Citizens for Tax Justice, a Washington based lobbying firm, Reagan's 25% 3 year cut in personal income taxes will actually result in an increase of 25% for those with incomes of \$10,000 and under after adjustment for inflation and social security increases. For those in the \$20,000 to 30,000 range there will be a 1% increase. Those making \$50,000 will get a 1% cut. The only real winners are the small minority in the \$200,000 and up bracket who will reap a 15% benefit.

In addition to a lucrative accelerated depreciation allowance, the Reagan package hands corporate interests a bag full of goodies. The most outrageous is the massive handout to big oil

in the form of exemption from the windfall profits tax.

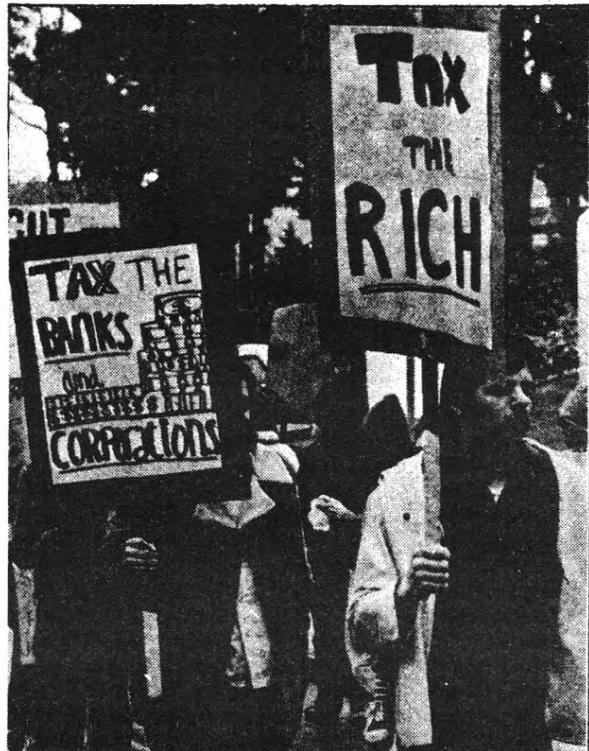
TWO PARTY CONSENSUS

While there has been much hue and cry in liberal circles about the inequity of Reagan's tax plan, what tends to get obscured is the basic unity of both parties in their tax policy. The so called Democratic opposition consists of a plan that is different in some slight degree, but certainly not in kind from that of the President's. The Democrats would increase the real taxes of those earning \$10,000 and under by 15% instead of the GOP's 25%. In all other respects the Democratic plan is essentially the same, including the shameful giveaways to the oil companies.

★ The shared premise of both Democrats and Republicans is that the requirements of prosperity are lower taxes for big business. Nor is this some recent development. The share of government revenue raised through taxes on corporations has steadily declined since 1950. Then one of every four dollars collected came from taxes on corporations. Today that figure is one and ten and falling.

Reagan's tax approach has been packaged as a long overdue correction to "oppressive" overtaxation of corporations. Nothing could be further from the truth. Not only does big business pay a progressively smaller share of the nation's tax bill. It also pays at an ever decreasing rate.

The federal tax rate on corporate income is fixed by law at 46% of all profits over \$50,000, down from a previous 52%. But this relatively high figure does not bear any relation to what the corporations actually pay. A complex series of loopholes reduce the actual or what economists call the "effective" rate, to 28%. While the statutory rate has fallen only slightly, the effective rate has declined sharply over the past three decades. Reagan's tax legislation is expected to cut the current effective rate by half to 28% by 1986, even if there is no further reduction in the statutory rate. "I don't think the public is really aware that we are about to repeal the corporate income tax," Daniel Halperin, a former Treasury official and Georgetown professor, told the New York Times. "The current tax bill really is a culmination of that trend and we now seem to be moving toward a zero or



even a negative tax on capital," he added.

A popular belief is that corporate income taxes don't really work because corporations simply pass the costs on to consumers. However tax experts generally agree that this is not the case. The corporate income tax, based on corporate profits, results not in higher prices for consumers, but lower dividends for stock holders and smaller retained earnings by the corporation.

TRICKLE DOWN?

As for the reaganomics argument that reduced taxes on business will lead to greater investment, economic growth and thus jobs and prosperity for all, just look at the facts. Under both Democratic and Republican administrations over the last thirty years taxes have been steadily reduced for business. The inching down of the statutory corporate tax rate -52% in 1952, 50% in 1964, 48% in 1965, 46% in 1979 and now a House Ways and Means proposal to reduce it to 34% by 1987 - is the least of it. Since 1954 businesses have been able to depreciate their investments at rates faster than the actual deterioration of their plant and equipment. In 1962 and in 1971 the depreciation period was shortened again and Reagan's tax plan shortens it even more drastically. Since 1962 corporations have been allowed tax credits for investment in

new equipment in addition to the generous depreciation allowance. These and other write offs add up to a sharp and steady reduction in corporate taxation.

So where, then, are the promised jobs and prosperity? Lower taxes are allowing corporations to reap greater profits, but this is not producing economic well being for the masses of the people. On the contrary the result is greater exploitation. There is no means of assuring, as long as the means of production are privately controlled, that a corporation will invest in job producing, socially useful activity. Each corporation invests where it is promised the greatest return. Thus it is more likely that a firm will invest in a new plant in South Africa, where the Apartheid system provides cheap Black labor, than in housing in the inner cities, for example.

The fact that the downward spiral of taxation on corporations has coincided with growing unemployment, inflation and economic instability is a living indictment of the "trickle down" theories of both Parties. The alternative that the people's movement must stand for is reducing taxes on working people, shifting the tax burden to the wealthy and the monopolies, and public investment of these revenues in projects that create jobs and meet social needs.

THE WIZARD OF ID

Capevine/cpf



AFT Convention...

(continued from previous page)

A theme of this year's convention and the work of the AFT is around the proposed federal tuition tax credits. Shanker and the AFT leadership have taken a militant stand on this proposal - it is a direct attack on public education in general and on integrated public education in particular. At the same time, Shanker's position smacks of racism. He maintains that with tax credits the public schools would be left with the "poorest achievers and the least concerned parents." Given that the public schools would be made up of largely poor and minority students, this assumes that it is these students, and their parents who are to blame for poor scores and poor schools, and not the racism of the educational system itself.

DEMOCRACY IN THE AFT

Every year there is a struggle at the convention around the increasing lack of

democracy within the AFT. In the early 1970's an open ballot was instituted. For every roll call vote, particularly for election of officers, delegates must sign their ballots. Although the leadership maintains that this keeps delegates accountable to their rank and file members, delegates are not accountable for their views or voting records on any of the other issues which come before the convention. Nor does the AFT encourage locals to develop participation of rank and file members. So most members hardly know what goes on at conventions and are never asked their positions on the issues. The open ballot is really a means of pressure on delegates and on locals to vote Shanker's way.

One constitutional amendment supported by Shanker which encouraged locals to automatically pass through national per capita dues increases on to local members, was defeated on the convention floor. But this amendment was

passed by a slim margin when a roll call vote was taken.

This year, the Black Caucus of the AFT organized a campaign for the Secret Ballot. But it never even reached the floor for debate, even though it had in 1980. Someone, unknown to the forces organized around the Secret ballot, introduced it at a time when many delegates had left and many Black delegates were leaving to go to a Black Caucus Luncheon.

AFT AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Shanker and the AFT leadership have historically held conservative international politics. Anti-Communism, has, and continues to be, the main basis of their positions. Many AFT conventions have a Soviet dissident as one of the speakers, and Denver was no exception.

AFT is involved in the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions (IFFTU) and invites leaders of these unions to each convention. This year,

Shanker was probably taken aback when a delegate from the Netherlands spoke in opposition to increased military spending and in support of broadening membership in unions and fighting for the rights of all workers, including communists, to be members.

In past years this struggle around international positions has been focussed on South Africa and its apartheid regime. AFT opposes divestiture of funds from South Africa, claiming that U.S. dollars in South Africa are necessary to provide jobs for Black South Africans. AFT thus has failed to challenge pension and retirement funds which may be in banks or companies with investments in South Africa.

This year the major struggle was around El Salvador. Nine resolutions from locals and state federations around the country were submitted which called for the withdrawal of American support and aid for the present El Salvadoran regime, which even U.S. Congress people

(continued on page 11)



GE Workers Protest Sexual Abuse



Joe Casey, a supervisor in GE's Riverworks plant, just north of Boston, has been reported to be able to get away with sexually harrassing his women employees. He's also known to union members as someone who will go out of his way to harass any worker. So it wasn't surprising when he and another manager, Messina, thought they could get away with sexually assaulting their 21 year old secretary after requiring her to join them for lunch to celebrate National Secretaries Week.

But now Joe Casey no longer works for GE thanks to the actions of the members of IUE Local 201 (International Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers).

THE ASSAULT

In an affidavit filed after the assault, Mary (not her real name) accused the two managers of five hours of intense abuse. In a restaurant, a bar, and a car, the two physically assaulted her by feeling her legs, pulling at her dress and grabbing her between them. In addition, they ignored her yelling at them and hitting them, and her pleas to be left alone. Instead they insulted her with names such as "bitch" and "asshole."

Over the weekend, Mary, at first terrified, began to get angry. She said, "I felt like I shouldn't have been putting up with the little things they had said and did for the last two years...I just thought it was part of my job to put up with this, like everybody else...I had to go through alot of changes. I hadn't ever spoken up for myself before, and I had to realize that you can only go so far before you have to speak up."

Mary spoke up and went to her union steward. GE responded by doing nothing. Joe Casey even boasted that nothing would happen to him. He was banking on the predominantly male work force agreeing with the male chauvinist assumption that she either asked for it, or enjoyed it, but now was "crying rape."

Casey found out how wrong he was when 120 men and women in the secretary's immediate area walked off their jobs demanding that the two supervisors be fired.

GE's response to the walkout was to fire one probationary employee, dock 22 more a day's pay and issue reprimandatory "blue letter" to the rest. Only when other in Building 64 and other Turbine Division buildings threatened to walk out as well did GE finally remove the two managers, sending them on vacation, pending an "investigation."

The result of this investigation and the subsequent "confession" of the two managers was that the two were removed from supervisory positions and demoted two rungs.

ROLE OF THE UNION

Top union leaders, particularly President Kevin Mahar and Business Agent Peter Teel spent the first few weeks after the assault trying to undercut the militance of the rank and file. First, when they met with Mary they raised the possibility that the managers might commit suicide. "Think of their families," they said, oblivious of what Mary and her family were putting up with. Mary left the meeting feeling that she didn't want anything to do with the union handling the case.

Then, after GE harshly disciplined the 120 members who walked off the job,

the officers advocated that they accept the day's pay loss and the "blue letters" since that was the only way, so they claimed, to keep the probationary employee's job. They then signed a "compromise settlement" with GE, at the same time that several thousand workers were ready to strike if the managers weren't fired and the union members protected.

Finally, the President and B.A. justified inaction on the grounds that it was in Mary's best interest if the whole thing died down.

That's what would have happened if the membership had not intervened. But they did. Members of the 201 Women's Committee, stewards and other workers in Building 64, Executive Board members Charley Ruitter and Frank Emspak, and concerned members throughout GE organized an unprecedented turnout for the next union meeting. The packed union hall voted unanimously to support the woman and called for a special stewards council meeting to organize more action against GE.

A special stewards subcommittee which was open to and involved volunteers as well, organized a rally on June 24 outside the Lynn plant. Over 300 members then boarded busses or drove to go and picket the swank suburban home of GE's Union Relations boss, Frank Thorn. Significantly, all the top officers participated in the demonstration, showing the impact of membership pressure.

In a striking turnaround from his earlier stalling, President Mahar characterized the company's punishment of the managers as a "slap on the wrists," and said, "If those guys were union members their asses would have been canned." Demonstrators carried signs saying: "Caution: GE Managers may be hazardous to your health," and "IUE 201 says Hands Off Us." In front of Thorn's house the crowd chanted, "We want justice...When do you want it?...Now!"

A speaker from the Women's Committee drew out how it was membership outrage at GE that had made the demonstration possible: how last year another GE worker, a Black woman, had been brutally raped on GE property and GE had failed to do anything to protect women's safety. But now the union

would be sure to involve the Women's Committee and the North Shore Rape Crisis Center to provide counseling to any future victims.

However, she failed to mention that GE's inaction was successful last year because of its ability to use racism to divide workers in their struggle for women's safety. GE spread the rumour at that time that the victim was a prostitute and deserved being attacked. Since many workers bought this view out of racism, this undercut the movement that demanded GE ensure women's protection in the shop by providing keys, alarms, more lighting and moving the locations of remote bathrooms. Therefore, the movement didn't have the strength to press these demands and GE did nothing.

While the June 24 demonstration was spirited and put pressure on GE, alot of the rank and file stayed home. The major reason was that the efforts of the steward subcommittee were undercut constantly by a number of top union officials. Some spread rumors that "You women are going out for blood on this sexual harrasment thing," as if women's safety were not a legitimate issue. Others, responding to the question, "Why should the union intervene instead of the courts?" only said, "The stewards council voted for this so we have to do it." They failed to draw out that safety is a basic right of all workers, and that nothing would have happened to Casey and Messina if Building 64 workers had not walked out and the union then gotten involved. Fur-

ther, the union must guard the safety of all its members which includes protecting women from sexual harrasment and national minorities from racist harrasment.

Because of the pressure, Joe Casey went job hunting and now no longer works at GE, and Messina is rumored to have quit as well. Other women victims of sexual harrasment have stepped forward and filed complaints putting GE managers on notice that they'd better think twice before abusing their female employees.

Members of Local 201 should be proud of their role in making sure that the issue didn't die, and that the leadership did take up the issue. Their action made things happen.

The open "stewards subcommittee" was a good example of what can be accomplished when rank and file members plan and act together. But it was just a temporary thing and under great restraints. The limited victory and the extreme foot-dragging of many of the top officials points up the need for more regular and organized membership pressure to get things done.

Two groups actually do function as caucuses at GE. The "Rank and File Committee" has been around for a number of years, but it did little around the women's safety issue. Another group of union members, loosely called "the caucus," who organized a candidates night during the union elections this year, and who are now campaigning to bring the union to the shop floor with more regular E-Board/stewards meetings, met around the sexual assault issue. "The caucus" members then worked hard as individuals on the case, several in the stewards subcommittee. But as a group it did nothing. An early leaflet by "the caucus," exposing the GE's tactics and the top officials stalling and suggesting action for the union, while people were most upset and many buildings were ready to walk, could well have helped to bring about a more complete victory. GE workers concerned about women's safety, about next year's contract, about GE's resistance to employing and training minority workers, need to meet together, as a caucus, and make sure that the membership's interests are served.



GE demonstration draws 200 workers.

"Human Life" Amendment ... What Will It Mean?

Did you know that if a so-called Human Life Amendment or statute is passed by Congress that it wouldn't just make abortions illegal but it would also outlaw forms of birth control such as the IUD and the pill? It would make one of the major tools for detecting severe genetic defects before birth - amniocentesis, illegal. And women who had miscarriages would be open to investigation, maybe even prosecution. The U.S. has never had such a repressive law. For a modern precedent we have to look to Nazi Germany. How did we get into this mess?

Most Americans thought that when the Supreme Court decided in 1973 that women have the constitutional right to opt for an abortion during the first six months of pregnancy that the issue was decided. But anti-abortion forces did not give up and go home. They grabbed what they consider a vital legislative loophole in the Court's decision: If the fetus was indeed a person in the biological as well as legal sense of the term, its right to life would have to be guaranteed.

The Court ruled that according to the best scientific information such personhood simply does not exist until the fetus has grown sufficiently to remain alive outside the maternal womb. But nevertheless the loophole has inspired the introduction of 17 versions of a Human Life Amendment by over 80 sponsors in Congress. The Right to Life Amendment would define a fertilized egg as a person, so that ending its "life" would be illegal under the 14th Amendment which guarantees all persons equal protection under the law.

The only real difference among the bills is that 7 of them outlaw *all* abortions while the other 10 would allow abortions in order to save a woman's life. The most frightening ramification of the Human Life Amendment is that it has encouraged 19 state legislatures to pass motions calling for a constitutional amendment like the ERA campaign. A constitutional convention throws open the whole Constitution and Bill of Rights for addition, deletion and possible obliteration.

Recently the Right developed a new strategy to outlaw abortion. Jesse Helms and Henry Hyde have introduced a bill (S.158, H.R. 900) that would amend federal statutes to state that human life begins at conception. This legislative maneuver would only require a simple majority in Congress to pass instead of the two-thirds vote in Congress and approval by state legislatures that a constitutional amendment requires.

Helms and company want to take advantage of the present right wing mood of Congress and bypass the Supreme Court and the complicated constitutional amendment process. The same tactic was employed in relation to school prayer, attempting to remove school

prayer cases from review by the courts by passing legislation. A similar approach is being taken to bussing for desegregation. *National Right to Life News* talks openly of bringing about a "confrontation between the Supreme Court and the Congress" designed to weaken the power of the courts. Since protecting the separation and balance of power between the judicial, legislative and executive branches of government is supposed to be an article of faith with conservatives, this new strategy does not sit well with some right wingers.

Constitutional scholars and lawyers are unanimous that the bill is unconstitutional and will automatically be tied up in the courts. The bill was approved early in July by a 3 - 2 vote of the Senate Subcommittee on the separation of Powers. But conservative Sen. Orrin Hatch who says he is "unalterably opposed to abortion as a matter of both moral and public policy," is rumored to have only voted for the Human Life Bill because of an agreement to hold up the bill's consideration pending action in Hatch's panel on the Human Life Amendment. Hatch (and other conservatives) has "serious constitutional reservations," about the bill. It now looks like the bill will be put on the back burner as energies go into unifying anti-abortion legislators behind a vote on the constitutional amendment some time next year.

Implications of Amendment

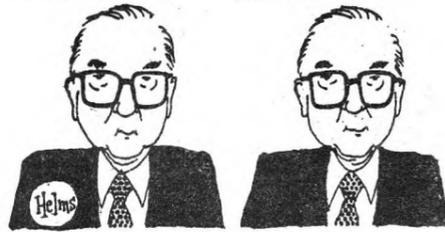
Legislative maneuvering aside, what would a Right to Life Amendment or statute mean? By defining a fertilized egg as a person, preventing the implanting of the fetus in the uterine wall would then constitute murder. Some of the most widely used methods of contraception would have to be outlawed. Most physicians think that IUD's prevent implantation in the uterine wall. Some say that IUD's alter the uterine lining slightly so that the ovum does not remain in position. Low dose estrogen birth-control pills may work the same way that IUD's do. The so-called mini pill which contains only progesterone and no estrogen almost certainly does. Women using these forms of birth control could be prosecuted as murderers.

And what about tubal (ectopic) pregnancies? Because the fetus would be legally a person a physician would be forced to make an impossible choice. There have been cases in medical history where such pregnancies were carried to term but during the entire pregnancy the mother's life is at risk.

Any Human Life Amendment would open a Pandora's box of medical and legal questions. How could a doctor determine exactly when fertilization had taken place? How long does it take for the implantation process? If it is determined that a murder was committed who can be prosecuted? The doctor, mother, lab assistants, pharmacists? What about a pregnant woman who uses a knitting needle or coat hanger on herself?

OUTLAWING ABORTION IS NOT ANTI-WOMAN - IT'S PRO-FAMILY

SUCH LEGISLATION WILL ONCE AGAIN MAKE MOTHERHOOD...



RESPECTED, CHERISHED, HONORED...

AND MANDATORY

Wasserman, Washington Star



And who is going to provide the extra law enforcement necessary to carry out the law? The state, the federal government?

And what about the children? Estimates are that a million more children would be born each year. When the question of unwanted (and abused) children comes up Right to Lifers say they can be put up for adoption. But where are we going to find a million families that want to adopt, year after year after year. And what about the children born with handicaps and severe genetic defects? There will be a lot more of them if amniocentesis is outlawed. Who is going to adopt or take care of them? The truth is that very few of the "pro-life" conservatives support increased services for mothers and children.

At the recent Right to Life convention a resolution was passed that supported "responsible" marketing of baby formula in third world countries. It isn't just that these conservatives have more faith in the conscience of profit hungry corporations than they have in pregnant women regarding abortion.

Racist Underpinnings

The point is that they especially don't care about the welfare of Black and Asian children. This is blatantly evident in the Right to Life movement's silence on the issue of sterilization abuse. If these people are so pro-life, why haven't they taken a stand on the estimated 65,000 people who have been the victims of unwanted sterilizations in this country during the last 60 years. These are people who want to have children but that right was taken away from them against their will. The reason the Right says nothing is because these people are Black, Hispanic, Native American or poor. Arizona State Representative Ratliff made the racist undercurrent in this movement quite clear. Even though Ratliff is a

staunch opponent of abortion he said he would make an exception if a Black man raped a white woman. When asked what the difference was, he said, "It makes a helluva lot of difference." When asked why, he said, "Because it does." It is clear that the "pro-life" people are pro *white* life.

Even though the anti-abortion forces seem to be making inroads there have been important victories recently that are encouraging. In February, the Mass. Supreme Court issued a far reaching decision that requires the state to pay for all medically necessary abortions for women on public assistance. This means that Mass. offers a constitutional protection of a woman's right to choose abortion that is broader than currently recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court. And with all the controversy that the Human Life Bill has generated, new forces have gone on record as against the bill.

The National Academy of Sciences, the American Public Health Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the very influential American Medical Association have all spoken out against a Human Life Bill. Various religious officials too have voiced their support for a woman's right to choose. A Catholic professor of theology told the hearings, "The issue is not 'pro-life' versus pro-abortion. The issue is legal, safe abortions versus illegal unsafe abortions. Legal abortions do not force anyone who does not approve of abortion to have one." In 1965 when abortions were illegal in the U.S. 235 women died in abortion related deaths. In 1976, three years after abortions were legalized, the number of abortion related deaths were only two. We should all remember this fact and share it next time we hear advocates of "pro-life."



PATCO Strike - Big Stakes for All Labor

On August 3rd Ronald Reagan and his administration sent every trade unionist in this country a message. The news wasn't good. On that day Reagan responded to the strike of the 15,000 member Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) by firing all strikers, indicting 72 union members on felony charges, levelling fines upwards of 4 million dollars, and moving to decertify the union as the legal bargaining agent.

The Reagan game plan calls for the fired strikers to come dribbling back hat in hand with no union and no prospect of winning their demands. Meanwhile the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) hopes to operate the nation's airways with 6,500 scab military controllers and supervisors, many with limited training and experience, working 12 to 16 hour a day shifts. In spite of reduced operations, the skies are unsafe according to the controllers. While the FAA disputes this charge, independent analysts confirm it. John Galipault, President of the Aviation Safety Institute, accused the administration of a "cover-up" of the danger to safety and cited 23 verified near miss reports as evidence.

So far PATCO's ranks are holding firm. International support from fellow air controllers and the prospects of more active assistance from Labor here at home have strengthened the position of the Union. Meanwhile the airlines are losing \$35 million a day.

STRIKE ISSUES

The Reagan administration has sought to isolate the striking air controllers by portraying them as spoiled brats, overpaid gripers and criminals. The fact is that air controllers

work one of the most stressful and demanding of jobs. Far from being pampered, U.S. traffic controllers face hours and conditions that are substantially worse than controllers in other countries experience. The U.S. is the only country that requires controllers to work a 40 hour week. In other countries long vacations are also the rule. PATCO's demand for a 32 hour week is an attempt to bring U.S. air controllers gains already won by controllers in other countries.

The media and the government have focused on the fact that the average controller makes \$33,000 a year. What has generally been ignored is that the average controller only lasts 14 years on the job, that only one out of ten will ever collect a full pension, that 90% of the controllers who have retired in the last four years took medical retirement because of heart disease, high blood pressure, ulcers and nervous conditions. A Boston University Study showed that controllers have a 200 to 300% greater chance of being afflicted with hypertension. Controllers work swing shifts, sometimes are called to work with little sleep between shifts and are routinely asked to make life and death decisions in split seconds.

Besides the 32 hour week the union wants retirement after 20 years at 75% of base pay. The refusal of the Reagan administration to budge on these issues is what prompted the strike. Secondly the administration best wage offer was a miserable 4.8%.

The law prohibiting strikes by federal employees has been used to keep wages and salaries for most federal employees well below those for comparable unionized positions in the



Associated Press

private sector. Other public employees have won the right to strike with no disastrous consequences for the "public welfare." In almost all cases the demands of public sector workers coincide with the needs of the Public. This certainly is the case in the present strike where the public's interest in safer airways would be advanced by meeting the controller's demands. It is the Reagan administration which is endangering the public safety with its scotch tape and bailing wire approach to air traffic control.

UNION BUSTING

The White House by its repressive action has turned the strike from an ordinary collective bargaining situation to a major confrontation in which

labor's basic rights are at stake. Not only has the administration refused to negotiate. They have openly moved to destroy PATCO.

The labor movement cannot ignore this threat. A defeat for PATCO will be a clear signal to employers that it is open season on unions. So far the controllers have received more concrete support from controllers in other countries than unions here in the U.S. Many rank & filers have joined PATCO on the picket lines and verbal pledges have been forthcoming from Lane Kirkland of the AFL-CIO, William Wimpinger of the IAM, which represents 60,000 airport workers, and others. But it's going to take more than talk to defeat this attack. Reagan has sent us a message. Now it's time send him one.

New Bedford Seafood Workers Fight Union Busting

Striking seafood workers in New Bedford, Mass. are fighting a union busting effort by the dealers associa-

commercial fishing ports on the east coast. Five hundred seafood workers, in Local 1572-6, International Association of Longshoremen, who process fish caught off Cape Cod are striking over a take-away package sought by the dealers which includes: wage cuts from \$2 to \$3 an hour for people who pack, skin and trim the fish and a 10¢ increase for cutters who fillet the fish, increased production standards for cutters and others, extending the workday by 2 hours, forced overtime, with no overtime pay for Saturdays, reduction of paid holidays from 12 to 6, classification of workers who put in less than 25 hours a week as part-time thereby denying them benefits. Since the industry average is 26 hours this affects many workers.

The dealers claim that "competitive pressures" from nearby ports are forcing them to seek paycuts. But while the dealers are crying poverty, they have refused to open their books to union inspection. The union has been willing to compromise on every issue except the pay cuts where they are sticking to their demand for 8.5% annual raises over 3 years. Despite the lack of a strike fund, company threats to run away and efforts to divide the union the strikers are standing firm. The union is maintaining round the clock picket duty and community outreach and education.

Organizer, August 1981, page 8



William F. Royce

Women filleting fish.

Union members point out that the dealer proposal of paycuts for most workers and a slight increase for the cutters is aimed at dividing the union. Most cutters are men and most other workers are women. But these divide and conquer tactics haven't worked.

Workers believe plans to introduce cutting machines may be behind the union busting attempt. The companies want to divide the cutters from the other workers to weaken resistance when they introduce the machines.

Seafood workers have received some support for their strike. For instance Teamster union boats are going to other ports to sell their catches, forcing the daily fish auction to shut down. Also the fish lumpers union, people who unload and weigh the fish off the boats, are also not crossing the lines.

NON UNION SHOPS

But non-union shops, which have grabbed a bigger share of the local market in recent years, are still working full blast. Also non union scallop boats are crossing the lines, bringing their catch to the houses, where man-

agement is packing and sending them out, often under unhygienic conditions. And management is packaging whole fish from non union boats and sending them to be cut at out of town unorganized plants. These non union operations have undercut the effectiveness of the strike.

More rank & file involvement in strike planning and activity is needed. The idea of a rank & file committee to organize strike rallies and more outreach needs to be considered. Another problem is the need for more support from other unions in this heavily organized city. Defeat for the seafood workers will be an open invitation for other area employers to cut wages and benefits. Yet aside from a small support rally at the beginning of the strike the labor movement has done little to help the seafood workers. Plant gate donations, rallies and if necessary, strike action, are just some of the ways the union movement could support the strike. As the Air Controllers strike makes clear, the union busting tide isn't limited to seafood workers. If the labor movement doesn't stick by its slogan - "AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL," EACH UNION WILL BE LEFT TO FEND FOR ITSELF.



1199-C Scores Gains in New Contract

Over 7500 hospital workers in Philadelphia, represented by District 1199-C of the Hospital workers union, won major concessions from area hospitals that were intent on taking away existing benefits. In addition to an 18% pay raise over two years and continued hospital contributions to the union's training and upgrading fund and legal fund, the union won major gains in the area of health and welfare.

For years 1199 members have been in Plan B of a three step medical coverage plan. Although Plan B provided basic health maintenance costs for hospitalization and medical treatment, it was still inferior to Plan A which provides almost total medical coverage to its members with little or no costs to themselves. It increases the amount of money paid to cover out-patient services and various hospital tests such as x-rays, office visits and consultations. Hospital administrators were clearly bent on keeping 1199 members in the outdated and inadequate Plan B and called for the union to return a 6 million dollar surplus in the fund to the hospital vaults. The union stood firm in its insistence that the surplus meant that the rank & file were entitled to an increase in benefits and were not giving anything back in return for a small percentage increase in their wages

NEW MILITANCE

These gains were the fruit of a new militance on the part of the union. Just 2 years ago the rank and file rejected tentative agreements at 3 major hospitals and came close to rejecting it at a fourth. It was a message to the leadership that they were becoming out of touch with the needs and the



mood of the ranks. This time around the union made clear its determination to launch a city wide strike if its key demands were not met.

When some hospitals refused to sign the new contract that already had been signed by the others, the workers walked out. At Hahnemann Hospital a militant picket line was set up and strikers were arrested and some brutalized by the police.

The new contracts made significant gains for 1199 members, especially in a period when public service workers are coming under increasing attack from federal, state and local government, joined by the mass media. In the case of 1199-C, whose members are predominantly minority, the scapegoating of public employees coincides with the racist scapegoating of minorities that is a central feature of big business's right wing offensive.

Despite the harassment and intimidation the strikers held firm and forced the struck hospitals back to the negotiating table where they agreed to the same conditions as the other hospitals within the day.

While overall the new contract is certainly a step forward, some important issues did not receive adequate attention. A central concern of hospital workers, particularly semi- and unskilled workers, the majority of whom are national minority, is the issue of affirmative action and an end to the dead end job status that so many hospital workers face. Although 1199's training and upgrading fund has made a dent in this problem, it has not forced the hospitals to significantly change their hiring practices or challenge the trend toward ever higher entry level skills and certified training for technical and professional jobs. And most importantly the fund does not attack head on the

institutionalized racism that has become part and parcel of the health care system itself.

NEED FOR LABOR—COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

1199-C is one of the more politically progressive unions in the city and has played an active role in a variety of struggles that go beyond narrow trade union concerns. Strengthening this activity, particularly in relation to community struggles over cutbacks in health care is going to be necessary if the union is to be able to retain and extend the gains its has made.

Cutbacks in Medicare and Medicaid have a direct relationship to the loss of jobs. The movement to consolidate health care into big medical centers and shut down small hospitals, community clinics and public health centers makes it even harder for minority, working class and elderly people to get quality care. Community organizations are beginning to address these problems and the union needs to join in this struggle. It would mean that the union would be strengthened by the community support and vice-versa. Such solidarity can thwart the attempts to divide the community and the union against each other when ever the question of a strike or say a boycott or sit-in by community activists occurs.

We can't afford to look at each struggle as separate. The attacks are coming from many directions at once. We have to be capable of not only defending ourselves but going on the offensive and demanding what rightfully belongs to us - the fruits of our labor.

Cutbacks in Health Care Ravage Boston's Poor

Last year Boston City Hospital - Boston's only public general hospital - provided 100,000 days of in-patient care and had over 200,000 out-patient visits. The community health centers (CHC's) spread throughout the city's neighborhoods saw another 500,000 patients. Between 30-45% of health center users have no health insurance coverage.

What would happen to all these people if the city hospital and the health centers were to shut down? Unfortunately, if the city has its way, Boston residents may have to find out the answer to that question in the not-so-distant future.

While there are no immediate plans to shut them down, public health care in Boston is under attack. Already deep cuts have hit BCH and the CHC's, and even more dangerous ones loom on the horizon.

CUTS AT BCH

BCH once had 1800 beds. Now it is down to under 400. In the last year, Kevin White's administration has been busy laying off workers and cutting services. 55 jobs were lost when the administration shut down the laundry department and subcontracted the job to a firm outside the city. The union, AFSCME Local 1489, staged job actions and held a demonstration of 200 workers that were successful in getting the laundry workers other jobs, but there are now 55 fewer jobs at the hospital.

Jobs at the new snack bar have also been contracted out. Meanwhile, the cafeteria has cut back from serving three meals seven days a week to two meals five days a week.

The biggest blow has yet to come. The White administration is planning to subcontract out the entire housekeeping department in October. At the same time, since January, White has illegally placed his campaigners on the BCH payroll to the tune of almost \$2 million. The city is clearly trying to chop away at the union in order to weaken the resistance to further cuts.

Meanwhile, staffing cuts in different departments have led to longer waits and poorer care for patients. The lead paint program has already been eliminated, and the child abuse prevention program may be next.

Similar cuts have hit the CHC's. For example, at Roxbury Comprehensive CHC, 15 people were laid off resulting in deep cuts to the adolescent health program, layoff of the only health educator (who taught patients and did community outreach and education), and a general cut in staff so that those who remain have to do more with less.

WHO SUFFERS?

BCH is the only hospital where anyone can go regardless of ability to pay. It is used by 35% of the people in Roxbury, 30% of the people in the South End, 27% of South Boston residents, and 22% of people in Dorchester. It is these

poorer, working class communities which suffer most from the cuts. In particular, minority residents of Boston, who last year made almost 60% of all visits to BCH, bear the heaviest burden.

The same is true of the layoffs that have hit the hospital. Boston residents' jobs are being taken away with a disproportionate share of the layoffs coming down on minority workers.

Already the quality of care has dropped way down with fewer and poorer services being provided for patients. If the hospital should close in the future or be drastically cut back further, what would happen to all the people who now depend on it?

While Boston is a major hospital center, the large private hospitals are only legally required to take a small number of uninsured patients. Mass General Hospital, the largest in Boston, has a policy of repossessing the homes of patients who could not pay their medical bills. This is the kind of "concern" that the city's poorer residents can expect.

Back in 1974, in announcing the closing of beds at BCH, Kevin White said, "Some of these people are going to have to die." White isn't talking now but his policies are the same. In the meantime, downtown construction is booming. The developers, banks, and insurance companies are making big money. White loves to point to the fancy new office buildings and hotels as proof of how "alive" the city is. But while these projects go ahead with sweet tax deals

engineered by the mayor, Boston residents' health and very lives are jeopardized in the name of "tightening our belts" and "facing new realities."

WHERE IS THE ATTACK COMING FROM?

Boston residents who depend on the public health care system are actually being hit by a three-way attack with cuts coming from the federal, state, as well as the local level. The Reagan administration, while giving the military a virtual blank check and the rich a huge tax cut, has cut deeply into social programs. Health care has not been

(continued on page 15)



Local Issues Predominate in First Congressional Election Since Last November



Joe Smith - elected to 3rd Congressional seat



David Glancey - the Mayor's choice.



Charles Duncan - Consumer Party candidate.

the past. This did not occur, however. Instead the Consumers unilaterally nominated Charles Duncan, a Black activist from North Philadelphia, a figure little known to many progressive forces in the third.

Duncan proved to be a poor choice. Early on in the campaign he went on record as favoring ties with South Africa and other reactionary regimes if it could be demonstrated that this was in "the national interest." These remarks were widely condemned, including in a front page article in the Black Community newspaper, the *Philadelphia Tribune*.

Duncan later charged that he was misquoted and misinterpreted, arguing that he did not think ties with South Africa were in the national interest. To many these explanations were unconvincing and smacked of political expediency. Duncan also stressed that he was a loyal Democrat running on the Consumer line rather than a genuine independent. For these reasons his candidacy failed to become the focal point of broad based opposition to both Smith and Glancey. At the same time, Duncan rightfully complained that because of racism the media failed to give his candidacy any serious attention and exposure.

Progressive forces in the district did organize a series of forums designed to pressure the candidates and bring opposition to the cutbacks, militarism and racism to bear on the campaign. Third District Voters Concerned with Foreign Policy, The Black United Front and the Kensington Joint Action Council all planned forums. The People's Alliance for Human Needs, a city wide coalition, actively supported these efforts.

Smith's election will not have any major impact on the Congressional balance of power. He can be expected to vote with the Democratic leadership on most budget and tax issues, while joining with the Republicans and Democratic conservatives on many military and social questions. The main significance of the election is its exposure of the isolation and vulnerability of the Green administration and the growing resurgence of the Rizzocrats. The 1982 elections, particularly the Democratic primary, is likely to be a major battle with both wings of the Party fielding slates and contesting control of the Democratic organization. This, in turn, will set the stage for a 1983 mayoralty election in which Frank Rizzo, from all accounts, will make his comeback bid against a weakened Bill Green. Green is already scrambling to mend fences and project a new image as just a regular guy, but there is no likelihood of any major reversals in policy and thus his support can be expected to continue to erode. Independent forces must reorganize in order to insure that there is an alternative to the discredited politics of both Rizzo and Green.

by Ron Whitehorne

In the first Congressional election since the Reagan sweep last November, Joe Smith, a Democrat who ran as a Republican and an independent, upset David Glancey, a liberal Democrat and leading protege of Mayor Bill Green, in Philadelphia's 3rd Congressional District. While Smith opposes the bulk of Reagan sponsored budget cuts and favors the Democratic Party's tax proposals over those of the administration, he supports an expanded military budget and shares much of the right wing orientation of the Reaganites on issues related to racial and sexual equality. Glancey, by way of contrast, supports the Congressional Black Caucus budget resolution and could have been expected to vote with the left liberal bloc in the House on most issues. The race, however, was less a referendum on national politics, and more an expression of lack of confidence in the Green administration in City Hall.

The special election was necessitated by the conviction and subsequent resignation of Abscam defendant Ray Lederer who previously held the seat. The 3rd is a diverse district which encompasses the town house gentry of Society Hill, the white, blue collar River Wards that hug the Delaware and the poorest Black, white and Hispanic neighborhoods in the city, located east of Broad Street and in lower Kensington. Predominantly a working class row house area, the electorate is also 40% Black and Hispanic.

The election result and the campaign are only understandable in the context of local politics. Glancey, who was selected by Mayor Bill Green to head the Democratic City Committee, was the choice of the Democratic organization to replace Lederer. He quickly gained the support of the city's liberal establishment including the Americans for Democratic Action, a number of industrial unions including the UAW, the Steelworkers and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, and the city's leading business and financial circles who are enthusiastic backers of Mayor Green's pro-business policies. Glancey outspent Smith by a 4 to 1 ratio and ran an aggressive, well organized campaign.

GREEN KISS OF DEATH FOR GLANCEY

The problem for Glancey was his identification with the Green administration which generated opposition from several quarters. First of all a group of dissident ward leaders and politicians within the Democratic organization, many of whom were previously associated with former Mayor Frank Rizzo, balked at the Glancey candidacy. These forces are angry over the loss of patronage and what they see as general neglect by City Hall. They are part of an emerging anti-Green coalition which includes convicted fellow Buddy Cianfrani, a power broker in

South Philadelphia and many of the former leading lights of the Rizzo years. They may well be the vehicle for an expected comeback try by Frank Rizzo in 1983. Smith, a state senator from Kensington was part of this group and became its candidate. Smith also got the nod from the local Republican organization and had the active backing of neighboring Congressman Republican Charles Dougherty.

Glancey also paid a heavy price for the anti-labor policies of the Green administration. City Hall has sought to impose harsh wage settlements and layoffs on public employees and is currently attacking the contracts of school employees. Predictably, the building trades, who are closely linked with the Rizzo wing of the Democratic Party, backed Smith. But in addition a number of other unions, including the powerful Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, sought to punish Green by endorsing Smith.

Finally, Glancey was hurt by the growing gulf between the Green administration and the Black community. While Green has avoided the strident and openly racist rhetoric of his predecessor, he has continued the development policies of the Rizzo administration and has reneged on a number of campaign commitments of particular concern to the minority community. Green's problems were dramatized recently when Representative Bill Gray, of the 2nd District, vice chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and Green's leading supporter in the Black community during the mayoralty race, publicly criticized the Mayor for dragging his heels on implementing affirmative action guidelines in the police department. This was widely interpreted as an indication of a deep rift between these former allies.

Part of what is at issue is the future of the 3rd Congressional District itself. Next year Philadelphia's congressional districts will be reapportioned and one seat will be eliminated because of population loss. This was widely expected to be the 3rd and Green had privately indicated that this was to be the case. But the selection of Glancey, one of the brightest stars in the Green camp, as the nominee appeared to call this decision into question. Why would an ambitious politician like Glancey, who is also the person closest to the Mayor, run for a lame duck seat? The concern in the Black community was that if Glancey were elected, reapportionment would result in the gerrymandering of the predominantly Black second district, threatening Bill Gray's seat and weakening Black political power generally. As a result, many key Black politicians and activists sat out the race.

Smith effectively exploited all these contradictions to his advantage. He

adopted a populist stance as the friend of the "little guy" in the row house running against the City Hall machine and downtown big business. Smith stressed his "pro-labor" record, particularly his defense of unemployment compensation in Harrisburg. He campaigned heavily in the River wards and relied heavily on sympathetic ward leaders and the organizational muscle of the building trades to get out the vote for him. While Smith made no serious attempt to capture support in the Black and Hispanic neighborhoods, he was careful to avoid statements that might have galvanized opposition and generally downplayed his past identification with the politics of Rizzoism.

Special elections generally draw a very low voter turnout. Most analysts expected that a low turnout would favor Smith over Glancey, given Smith's strong organizational backing. What occurred however was precisely the opposite. Voter turnout was high - a record 28% and Smith scored a landslide. Turnout was high in those areas which supported Smith. In the Black wards, where Glancey needed a substantial turnout, the voters stayed at home. Black voters proved to share the hostility and suspicion of many Black elected officials toward a candidate who personified the Green administration.

ROLE OF INDEPENDENT FORCES

The third district has a strong concentration of progressive and independent organizations and made a substantial contribution to the Stop Rizzo Movement and the Blackwell campaign two years ago. However, these forces did not figure as a major factor in this election. The Consumer Party, an independent Party with ballot status, could have provided a vehicle for a mass based independent candidate as they did in making their ballot position available to Lucien Blackwell and the Black Political Convention in



Lipshutz in Labor Today

Mel King Resigns from Democratic Party

Mel King, Mass. state representative from Boston's South and a former mayoralty candidate in 1979 has become the second Black legislator to quit the Democratic Party this year. He said he is leaving out of disgust for its performance at the local, state and national levels and will become an independent. Rep. King's break from the two party system represents another expression of the growing sentiment for independent political action.

The immediate factor causing King's resignation was the recent farce over the passing of the state budget. While the Governor and a handful of powerful legislators argued back and forth, state workers, welfare recipients and pensioners went without checks for over a week. This has now become an annual occurrence. Mel King, in response, said "I could not see myself identifying with the likes of the leadership which conducted itself in an unconscionable manner."

MYTH OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY

More and more the myth of the Democratic Party as a 'friend of labor and the poor' is being exposed. In Mass. the Governor is a Democrat and an active supporter of the Reagan economic policy. A Democratic legislature has presided over massive cutbacks in state services, cutbacks that have had a disastrous impact on working people, particularly national minorities. A year ago public transit commuters paid 25¢ for a subway ride. Now they pay 75¢. Layoffs of public workers, police, and fire fighters, closings of schools and libraries are impacting on working class neighborhoods across the city. As the last hired, minority public employees have been laid off in larger percentages than their white counterparts.

Mel King has been a central figure in building a people's alternative. When he ran for mayor in 1979 his program spoke to the need for adequate housing for Boston's poor and working

class neighborhoods and against condominium conversion. Safe access against racist attacks and 'Boston jobs for Boston residents' with an affirmative action policy were also key points raised. With this program King successfully drew 25% of the vote, demonstrating a significant base for independent political action. While King has stated his desire to help build a third party, his present plans are unclear. He may run for Mayor in 1983.

The people of Boston need candidates like Mel King who will fight the big business inspired attacks on living standards and democratic rights. Numerous spontaneous protests against fire and police station, school and library closings demonstrate the growing discontent with the policies of the two capitalist parties. The impact of these protests has been limited because they have remained isolated from one another and fail to connect with a long term strategy to deal with City Hall.

More conscious efforts to advance beyond this level have taken form in attempts to build coalitions. A coalition of more than a dozen unions and community organizations has formed to save the city's only public hospital. Several months ago the Coalition to Save Dorchester and the Coalition to Save Jamaica Plain, two large Boston neighborhoods, formed to respond to the cutback crisis. While dormant through much of the summer, the groups have taken some important steps. The Coalition to Save Dorchester, which includes the Boston Teachers Union, AFSCME, SEIU, Dorchester Women's Committee and over a dozen other organizations, for example, cosponsored with the NAACP and others a press conference in June. They stated that the neighborhoods of Boston will not be pitted against each other. They challenged both the severe cuts in city services and the method of making budget decisions which completely excludes those affected by them. The group also pointed to some possible sources of revenue that might support adequate services. Among other things they suggested that the city

AFT Convention . . . (continued from page 5)

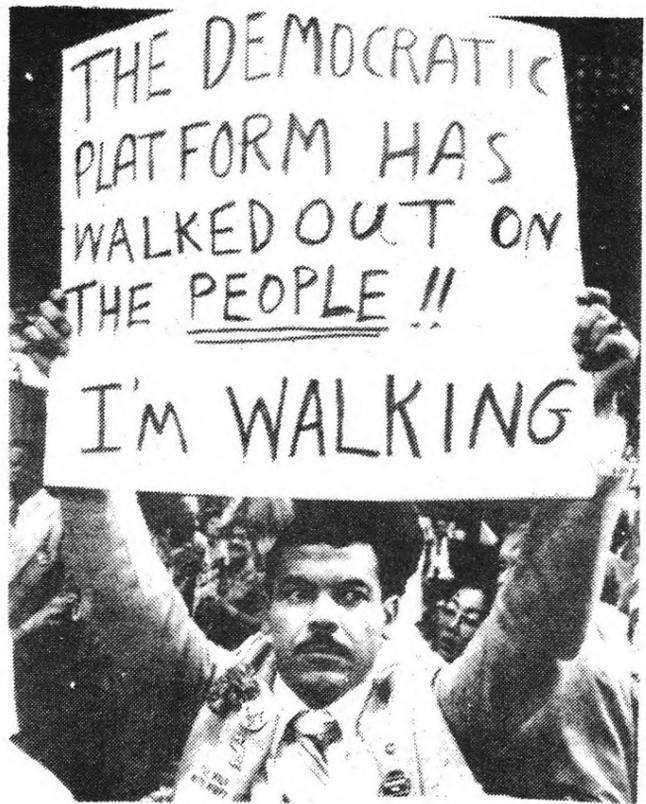
have observed is fundamentally a right wing regime controlled by the military. One resolution, which had the support of N.Y. Local 2, supported the present regime, and called for it to continue its program of land reform. This resolution came to the floor of the convention and was passed. An amendment which would have added removal of U.S. military aid was defeated.

Both the Black Caucus and the opposition caucus United Action Caucus (UAC) sponsored talks by an El Salvadoran woman in exile who had founded the Teachers Union in El Salvador. The delegates who heard her speak were urged to support a resolution which opposed U.S. involvement, and they supported her with a standing ovation at the Black Caucus Luncheon. When a special order of business was proposed to have her speak to the plenary session, it was voted down, not much more than 10 minutes before the IFFTU delegates were brought to the podium. But it is consistent with AFT's policy of support for military spending, that it would also support U.S. foreign policy.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The AFT has a history of not supporting affirmative action. It was the only national union to file a brief in support of Bakke's "reverse discrimination" case. The AFT remained silent on the Weber case, largely because of an organized struggle waged by the Black Caucus.

The AFT convention itself is predominantly white. The UFT, with almost 60,000 members in a mainly minority school system, is only about 4% minority. It is no wonder that around affirmative action, Shanker wants to maintain the status quo. This year, a resolution called for affirmative action within the AFT itself; adherence to guidelines on hiring of minority staffers, wide advertising of all jobs and publication of progress reports on the number of minorities in the national office. In arguing against this proposal, delegates claimed it could be "embarrassing" for AFT to publish such statistics. But it could only be "embarrassing" if the AFT failed to practice affirmative action in hiring and promotion!



Delegate at Democratic Convention walks out in disgust

collect \$55 million in back property taxes owed by business, a 5% sales tax on business services such as advertising, accounting and engineering, and a renegotiation of 121A agreements (tax breaks for business) while no new taxes on consumers be legislated.

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

The upcoming school committee and City council elections are another important front for the fightback movement. There are a number of progressive candidates running who pose a positive alternative to the policies of Mayor Kevin White and the Democratic machine. A referendum question on the ballot concerning district representation is important as well. Presently the city council and school committee are elected on an at large basis. Currently 90% of the city council and 82% of the school committee come from 7 out of 22 wards. This undemocratic process leaves 62% of the city without representation. The plan on the ballot, on the other hand, would allow the city's neighborhoods to elect and better hold accountable their own representatives. The present system works to disenfranchise the city's minority community and thus the fight for the district plan is key to the struggle for racial equality as well as democracy in general. Mel King has been in the forefront of this struggle.

This fight, as well as the struggle for affirmative action and other anti-racist

Again, the AFT failed to take any steps to build real unity between Black and white AFT members. AFT fails to take up racism except in abstract opposition to discrimination and paper support for desegregation. For example, AFT has yet to develop the anti-Klan, anti-racist curriculum which it was unanimously mandated to do at last year's convention.

Although other, more general resolutions in support of affirmative action were sent by locals, this direct demand for a commitment to reverse past discrimination in the AFT came from members of the Black caucus. The Black caucus was initiated in response to racist practices not only in AFT's public positions but internally as well. The impetus for fighting racism in the AFT again came from Black people and the Black Caucus. In order to build unity in the future, white AFT members will also have to take this up as their fight.

The next period is going to be a struggle for the AFT. Building coalitions with labor and community organizations and developing actions will be necessary. A high point of trade union solidarity in Denver was the march of 1500 delegates to join strikers at the

demands are critical to building the fightback. The movement's effectiveness is hampered by divisions within its ranks. Racism especially serves to undercut the unity necessary to win common gains by pitting white against Black. An alliance of labor and the movements of the oppressed nationalities is at the heart of building an effective movement. When unions oppose layoffs, but refuse to support affirmative action, when whites in South Boston, say, fight cutbacks in their neighborhood, but support cutbacks of services for Blacks in Roxbury the result is a weak and divided movement which can easily be diverted and neutralized.

The emerging fightback movement also needs to understand that the way forward is through independent political action rather than reliance on either of the two parties. This is the positive significance of Mel King's resignation. The movement must aggressively support those candidates who oppose the present right wing offensive and call for positive policies in the interests of working people. This will require independent organization and putting forward candidates of its own choosing. These independent efforts, in conjunction with similar developments in other cities and regions can help lay the basis for a mass breakaway from the two party system and the emergence of a new People's Party committed to the struggle against the policies of big business and to fighting for People's needs

state office building, an action initiated by UAC.

The AFT has endorsed the Sept. 19th AFL-CIO Solidarity Day Demonstration against the cutbacks. In many areas, including Phila. and N.Y., AFT locals are actively campaigning and building participation. AFT members, along with other union members must also press the labor movement to take a stand against the increasing build up of the U.S. military, especially at the expense of jobs, education and services.

Alongside the fightback against cuts in education and the attacks against workers, there must be an increasing demand for democracy within the AFT itself. Neither the Black Caucus, nor UAC, which takes progressive stands but remains a small group, nor individual small locals, can do it themselves. This year a broad coalition of forces, including the ones above as well as delegates who are members of and support the Progressive Caucus, has formed to build a campaign for the Secret Ballot. This group is committed to organizing all year and drawing many independent forces to the 1982 convention in N.Y. City. The idea that officers should be elected in the future by referendum of all rank and file members has also been raised.

Baltimore Welfare Rights Takes on State Lottery

By a member of the Socialist Union of Baltimore

"The state of Maryland has been literally robbing poor and minority people..." That is how the Baltimore Welfare Rights Organization (BWRO) describes the nine year old Maryland State lottery. And BWRO is doing something about it, calling for a lottery boycott as the first step in a larger "Take it Back" campaign.

The lottery takes but it does not give back. The state makes \$500 million a year from the lottery, its third largest source of revenue. Most of this income comes from sales in working class neighborhoods. One out of five persons playing the lottery lives in Baltimore city and within the city more terminals are in the Black community. For instance, Park Heights, an all Black neighborhood, has the largest per capita lottery ticket sales in the entire state.

Little of the lottery revenues are returned to working class and minority communities in the form of services. Instead, state spending primarily benefits the monopoly corporations and the rich. Last year the state government realized a \$20 million surplus while claiming it had no money to build low income housing. Medical assistance was slashed by \$11 million while vast sums were spent on highway construction (Interstate 70 costs run at \$14 million per mile) and a subway system designed primarily to serve the more well to do suburban population. The state's Governor cried poverty and laid off 1800 employees. Then he turned around and "found" the money to give himself and the state legislators. The state takes care of big construction companies, the banks and of course the politicians, but when it comes to working people there is "no money."

This year, with budget cutting the order of the day in Annapolis as well as Washington, things will be even worse with the blows falling hardest on the minority community. Last year welfare recipients got no grant increase (A parent with one dependent child gets \$211 per month). This year grants will be cut by 3%. Restrictions on medical assistance are increasing. If you are a family of four for example, and make over \$4500 a year, you are ineligible. And even if you are eligible, you can't

stay in the hospital more than 21 days. Cuts in childcare funds, resulting in the close of daycare centers in a number of both Black and white working class neighborhoods, make it all that much harder for single parents with dependent children to work and get off the welfare rolls.

Gambling thrives in capitalist society. Capitalism creates poverty and deprivation and to divert the oppressed from collective struggle against these conditions, it encourages individualistic "solutions" like gambling. It is not surprising that the poorer the neighborhood, the stronger the obstacles to economic advancement, the greater the gambling. The state actively promotes playing the lottery as the way to a quick, easy buck. Ads and billboards bombard us with pictures of happy lottery winners with the ever-present slogan, "You got to play to win." What gets left out is that you have a 1 in 1,000 chance of winning.

"TAKING IT BACK"

The BWRO initiated campaign is not calling for the abolition of the lottery, but rather demanding that the revenues it produces be returned to the communities from which they came. With federal programs being sharply cut back, the distribution of state income is acquiring even a greater importance. Specifically, the BWRO is calling for a boycott of the lottery until the following demands are met: 1) Raise in Welfare Grants to Parity with the Cost of Living; 2) Adequate Monies for Health Care; 3) Adequate Resources for Title I Schools; 4) Decent Affordable Housing; and 5) A Fair Return on Dollars Invested in the Maryland State Lottery. A weakness of this program is the omission of demands for jobs and daycare.

BWRO has been organizing support for the boycott on different fronts. They're doing door-to-door canvassing and petitioning at shopping malls. Neighborhoods with high lottery sales have been targeted. Some 700 people have already signed the BWRO petition and many have responded favorably to a T.V. interview featuring BWRO's campaign.

In addition, BWRO is reaching out to other organizations seeking endorsements and active participation in the campaign. The NAACP, Black Social

Workers Alliance, 1199-E, Residential Advisory Boards representing tenants in public housing projects, and the Baltimore City Tenants Organization are among those who have joined in this effort. A number of organizations who originally were positive have backed off, buying into the Governor's cry about lack of money.

BWRO plans to convene a state-wide organizing committee for the campaign in the near future. The Lottery Boycott is seen as only the first step. A second projected focus is a boycott of stores that are particularly exploitative of welfare and social security recipients and poor people generally. Besides getting these businesses to cease these practices, BWRO wants them to bring pressure on the state government in relation to the five demands cited earlier.

KEY FRONT IN THE FIGHTBACK

All working people are being ripped off by the lottery and the cutbacks of state programs and services. But presently the support for the Take It Back Campaign is largely limited to the Black community. Racism serves to blind many white working people to the self interest that they have in supporting these just demands. Many believe, for example, that those on welfare are Blacks who are too lazy to work and who cheat the taxpayers. In fact, there are more whites than Blacks on welfare nationally, although it is true that a disproportionate number are Black. Because of systematic discrimination in education, training and hiring, twice as many Blacks are denied jobs in this society, and of course, the welfare rolls reflect this.

The real welfare cheats are in the corporate board rooms, getting billions in government subsidies, tax breaks and other legal handouts. Look at the Belvedere Hotel in Baltimore. They received a city loan to make apartments for middle class people and now that they can't pay back the loan the city is loaning them more to convert back to a hotel!



The Take It Back Campaign is an important front on which we can fight back against the budget cuts and attacks on the working class and national minorities. But it is necessary to see it in the context of fighting the broader attack on us by the capitalist class. Reagan is making devastating cuts across the board in social services (\$36 billion) while increasing the military budget to about \$224 billion.

There is a real danger of Reagan starting a war in El Salvador or in South Africa to protect the interest of U.S. companies, while at home people can't get jobs and the Voting Rights act is being challenged. In Baltimore, we need to work towards building a city-wide coalition that brings together the trade unions, Black Liberation groups, women's groups and community groups to fight the cutbacks on a local, state and federal level. The fight against the increased military budget and the racist offensive has to be linked with the struggle against the budget cuts. This fightback movement has to utilize all avenues of struggle to win its demands, including supporting or putting forward independent candidates for office. The Take It Back Campaign could be an important step in building such a movement.

For more information on the campaign, call BWRO 752-6181

South African Women's Day Celebrated in Philadelphia

By Ros Purnell

The women of South Africa have been integral to the struggle for liberation from the very beginning. When pass laws that prohibited a Black man or woman from moving freely in his or her own country, were being invoked on South African men in the early 1950s the women protested. They demonstrated their opposition by going to the beer halls, government institutions for Blacks only, and dumping the beer on the floor and encouraging the men to come out and demonstrate with them. And their protest did not go unnoticed by the authorities. Pass Laws did not immediately apply to women

Typically Black women are on the bottom of the social heap in South African society. She is most likely to be living in the Bantusan where the land Organizer, August 1981, page 12

is poor and her children have little chance of reaching the age of two. Even if she lives in the cities, in spite of the new "liberalization" of the regime, she is likely a domestic servant or nurse or perhaps a teacher living in a dormitory without the comfort of her home or family.

Traditionally August 9th is celebrated as a salute to the struggles and strength of the women of South Africa. For the first time in this city, South African Women's Day was celebrated. The African National Congress (ANC), a leading force in the liberation struggle, initiated the tribute which was co-sponsored by the National Anti-imperialist Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation (NAIMSAL) and the National Coalition of Third World Journalists.

The meeting was highlighted by a 19 year old woman, an ANC Young Pio-

neer who has been in this country for about two years. She was forced to leave her family, friends and country because of her participation in the June, 1976, student uprisings. A soft spoken woman, Xenla Makatini, the niece of Johnstone Makatini, ANC representative to the U.N., expressed the strength of the South African people as they continue to struggle for freedom. Makatini pointed to the knowledge of history as a source of this strength, the history of a fighting spirit that runs deep within the hearts of the people. Ms. Makatini represents the hope to true liberty for all of South Africa's people - Black, Coloured and white.

Another strong point that was made was the need for solidarity on the part of the U.S. people with the liberation struggle in South Africa. A particular appeal was made to Afro-Americans who made up the bulk of the audience that night. The likelihood of Blacks being used as cannon fodder in

support of the apartheid regime was raised by Phumzile Zulu, a Black South African woman. It could have been added that working class youth of all races and nationalities will be used to guard the profits of General Motors, Chase Manhattan Bank and the rest of the monopoly corporations in South Africa and fight for the white supremacist order that those profits possible.

A new organization in support of South African Liberation was put forward at this meeting also. The Coalition for Freedom in South Africa and Namibia was discussed to take up support for the Southwest African Peoples' Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia and opposition to the racist South African regime. The Coalition of Third World Journalists presented a petition which calls for support for the freedom struggle of the South African people while simultaneously opposes the cutbacks and union busting of the Reagan administration.

Accommodation to Racism and the Communist Movement

by Michael Simmons

Black people are too busy "doing their thing" to be into communism. After all, aren't they anti-communist anyway? How else do we explain that on the one hand the most advanced political fighters have come from the movements of the oppressed nationalities, particularly the Black Liberation Movement, yet, on the other hand, the communist movement remains overwhelmingly white and petty bourgeois. Even the CPUSA at the height of its influence in the Black Liberation Movement was never any more than 10% Black.

MARXISM-LENINISM, FOR WHITES ONLY?

Historically the burden for the racial composition of the communist movement has consistently been put on national minorities. The major assumption being that communist theory was written for white petty bourgeois intellectuals and a few "exceptional" national minorities. The charge, often expressed as sympathetic anti-racist concern, is that national minorities are so involved with "survival" issues that they won't take up Marxism-Leninism. National minorities have historically united with this view. Statements putting down theory as a waste of time or viewing Marxism-Leninism as a "white" thing have given credence to these racist views.

These and similar views have served to obscure racism and accommodation to it in the communist movement. If we look at the literature of this movement we find many writings on racism, but except for the CPUSA there are virtually no writings on racism internal to the movement. Moreover no significant attempt has been made to explain why the composition of the communist movement does not reflect the reality of the most advanced in this society. Even the CPUSA's history of taking up racism internal to its ranks seldom went beyond criticizing racist errors and failed to focus on the ideological roots of these errors.

It is in this context that the current campaign against white and petty bourgeois chauvinism has developed. The primary advance of the campaign has been the recognition that white chauvinism in the communist movement, like white chauvinism in society as a whole, is a consciously held ideology. Viewed abstractly this seems obvious, but in the context of the communist movement seeking to sidestep the question of racism within its ranks denial of the obvious becomes essential.

The recognition of the consciousness of white chauvinism has gone through several stages. Prior to the campaign racist errors were largely summed up as "objective" racism, that is they had a racist impact but this was accidental and unrelated to racist ideas. In the

The denial of the consciousness of white chauvinism by white communists creates the context for a liquidation of any serious struggle against racism within the ranks of the communist movement, enabling whites to treat racist errors as random, unconscious acts or isolated personal lapses. The historic failure of national minority communists to sharply and consistently criticize white chauvinism has fed this practice. Moreover those national minorities who do challenge racist behavior and views are summed up as subjective, narrow nationalist, anti-white and anti-communist (some comrades view the latter two as synonymous.). The result has been to seek out the most accommodationist minded national minorities to recruit to the communist movement on the one hand and to avoid the most advanced - those who are most critical of the racism of

hand a national minority who does not show interest in developing a personal relationship with the white communist or is not particularly flattered by their attention is immediately viewed as hostile. If the worker takes a "wait and see" attitude about the white communist's commitment to the struggle against racism they get summed up as nationalist.

The weaknesses of the former Black worker are virtually ignored and they are judged solely on their strengths, even if they are manufactured. The latter worker is summed up based on their weaknesses and often have their strengths labelled as manifestations of opportunism! In both situations a political assessment is never actually made based on politics. Indeed politics are used to cover over the real criterion - "Do you like white people?" This practice has served to cut the communist movement off from many advanced forces in the trade unions and the mass movements.

Is Communism the Property of White Petit Bourgeois Intellectuals?

Essential to this practice is the culturing of accommodation to racism. The purpose is to build a non-struggle, paternal relationship with national minorities by convincing them that "we are not like other white people." A consistent form of this is the immediate involvement of the white person in the personal life of the national minority. Exaggerated concern is expressed over domestic, financial and any personal problem. Every political statement of the national minority is treated as if it were profound, regardless of whether or not it is correct or common knowledge. In some communist organizations national minority comrades were made cell chairs when they did not even agree with party building. The national minority in this situation views this non-struggle relationship sugar coated with "concern" for their personal problems as political respect rather than recognize that it represents anything but that

white communists - on the other.

The other side of this impact has been for national minorities who are attracted to communist to judge it based on the racism of white communists or the accommodation to racism by national minority communists. For national minority revolutionaries the tendency has been to write off Marxism-Leninism as "a white thing" rather than take up the struggle against opportunism in the communist movement.

The use of national minorities as overseers is another component of white communists defending themselves against correct criticisms of racism. This metaphor is drawn from the slave experience of Afro-Americans where a passive slave was used to keep down unruly slaves. The national minority contact or comrade is sent to beat back or minimize criticisms of racism by other national minorities. They join the white person in accessing these criticisms as opportunist, exaggerated and coming from narrow nationalism. They are used not only to provide a "legitimate" basis to keep less accommodationist national minorities out of the party building movement, but also to drive out those who criticize racism within the movement

Historically inter-racial relationships have played a major role in facilitating this process within the communist movement. The white person benefits in these relationships by having a built in, personal overseer to virtually immunize them from criticism for racism. Overall they represent the consolidation of racism and accommodation to it and serve to intensify the process described above.

All of these components of white chauvinism and accommodation to it will be fully delineated in documents being prepared for the conference. The conference represents an historic step for the communist movement and challenges national minorities to stake their claim to the science of Marxism-Leninism. It is only by accepting this challenge that we will be able to forge a truly vanguard communist Party.

OCIC CONFERENCE PLANNED

Early in 1982 the OCIC is having a conference on accommodation to racism. At present the conference is planned for Detroit. Its principles of unity are the 18 points of unity of the OCIC and agreement on the need for a single ideological center. All national minority members of the OCIC are eligible for participation. National minorities outside the OCIC who unite with the principles for the conference are also eligible.

The tentative agenda for the conference is 1) history of the party building movement, 2) history of ideological struggle in the OCIC, 3) accommodation to racism, and 4) the draft plan for a leading ideological center. There will be presentations and discussions on each of these agenda items. The last two items will also include resolutions that will be voted on at the conference.

OCIC CONFERENCE

Recognizing that it is impossible to go forward without deepening this preliminary analysis, the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center (OCIC) is planning a conference on accommodation to racism. This conference marks the first time that the issue has been taken up in such a fashion in the history of the communist movement. It will, in the context of exposing white chauvinism in the movement, challenge national minorities to look at the theoretical advances made by the campaign against white chauvinism. While documents discussing the lessons from the campaign are being prepared for the conference, we should briefly mention some of the ways which racism and accommodation occur in the communist movement. It should be noted that this process occurs in all multi-national movement situations and is not peculiar to the communist movement

The first stage of the process is recruitment of the most accommodationist minded national minorities to the party building movement. In work in the trade unions the Black worker who immediately strikes up a relationship with a given white communist is sought out if there is an absence of criticism about that particular white communist's racism. If the Black person seems to "appreciate" the attention by the white communist and makes no demands on the white communist's practice in relation to the struggle against racism, he or she is viewed as advanced. On the other

Solidarity Day

(continued from page 1)

demand renewal of the Voting Rights Act, an end to the attacks on Affirmative Action and desegregation, and action from both the White House and congress to stop the escalation in racist violence. Passage of the ERA

and a swift defeat for the so called right to life amendment are two more key demands.

To the extent we raise these demands on Solidarity Day, along side the general call for social justice and an end to the cutbacks, our movement will be stronger, more united and better aimed at the target.

Letters...

(continued from page 2)

racist conceit and complacency of a movement composed predominantly of white, petty bourgeois intellectuals. This is the reason for all the sound and fury and not some imagined slide into "left" opportunism on the part of the PWOC. Significantly J.B. and C.B., like the opposition generally, fail to even address what should be the main point of debate in relation to the campaign - How do we build principled multi-national unity? That this question is low on the agenda of the opposition, to say the least, is a concrete exposure of where their concerns really lie.

We have not addressed the criticism around the merger with FTP because we will be running a whole article on the issues and events surrounding the merger. Finally we want to acknowledge that while we regret that J.B. and C.B. are cancelling their sustainer ship and take issue with their reasons, we appreciate that they have put their views forward in writing in at least a beginning way and that they will continue their subscription. We urge them to reply to our response to these views.

Line of March's Strategy for Resistance...

A Critical Response

by Ron Whitehorne

What is the political significance of Ronald Reagan's ascension to the presidency? What is the nature of the period we are in? What strategic perspective should guide the working class and its allies in defending and promoting its interests against those of monopoly capital? These are questions that are clearly at the forefront of the Left agenda at the present moment and properly so. How we answer them bears centrally on the prospects and future political character of the emerging fightback movement arrayed against Reaganism and the Right.

The Line of March editorial board, the leading center of the rectification party building circle, have offered their contribution to this discussion in two documents, *A Communist Proposal for a United Front Against War and Racism*, a long article in the March/April edition of their journal, and a much shorter broadside entitled *Strategy for Resistance*. An analysis of these documents is not only important because it can clarify key differences in strategic perspective but also because they shed light on the divergence over party building between the rectification circle and those who hold to the fusion line.

The essential points of the LOM analysis are that "the cutting edge of the overall imperialist offensive is to be found in preparations for war and the program of a racially-defined social austerity," that "the concept of a united front against fascism is a correct one for the present stage of the class struggle in the U.S. and that the precise political expression of this united front is a United Front Against War and Racism."

We think each of these formulations is flawed. LOM misunderstands the character of the ruling class offensive, misunderstands the dynamics of fascism and ends up with a muddled and wrong-headed strategic perspective.

THE NATURE OF THE RULING CLASS OFFENSIVE

LOM's assertion that the struggle against war is a strategic task of the first order is not controversial. No one could deny that one of the defining characteristics of Reaganism is an intensification of militarism and the danger of war. Nevertheless, there is a misleading one-sidedness to LOM's analysis of the war danger. There are powerful checks on U.S. imperialism's drive toward war that LOM simply ignores. To effectively contend with the Soviet Union, U.S. imperialism must have the support of its imperialist allies, particularly the West Europeans. But these countries are not prepared to scuttle detente and embark on a course of all out confrontation with the Soviets. They act as a constraint on the Reagan administration. This, along with the strong manifestations of domestic opposition, was a factor in deterring a fuller and more direct U.S. intervention in El Salvador, for example. To fail to note, let alone weigh, the factors that serve to check the war designs of U.S. imperialism leads to an exaggeration of the war danger.

Our main differences with LOM's assessment center on their view of the domestic side of the right wing offensive. The rectifiers argue that "the brunt" of the attacks "is directed at its (the working class) minority sectors." If all that was meant here was that the minority sectors of the working class are disproportionately effected by these attacks, that they fall with particular intensity on national minority workers, no one could have any quarrel. This is true and of obvious political importance.

However LOM has something more than this in mind. Monopoly Capital,

according to LOM, has chosen not to mount "an across the board attack on the entire class" but is, rather, limiting the scope of its assault to the most oppressed sectors of the proletariat. The white workers are being "cushioned" from the effects of the economic and social crisis. This is the meaning of a "program of racially defined austerity."

While LOM acknowledges, in passing, that the ruling class offensive does impact to some degree on the class as a whole, it is clear that for them this is of little political consequence. Their whole prognosis rests on the premise that the more privileged sectors of the proletariat will be immune, at least in the short term, from the effects of the present economic and social crisis.

This is a profound misreading of what is presently occurring in the U.S. LOM has managed to liquidate what is one of the most critical features of the right wing offensive - the intensification of attacks on the living standards of the U.S. people as a whole. It is certainly true that the offensive is directed first and foremost at the racially and nationally oppressed sectors of the working class who are most vulnerable. It is indisputable that the consequence of the Right's policies will be a deepening of racial and national inequality, in the society as a whole and within the working class. But the attacks on minority workers and peoples occur in the context of a generalized assault on the multi-national working class and other oppressed sectors of the people as well. The effects of the right wing offensive in relation to white working people are not being deferred to some future point, as LOM suggests, but are being felt in the here and now.

Perhaps LOM could explain to us how white auto workers, miners, public employees and railroad workers, to just name a few, are being "cushioned" from the impact of Reaganism? Tens of millions of white working people, ranging from the elderly on social security to unemployed youth, are going to experience the ravages of the Right's austerity program over the next year. That a disproportionate number of minority people will be affected in no way cushions the blow for those white workers who will suffer directly from these attacks.

THE ROLE OF RACISM

Certainly it is true that the unequal and uneven impact on whites relative to

minorities provide the material basis for ideologically disarming and politically misleading the white section of the working class. But the point is that the objective conditions, specifically the across the board nature of the ruling class offensive, make this undertaking far more difficult. The monopolists are neither able nor willing to make substantive economic concessions to buy social peace. On the contrary they are attacking gains that Labor has long taken for granted. Relatively high paid and previously secure sectors of the organized work force are being confronted with massive layoffs and wage cuts. Congress is cutting social programs of vital importance to all working people and rightist forces are sponsoring a raft of anti-labor legislation as well.

These circumstances maximize the opportunity to expose and defeat the divide and rule strategy so basic to monopoly. Given that the offensive strikes in direct and immediate ways at the whole working class, the white workers can be more readily won to taking up the struggle against monopoly, including the racist attacks on oppressed nationalities, as a class fight. The divisive, anti-working class nature of racism, the destructive consequences of racial inequality as the principle obstacle to class unity, are much more likely to be grasped by masses of white workers under the present set of social and economic circumstances.

To counter this possibility the ruling class has stepped up its ideological assault designed to reinforce and promote racism. The cutbacks in social programs and the attacks on democratic rights are rationalized by arguing that the beneficiaries (i.e. minorities) are undeserving. The ruling class aims at justifying its economic and political assault on minorities and effectively isolating the resistance these attacks generate. It also seeks to draw the masses of white working people into collaborating with monopoly against their own interests. And here we do not mean simply the long term class interests of the white workers but very immediate interests as well. To the degree the white workers accept the racist premises underlying the Reagan austerity program, they are politically disoriented and crippled, unable to mount an effective challenge to the attacks directed at themselves as well as toward the nationally oppressed sector of the class.

LOM argues that a feature of the present period is the ruling class' effort "to forge a 'white' ideological consensus in support of its policies of militarism and social austerity." We agree that racism is the cutting edge of the bourgeoisie's ideological offensive and that it is absolutely critical to grasp this fact. It is the appeal to racism first and foremost that Reagan is utilizing to generate popular support for his program.

Where we disagree is over the strength and durability of this consensus. LOM reads the election results in a one sided fashion, seeing in the success of Reagan the effective consolidation of this consensus. While the Right made definite ideological inroads into the working class and this cannot be ignored, neither can the sizeable negative, anti-Carter vote, the substantial numbers of people who didn't vote at all and the widespread indications of lack of enthusiasm for Reagan among working class voters who cast their ballots for him.

What LOM has, in effect, done is to echo Reagan's own claim that he has a "mandate" from the U.S. people. This is an unwarranted and dangerous concession.

In our view, the consensus that Reagan has succeeded in forging is not only narrow, but shallow and likely to be short-lived. This consensus will shrink and come apart at the seams as the impact of the Reagan program becomes broadly felt.

The experience of Reagan's British counterpart, Margaret Thatcher, is instructive here. Thatcher capitalized on working class disillusionment with the class collaborationist policies of the Labor Party and their inability to address the problems of inflation and unemployment. Predictably Thatcher's version of supply side economics have led to record levels of unemployment while inflation continues to spiral. The working class has swung to the left and popular support for Thatcher and the Conservatives has fallen sharply. While there are important and obvious differences between the U.S. and Britain, the political consequences of Reaganism in power are, nevertheless, likely to be similar.

Even in the present period, when the full impact of Reagan's policies have yet to be felt, there is evidence of growing working class combativeness and ebbing of support for Reagan from a variety of quarters. Spontaneous rank and file resistance to the Chrysler concessions, the Miners strike, the AFL-CIO call for a demonstration against the budget cuts, the growth of support for a Labor Party, and Labor initiative and involvement in relations to safe energy, Atlanta and El Salvador are all real, if uneven, manifestations of this.

LOM, if they bother to take note of these developments at all, miss their significance. From their standpoint to see in these events the seeds of massive and articulate opposition to monopoly capitalist reaction on the part of the working class is undoubtedly "glorification of spontaneity."

Since LOM believes that the majority of the working class is being "cushioned" from experiencing the effects of monopoly's offensive, it is not surprising that they do not anticipate any significant resistance from this quarter.

THE QUESTION OF FASCISM

In their longer article, *A Communist Proposal for a United Front Against War and Racism*, there is a lengthy discussion of the question of fascism and the following formulation is advanced: "We hold

(continued next page)



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People building barricades in the streets of Madrid to resist the fascists during the Spanish Civil War. Have the rulers in this country made fascism the order of the day?

that the concept of a united front against fascism is a correct one for the present stage of the class struggle in the U.S. and that the precise political expression of this united front is a United Front Against War and Racism."

In the broadside version of this analysis there is no mention of the united front against fascism as the correct strategic perspective for this period and the united front against war and racism is advanced without reference to this. We are not clear whether this omission represents a retreat from this position on the part of LOM. Since there is no repudiation of this view, we must proceed on the basis that the rectifiers still hold this position.

This is a major question because it is one thing to argue that the tendency toward fascism, which is inherent in the very nature of monopoly capitalism, has been strengthened by the ascension of Reagan and the growth of the New Right. It is quite another to suggest that these developments require a fundamental shift in the strategic perspective of the Communist movement.

To say that the United Front against Fascism is the correct strategic perspective for the present period can only mean that the danger of fascism has assumed such proportions that its defeat and the defense of bourgeois democracy has become the principle task of the proletariat and its allies, a task to which all others are necessarily subordinate. This has a number of profound implications.

The struggle against fascism and to defend democracy is in no way incompatible with the pursuit of proletarian revolution. Even under conditions where this becomes the principle task there is no fundamental contradiction. As Dimitrov noted, the struggle against fascism, conducted in a revolutionary fashion, can open up new approaches to the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time if fascism is the main danger then the working class must subordinate its specifically revolutionary objectives to the building of the broadest and most effective anti-fascist front.

The case of Spain during the Civil War is a practical illustration. While perhaps a majority of the Spanish working class were subjectively committed to socialist revolution and prepared to carry out revolutionary measures against the capitalists and landlords, Spanish Communists sought to keep the Spanish Revolution within a bourgeois democratic framework. They argued against large

scale nationalization of capitalist property and collectivization of land and acted to restrain spontaneous initiatives by workers and landless peasants in these directions. This policy rested on an assessment of the strength of fascism, both in Spain and internationally. To attempt to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat under the concrete conditions of Civil War with the forces of fascism would split the anti-fascist alliance, alienating the pro-Republican section of the bourgeoisie and broad sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. This would be an ultra left policy that would strengthen the position of fascism and fatally undermine the position of the working class. In our view this was a correct orientation. As events conclusively bore out, the Spanish Communists hardly exaggerated the danger of fascism.

But what about the U.S. in 1981? Is the danger of fascism such that we must subordinate all to the building of the broadest possible anti-fascist front? Is the danger of fascism such that our attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie needs to undergo a shift?

LOM never even acknowledges these questions, let alone answer them. Yet clearly if fascism is the main danger, and this is the only possible meaning of saying that the united front against fascism is the correct strategic perspective for the period, the main questions are who can be rallied against fascism and on what basis.

If the danger of fascism is exaggerated the inevitable result is political disorientation - either in the form of a generalized right opportunist downplaying of class struggle in the name of anti-fascist unity or a headlong "leftist" rush to the barricades or the underground. Given LOM's assessment of the mass movements, it is the right deviation which is the likely result if their prognosis of the danger of fascism is wrong.

Of course an underestimation of the danger of fascism can be equally disastrous as the experience of the communist movement in the early 1930's amply illustrates. Thus the critical question comes down to how we read and analyse the present concrete conditions.

In our view LOM utterly fails to make a case that fascism is on the present agenda of the U.S. ruling class. In their longer document there are almost 8 pages devoted to a discussion of fascism including the forms it is assuming at the present moment in U.S. politics. This discussion is marked by vagueness and ambiguity.

Nevertheless a certain picture emerges. The dominant section of the ruling class, while not yet prepared to opt for fascism, is moving in that direction and is giving aid and comfort to the development of a fascist movement. The New Right is essentially the contemporary U.S. equivalent of such a movement - a fascist tendency still in its embryonic stages.

LOM describes the shift on the part of the ruling class toward "a more active military posture, a program of social austerity for the masses, government intervention to maximize profit and accelerate capital formation and a strengthening of the state's repressive apparatus" as part of the "politics of rising U.S. fascism." In addition we have the "dramatic growth...of fascism as a social movement" - namely the proliferation of the New Right.

It is the conjunction of these two developments which LOM believes constitute the danger of fascism. Fascism will come about through a convergence of the two under the pressure of intensified class struggle.

If the man in the White House is the darling of a "fascist social movement" and committed to carrying out a program that represent "rising U.S. fascism" then indeed we would appear to be dangerously close to fascism in the U.S.

But is this really the case? Is ten percent of the Congress representative of U.S. fascism as LOM maintains? Are the thwarting of ERA, the Proposition 13 style tax revolt and the erosion of affirmative action expressions of the political success of this fascist movement as LOM argues? No, we don't think so. All of the political developments cited by LOM are evidence of the growth of monopoly capitalist reaction. None of them make a case for the emergence of a mass based fascist movement or a commitment to fascism on the part of the leading circles of finance capital.

As LOM points out, monopoly capitalist reaction carries with it an inherent tendency toward fascism. As its anti-popular aims come into conflict with bourgeois democracy, this tendency comes to the fore. But to cite this tendency, which we would agree has assumed a greater weight in the context of the election of Reagan and related developments, as if it was sufficient to demonstrate the existence of a full blown fascist movement in all but name is to effectively equate reaction with fascism.

The reactionary aims of the dominant sector of the ruling class and the New Right are not in dispute here. The question is whether or not the pursuit of these aims will require in the coming period the destruction of bourgeois democracy - the liquidation of constitutional rights and parliamentary institutions in favor of outright terror and dictatorship.

In fact, there is nothing in the present political situation to suggest that reaction must resort to fascist dictatorship in order to realize its aims. The present framework of bourgeois democracy continues to be the most effective means of monopolist rule and neither the circles around Reagan or the "grass roots" reactionaries of the New Right have given any indication that they intend to dispense with it.

The question of fascism comes to the fore when there is a political crisis - when the class struggle has developed to a point where the bourgeoisie feels compelled to abandon its preferred form of rule and resort to naked and brutal dictatorship. Such a crisis presumes the existence of a revolutionary working class movement capable not only of thwarting particular policies of the monopolists but posing a threat to monopoly capitalist rule. Fascism is Capital's last resort in its struggle to neutralize the revolutionary proletariat. This was an historical feature of fascism in Italy, Germany and Spain. Fascism rose up to intercept a potent and revolutionary minded working class movement.

Clearly there is no such political crisis in the U.S. today. Recognizing this, LOM concedes that fascism is not on the immediate agenda in the U.S. Rather, they argue, the intensification of the class struggle, brought about by the policies of monopoly capitalist reaction, will generate conditions where the dominant sectors of the ruling class will go over to fascism. Yet, at the same time, LOM stresses that the prospects for mass resistance to these policies are modest to say the least.

The whole thrust of their argument is that the working class, owing to its political immaturity, particularly the strength of racism among its white members, is incapable of mounting an effective resistance. Significant sectors of the class are either part of the Reagan consensus or are vulnerable to the Right's ideological appeal. If this is the case, then where is the motive force that will compel monopoly to scuttle bourgeois democracy in favor of fascism?

(To Be Continued)

Boston Cutbacks... (continued from page 9)

spared. For example, the cuts and layoffs at the Roxbury Comprehensive CHC were as a result of federal funds being withdrawn.

Reagan has taken public health care funds and packaged them as part of block grants to the states. This means that money which used to be earmarked for specific purposes and programs would now be turned over in lump sums to the states to spend as they see fit. There is no guarantee that current programs would continue to be funded.

The budget passed by Congress also cuts the federal share of Medicaid funding. States will either have to make up the lost money or -which is more likely- make cuts in coverage and restrict eligibility.

Following the lead of the Reagan administration, Democratic Governor Ed King is proposing a drastic reorganization of the state's Medicaid system. King's proposal is to cut the Medicaid budget and turn it over to private companies. If the companies can provide care under budget, they make a profit. If not, they take a loss. The whole system is set up to encourage private companies to cut corners and determine priorities by the desire for profit, not human needs.

As if that weren't enough, the companies would be exempt from review by the State Rate-Setting Commission and could make major expenditures (like new buildings or fancy machinery) without getting approval from the State Department of Health as is now required. All the contracts would be awarded without public hearing or notice and no appeals process - a perfect set up for corruption.

While all these cuts are coming down now in the first year of Proposition 2½, it would be wrong to place the blame primarily there. The cuts at BCH and tightening up on Medicaid are part of an overall strategy being carried out throughout the nation to make the working class pay for the capitalists' economic crisis. Proposition 2½ is speeding up the process, but the city has been chipping away at BCH for a long time.

A key aspect of the city administration's strategy, in passing 2½ and in making other cuts, has been to promote the racist perspective that they are only trimming "fat" off the budget anyway - that is, that the community health services and special programs they are slashing are only used by "feeloaders" and "welfare cheats." This is designed to

appeal to the racist assumption that minorities, in particular, are getting a free ride, and is promoted to divide the white and minority communities in Boston in their opposition to the cuts.

The danger of actually closing BCH soon is real. Nationally, public hospitals have been hit hard. City hospitals have been closed in New York, Philadelphia, Detroit and Seattle.

RESISTANCE TO THE CUTS

The three unions at BCH - AFSCME Local 1489, SEIU Local 285 and the House Officers Association - have not taken these attacks lying down. All three unions have joined together to form the Political Action Committee to fight against the cuts and build support in the community. Joined by the community group Fair Share, the unions have demonstrated outside Mayor White's home to make their demands known.

AFSCME in particular has taken the lead in staging militant job actions and demonstrations. The union has also targeted the way out of the fiscal bind that is strangling BCH. Local president John Ingemi recently called for "Meaningful tax reform that generates money by closing unfair loopholes on big business and the rich."

One of the most notorious of these loopholes are 121 A's. These are property tax abatements which the mayor is able to give in order to "attract business" to Boston. In fact, these are giant gifts to some of the largest, richest corporations. The Prudential Insurance Building, for example, was given a 99 year 121 A abatement.

Another important source of revenue would come from the repeal of Proposition 2½ and passage of a tax bill that would give real relief to small homeowners while placing a greater share of the tax burden on big business and large landlords. Studies have shown that it is these groups - not the small homeowner - who benefit the most from proposition 2½.

Last month a meeting was called to build a broader coalition to fight for public health care in Boston. Members of the three BCH unions are involved along with State Rep. Mel King (see article in this issue), directors and workers at CHC's, members of the Boston People's Organization, the Coalition for Basic Human Needs and others.

The coalition hopes to broaden the fight against the cuts by building an alliance of workers and community residents who are affected by the layoffs and the cuts. The coalition is just getting going. Anyone who is interested in getting involved or finding out more should call 424-5301.

PECO Rips Off Consumers

contributed by Audrey Clement

In July Philadelphia Electric (PECO) filed a phenomenal \$344 million rate hike request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC), the largest rate increase ever sought by a utility in the state's history. Topping a \$304 million hike demanded last year and coming on the heels of a record 30% increase in second quarter earnings, this rate increase is more than an outrage, it's an obscenity.

Customers, who are already reeling under a 11.2% increase granted by the PUC in April, will experience a 21% hike in their electric bills, bringing the annual cost for the average residential user from \$515 to \$622. And PECO has given its assurances that its tariffs will continue to escalate through 1990 and beyond. The reason, PECO openly admits, is to finance the construction of the Limerick nuclear power plant. In order to do so it must attract investors and cover the mounting costs of the Limerick nuclear reactors - now estimated by the state consumer advocate at \$5.5 billion.

NUKES MEAN RATE GOUGING

With interest rates hovering at 20% and the cost of Limerick increasing at a rate of 25% per annum or more, PECO figures that it must increase its allowed rate of return from the 16% granted by the PUC in its April ruling to 18%. Consumer groups, incensed over this latest gouge, dispute the need for Limerick, which they estimate accounts for at least 60% of PECO's added expenditures.

PECO maintains it needs Limerick in order to replace two oil burning generating stations due to be retired in 1986 and that Limerick is the most cost effective alternative to fossil fuels. Consumer groups argue that the real alternative to fossil fuels is conservation and renewable energy sources. In terms of ecological risk, energy savings, and job creation, renewable energy is far more advantageous than nuclear energy and twice as economical.

PECO claims that only one third of its latest increase will be used to finance Limerick. It is requesting \$107 million for that purpose, primarily to pay interest and dividends to its investors. However another 97 million to cover the cost of new stock issues and an increase in its allowed rate of return are indirectly attributable to Limerick. Conservatively, \$204 of the \$344 rate hike will be diverted toward construction work in progress (CIWP), a situation which is expressly prohibited by current PUC regulations. Only facilities which are "used and useful" are allowed in the customer's rate base, a limitation which PECO has been contesting ever since the new PUC regulations were enacted in 1978.

The irony is that while PECO is continuing to bleed its customers to death, Limerick is continuing to drain PECO. Since 1974, when construction on Limerick began, its cost has escalated from \$717 million to \$5.5 billion. The magnitude of this cost overrun has not been lost on Wall Street, which devalued PECO's bond rating even after the latest increase was granted.

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

The Keystone Alliance, an anti-nuke group, maintains that their alternative plan would exceed the output of Limerick for \$480 million or one tenth the cost of Limerick. This program, which includes consumer loans for home weatherization, industrial recycling, hydro-electric stations, trash burning plants and voltage reductions, would generate one kilowatt hour of electricity for 1.5¢ as opposed to 7¢ for the same amount of juice from Limerick. The Alliance further estimates that PECO could save \$2.25 billion by cancelling Limerick and adopting such a program in its place.

While PECO acknowledges that there are benefits to be gained through conservation, it argues that other such programs implemented in the U.S. are utilized to replace oil, not nukes. Specifically it argues that Southern California Edison, which adopted a conservation plan in 1980, will offset current oil and coal consumption with renewable energy resources, while actually increasing the amount of energy supplied by nuclear power plants. While replacement of fossil fuels is a major factor in the development of alternative energy sources, there are other possibilities as well. Right now the Keystone Alliance estimates that PECO is operating at 32.5% excess generating capacity. This figure will increase to 50% when Limerick goes on line. Given that demand is increasing at .5% a year, it is safe to say that PECO could eliminate the need for Limerick simply by reducing its excess capacity to the 18% recommended by the PUC. Renewable energy could be used to supplement and not replace its existing resources.



In so doing PECO could certainly survive. But the search for an ever higher rate of profit comes first, no matter if it means dangerous nukes in our backyard and ever escalating electric bills. To expect PECO to act "rationally" is to ignore the logic of capitalist economics. Publicly owned, democratically controlled, energy is the only way we're going to get safer, cheaper, power.

Racism in the Media...

The N.Y. Post

by Ron Whitehorne

The *New York Post* used to be known as New York's liberal daily. That was before the Murdoch interests, the British based newspaper chain which specializes in sensationalism and yellow journalism, took over. Now the *Post* is a tabloid focused on sex, mayhem and murder and claims to be the fastest growing newspaper in the country.

Among other things the *Post* sells racism. In subtle and not so subtle ways the paper promotes the stock in trade racist prejudices, distortions and misconceptions that are utilized by the ruling class to justify the oppression of minorities in the U.S. Three quarters of a million people every day get their interpretation of what is going on in the world around them from this newspaper.

A randomly selected issue of the *Post* illustrates the point. On Monday, July 13th the *Post*'s front page was completely consumed with the following headline: "CONS WIN IN 2-DAY JAIL RAMPAGE Fire Hoses Turn Back Mob." The incident described here was seizure of the Westchester County jail by inmates, the majority of whom are Black and Hispanic, demanding changes in overcrowding, poor living conditions and indifference and discrimination on the part of the criminal justice system. The headline, right off the bat, serves to prejudice readers against the struggle of the prisoners, who are characterized as a "mob" on a "rampage." Only in a short sidebar story on the inside do we find out anything about the prisoners' demands and what motivated them.

RACISM IN QUOTES

The headline in this short piece reads: "The grievances: 'racist judges,' overcrowding and the heat wave." The placing of "racist judges" in quotes carries the clear implication that this charge is unwarranted. If the intent of the headline was to convey the opinions of the prisoners without editorial comment then all three grievances cited would have been placed in quotes. The use of quotes around the term racist in this article is in sharp contrast to a story on page 2 billed as a *Post* exclusive. This article, entitled "Browne Lets Confessed Mugger Take a Walk," describes how Judge Kenneth Browne, who is Black, acquitted a 24 year old Black man accused of attacking an off duty police officer. The story ends with the following two sentences: "Browne's long-time secretary, Jo Ann Langert, told the *Post* that Browne is a black racist who coddles black killers and muggers. 'He just hates whites,' she said." When it is a question of Blacks accusing judges of white racism the *Post* places the charge in quotes. But when whites accuse a Black judge of racism no need for quotes is seen. A former secretary's opinion is taken as authoritative.

On page 28 the *Post* runs an editorial on Judge Browne, specifically on a State Senate resolution to investigate him. Opponents of this resolution, according to the editorial, "predictably raised the cry of 'racism'" (once again in quotes). The *Post* makes its own position clear: "Sen. John Marchi (Republican - Staten

Island), who has long been a rational voice in debates over criminal law, eloquently answered the 'racist' diversion. It is true that Judge Browne is black, as were the defendants. But the issue is justice, not race."

The coverage of the Westchester prison uprising and the Judge Browne case both convey the message that the charge of white racism is a phoney, a cover used to justify coddling Black rioters and muggers. A Black judge is characterized as a "Black Racist" who "hates whites." His white critic is characterized as "rational" and "eloquent."

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR THE KKK

The promotion of racism in this particular issue does not end with these articles. The *Post* headline of the urban uprising in Great Britain reads: "British Hoodlums 'Have Gone Wild'". The picture accompanying the story shows a group of Black youths looting an appliance store. Neither the headline, the picture or the story mention the massive unemployment among British youth or the systematic discrimination against Black and Asian residents. Nor is any mention made of the fact that whites as well as Blacks and Asians participated in street fights with police and the looting of stores.

On page ten the *Post* runs a story entitled: "Klansman fights firing as Scoutmaster." This most reasonable headline is accompanied by a story which

stresses that the Boy Scouts' spokesman admitted this Connecticut Klan member was a "good scoutmaster" and devotes most of the space to an "attack" on the KKK by leftists. The picture accompanying the article shows an anti-Klan protester being taken into custody. The caption describes the anti-Klan rally as "violent." No mention of Klan's terrorist activity is made.

The Klan is a self described white supremacist organization which openly promotes racist violence against minorities. This is not a matter of editorial judgement or analysis but of plain fact. Yet you would never realize it from reading the *Post* article. Instead what emerges is the picture of a well intentioned man concerned with scouting whose civil rights are being violated. Conversely, Blacks are represented in this same newspaper as hoodlums, a mob, muggers and racists.

The Murdoch press has its equivalent in every major city. And the more "respectable" newspapers as well as the electronic media mirror much of the same slant on the news, if in less blatant and consistent fashion.

The media's promotion of racist ideology can't be reduced to a problem of bad attitudes on the part of publishers, editors and reporters. The newspapers and TV stations are owned by large corporate interests. They share and reflect the stake of the monopoly capitalist class as a whole in the oppression of national minorities and in keeping the working class divided against itself.