

FOR PEACE, EQUALITY AND SOCIALISM

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General Strike in Philadelphia!

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Philadelphia Police Inspector George Fencl orders arrested teachers into paddy wagons and buses. Over 200 teachers were arrested for picketing at six entrances of the School Board building. They are striking against the layoff of 3500 teachers, cuts in preparation time, and massive cuts in education programs.

by Clay Newlin

A general strike has been called in Philadelphia. By unanimous vote, the 300-union AFL-CIO Council has set October 28 as the day the city will be shut down.

The call for a general strike comes directly in response to the city administration's flagrant attempt to bust the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT). In September, 1980, after a three-week strike, the PFT reached a two-year agreement with the city. But in April of this year, the Board of Education announced that, due to a projected \$230 million deficit, it would refuse to live up to its agreement. Instead, the Board rescinded a 10% wage increase effective September, 1981 and laid off 17% of the PFT membership.

After attempting to get the courts to force the School Board to live up to its agreement, the PFT went out on strike. The PFT leadership has clearly stated its position. It is willing to renegotiate its contract and even defer its promised September raise. But it will not accept massive layoffs of its members.

UNION BUSTING

The city administration and the Board, on the other hand, demand that the PFT knuckle under. They argue that the union must make sizeable concessions and that substantial layoffs are essential. In fact, Mayor Green has expressed his opinion that there will be no settlement of the strike short of a "victory over the union."

The city's conduct in the now-43 day

strike makes clear how it thinks this victory will be achieved. The city has attempted to paint the teachers as greedy and unconcerned about education for the city's children. It has said that a victory for the teachers would necessitate a 40% rise in real estate taxes. Teachers, the city asserts, must adjust to the political and economic realities of the Reagan era.

The other part of the city's approach has been a vicious use of the police and courts. Beginning with the arrest of 200 teachers on the opening day of the strike, the police department has built a record of intimidation, physical harassment, and daily arrests of picketing teachers. And recently, at the city's request, the courts issued an injunction against the strike, imposing penalties of \$10,000 on the union and individual fines of \$250 on its leaders for each day that the strike continues. The city has also announced its intent to ask the court to levy additional fines of two days' wages on rank and file teachers for each day they refuse to report to work.

Many trade unionists see the city's assault on the PFT as a prelude to an attempt to break the power of the labor movement in this city. If Mayor Green succeeds in breaking the back of what is generally acknowledged as one of Philadelphia's most militant unions, he will be in a good position to demand concessions from other city and transit workers. Expressing this sentiment, John Murray, PFT President, told the AFL-CIO Council: "If one of us goes under, there is no way the rest of us can survive."

Defense of the labor movement is ample justification for the October 28

general strike. But, although not sufficiently recognized by either the PFT or the AFL-CIO Council, there is an even larger issue at stake.

AN ASSAULT ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

The city's attack on the PFT is also an assault on public education for working class and, particularly, minority students. The cuts proposed by the School Board will devastate quality education in this city.

The Board has called for slashing desegregation funds, a whopping 50% cut in bilingual and enrichment funds, the closing of elementary libraries, and elimination of elementary counseling. In addition, it has demanded a

administration and its 'big bucks' backers place education for Black and Puerto Rican children at the bottom of their list of priorities. Significantly, the children of Mayor Green, a supposed liberal Democrat, go to private schools where class size averages 20, as opposed to the 36 proposed in public schools.

Even worse is the fact that the cuts will be borne disproportionately in the predominantly minority schools. Schools like Birney, mentioned above, in minority communities have traditionally been targets of efforts to raise national test scores by allocating additional and special instructional teachers. But these additional teachers and aides will now be cut.

"...The proposed general strike will not only be a defense of legitimate trade union rights, but also a defense of public education, particularly for minority students."

reduction of remedial reading teachers, cuts in teacher preparation time, and an increase of classroom size from 33 to 36. Many sports and physical education programs are also to be eliminated.

To grasp the impact of these cuts more vividly, consider the cuts at a single elementary school. The Board's program for Birney Elementary, a predominantly Black school, calls for the elimination of three classroom teachers, two kindergarten teachers, a reading teacher, a science teacher, a language arts teacher, a mathematics teacher, two bilingual teachers, an instructional advisor, a mentally-gifted teacher, a Latin teacher, a counselor, a librarian, a speech therapist, and a checkpoint aide.

Such devastating cuts would never be made if the school population were not 70% minority children. But the city

Thus, the proposed general strike will not only be a defense of legitimate trade union rights, but also a defense of public education, particularly for minority students. It is, at the same time, in the interests of both labor and the community.

The Organizer urges each and every trade unionist, community activist, and parent to mobilize their organizations, neighbors, and friends to make sure that October 28 is as massive and broad as possible. In this way, we can ensure that Mayor Green gets the message that the people of Philadelphia oppose both union-busting and education-busting.

20 October 1981

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Blacks Ousted from New Bedford Media

by Cathy Levine

Within a 2-week period in September, a New Bedford radio station banned a prominent Black activist from calling its talk shows and cancelled the only Black-run radio show. And the city's daily newspaper temporarily suspended the only local Black weekly columnist. In addition to the silencing of Black activists, this represents the suppression of progressive ideas that benefit all working people, while threatening the vested interests in the city.

The New Bedford media has always had a racist slant. These recent actions, which amount to an effort to drive Black activists from the media, only further reveal the racism. The attacks have come at this time, partly because of upcoming local elections, in an effort to prevent exposure of city politicians. But they are made more possible by the increasing use nationally of racism to justify the Reagan attacks on social programs and civil rights, and to prevent the unity necessary to fight these attacks.

MINORITY ACTIVIST BANNED FROM AIRWAVES

Joaquim (Jack) Custodio is a long-time community activist, who is widely known for exposing the wheelings and dealings, and racism, in city politics. On September 15th, WBSM-AM banned Custodio from the airwaves. WBSM — which calls itself "The Voice of the People" — has an "Open Line" format, with call-in talk shows day and night. Whenever Custodio calls in, the moderator cuts him off immediately.

Custodio was banned from the airwaves before. In fact, almost two years ago to the day, on September 11, 1979, his weekly radio show, "Third World News," was abruptly cancelled by station owner George Gray, who also prohibited Custodio from calling in. Custodio's show, for which he received no pay, was very popular among both Black and white people.

Then and now, New Bedford Mayor John Markey and the City Council were facing re-election. Custodio has done a lot to expose the Markey administration's rip-off of New Bedford's working class and minority people — for example, patronage and corruption in the Housing and Redevelopment Authorities.

In particular, Custodio has exposed the administration's abuse of federal Community Development (CD) funds. Instead of spending New Bedford's CD funds on rebuilding low-income communities, the Markey administration has channelled much of it into "revitalizing" the downtown area for business and tourism.

Gray's silencing of Custodio during the election campaign reflects his desire to protect the Markey administration, which serves the local politicians and businessmen, including himself. WBSM is a business, and Gray owns substantial real estate interests in the city.

While Custodio has a large following among whites as well as Blacks, many whites, out of racism, view Custodio as a "troublemaker" and "loud-mouth." Gray is banking on this racist view to get away with banning Custodio from the airwaves. And so far, the community has been slow to respond.

"THIRD WORLD NEWS" KICKED OFF AIR

On September 4th, WBSM cancelled the weekly "Third World News" (TWN) radio show. An all-Black production committee took over the show two years ago, following a community protest when Gray fired Custodio. Since then, TWN has been the only minority-run radio or television show in the greater New Bedford area. Their programs have covered a wide variety of local, national, and international issues affecting minority and working people, providing information and a perspective seldom presented in the media.

Gray's stated reasons for cancelling

the show, according to the *Standard Times* (9/4/81), were: the failure of the TWN crew to learn technical tasks; their "tend[ency] to ramble without any particular form or content;" and "no audience." But these were just his excuses for cancelling the show. Despite the fact that the other moderators are salaried professionals and TWN is all volunteers, Gray is holding the TWN staff to a higher set of standards. Other WBSM moderators go on the air unprepared regularly and discuss subjects about which they have little knowledge or background. TWN, on the other hand, is generally well-researched, often with expert guests. And, as for ratings, Gray has not produced any statistics, just speculation.

The real reason Gray cancelled the show is that the TWN staff refused to obey his every command — and particularly, because he disapproves of the progressive content of their show. For instance, the last show featured Atlanta mother and organizer Camille Bell and Parky Grace, local Black activist and frame-up victim.

The combination of banning Custodio and TWN shows how George Gray views his responsibility to the Black and working class communities of New Bedford. He should change his motto to "The Voice of the Rich White People."

BLAMING THE VICTIM

Black writer Everett Hoagland's weekly column in the *New Bedford Standard Times*, "Quiet As It's Kept," was suspended for three weeks after his column of August 31st. In that column, Hoagland wrote: "According to a reputable and informed source, after a recent city council meeting, an elected official asked in the presence of three people, 'What is WBSM doing sending a [racial epithet] and a Jew to cover city government?'" The Black person referred to was Hoagland's wife Alice, a reporter for WBSM. He went on to say: "It may be

unfair to take one instance of racism in local government and induce a pervasively racist political scene. Yet what, in fact, are local politicians showing us by their official political actions or policies that would suggest they are not racists?"

The *Standard Times* and City Council responded by attacking Hoagland's credibility. In an editorial, on September 5th, Editor James Ragsdale called the column "lame reporting," based on "rumor and innuendo," and criticized Hoagland for failing to disclose his source or have a second source. But this editorial appeared two days after City Councillor Tom Kennedy stated publicly that he had heard the racist remark.

Secondly, Hoagland refused to disclose his source to avoid betraying a confidence. The newspaper industry's position of backing its writers in protecting confidential sources apparently does not apply where the writer is Black and the subject is racism in city government.

Several city councillors also assailed Hoagland for failing to reveal his source. Like the *Standard Times*, they targeted Hoagland and neatly sidestepped the content of his column — the charge of pervasive racism in city government.

The restoration of Hoagland's column reflects the *Standard Times'* awareness that they might face a community protest if they fired him. Community support for Hoagland was demonstrated when substantial numbers turned out at the City Council meeting to discuss the issue. Also, Hoagland's popular column sells newspapers. However, the paper did succeed in publicly slapping Hoagland's hand.

At the same time, the *Standard Times* is refusing to report on the censorship of Custodio and has even refused to publish several letters to the editor protesting the three racist incidents. The *Standard Times* claims

(Continued on page 10)

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

PATCO Support Builds in Bay Area

by Wally Engdahl

Support for the striking PATCO workers is growing in the San Francisco Bay area. The four Bay Area Central Labor Councils (Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco) have staged informational pickets at the three area airports. 1000 people picketed the three airports from 6 AM to 8 AM, August 21st, on only 5 days' notice, in the first picket called by the labor councils. There

were large delegations from ILWU (International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union), Teamsters, UAW, and the Building Trades, as well as other AFL-CIO members. And the September 19th Solidarity Day action targetted the Reagan administration's attempt to bust PATCO.

But the key to winning the strike is not picketing the public, or appealing to individuals not to cross the lines. The key is labor solidarity. The Canad-

ian air traffic controller showed this by their 48-hour job action in August, which completely tied up U.S. air traffic. On the other hand, the International Association of Machinists (IAM) has refused to honor PATCO's picket lines, even though the airport mechanics are not covered by the secondary boycott ban of the Taft-Hartley Act. They come under the 1905 Railroad Labor Act, which allows a secondary boycott (it would be a secondary boycott because IAM would strike the airlines, while PATCO is striking the government).

The United Mine Workers have proven that even Taft-Hartley can be beaten. They defied Carter's back-to-work order and got away with it. With that fig-leaf removed, iam president Wimpisinger claims poor leadership in the strike has made it impossible for him to support PATCO. It's funny — the Canadian controllers didn't realize that.

One positive development in the Bay Area is the development of a PATCO support committee. This is an open committee of about 50 rank and file workers, and union leaders elected by progressive caucuses in the UAW, ILWU, and AFL-CIO unions.

The purpose of the group is to help mobilize support for PATCO. The group has gotten the word out about the picketing at Bay Area airports and organized informational meetings

where interested trade unionists and community activists could hear the truth about the strike and the union-busting of the Reagan administration.

While the top labor officials are scared to death of Reagan and fear that support of PATCO will mean Reagan will attack their unions next, the rank and file sees clearly that if Reagan defeats PATCO, he will have labor on the run.

With the frontal attacks by Reagan and the desertion of the Democratic Party, it is clear that a party representing all working people must emerge to turn back to growing tide of conservatism. The seeds of that party are there: rank and file workers and community forces under attack by Reagan's racist and anti-labor program. In the Bay Area, Berkeley progressive Black Mayor Gus Newport and the East Bay's Congressman Ron Dellums were active in the movement to build the San Francisco September 19th Coalition, and Dick Groulx, Alameda Labor Council's Executive Secretary, moved forward by opening up the September 19th process to rank and file and community activists.

This growing labor-community alliance needs to stand behind the striking PATCO workers. But most of all, the labor movement must do whatever is necessary — even a national job action — to nip this union-busting offensive in the bud.



Striking air controllers rally in Cleveland Aug. 12.

RN's, Clerks Vote in 1199-C

by Patricia Eakins

On September 11, all non-management employees at Community Home Health Services of Philadelphia (CHHSP) voted for District 1199-C of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees to be their union representative. CHHSP is one of the largest home health agencies in the city, employing about 80 registered nurses, plus home health aides, social workers, therapists, and a large clerical staff of about 25 people. The victory was close, with a vote of 36-32, for the "professional" staff, and 12-11, for the "non-professional" staff. The election was the culmination of an eight-month long organizing struggle between the employees and management.

The main issues for the employees were: a say in some of the policies that affect their working conditions; a grievance procedure that has some teeth in it, to discourage arbitrary action by supervisors; and, better wages and benefits. Many employees had become fed up with the Employee Council, which was supposed to enable employees to participate in management decisions. Instead, the Council was frequently ignored, or else took many months to address problems that were raised. Finally, many people who were having trouble making up their minds about the union were angered when the July 1st raises were announced. The maximum was 4% for people lower on the scale, down to 2% for those with higher seniority. Another issue was work load. Many nurses felt the number of patient visits expected and the amount of paper work involved were often excessive and interfered with good patient care.

The employees had several after-work meetings to discuss the main problems and review possible solu-

tions. Lawyers were invited to explain their legal rights. They realized, through this process, that the only solution with any muscle to it was unionization. As a result, several unions were invited to meetings to explain what they had to offer. Out of these meetings, employees chose 1199C and began signing cards.

The victory is significant because it includes the first group of RN's in the city to join 1199C. Most RN's, if they organize at all, join the Pennsylvania Nurses Association, which includes many nursing supervisors. The PNA also acts as a bargaining agent for RN's and, occasionally, for LPN's.

The PNA does not include all hospital or health care workers and appeals to the elitism of most RN's, by saying they should be in their "own" union. In relation to 1199-C, this is also racist, because most other health care workers in 1199-C are Black. In fact, during the organizing drive at CHHSP, a group of nurses who opposed the union drive, but who saw that the majority of nurses were for it, argued that it was not professional to join a trade union. They put forward that if RN's must organize, they should join the PNA — despite the fact that the PNA would not even consider accepting the home health aides or clerks (who are mostly Black) into their ranks. Because of the PNA policy, the majority at CHHSP ruled it out as a potential bargaining unit.

Management's main strategy to fight unionization was to insult us by saying we didn't know what we were doing. They portrayed the union as an opportunist organization that would promise us anything just to get our union dues. They issued memos several times a week, attacking the union, and held many staff meetings where

anti-union sermons were delivered. While the close vote shows that they succeeded in intimidating some people, the majority saw through their tactics.

One of the main weaknesses of the drive was the division between nursing staff, on the one hand, and clericals and Home Health Aides, on the other. Throughout the drive, the nursing staff dominated the organizing committee and only occasionally did a clerical representative come. The committee summed this up as the clerks' own fault because, after all, they were notified of the meetings and encouraged to come. Most nurses on the committee thought it was "understandable" that clerks didn't want to come because of their vulnerability, as compared to the nurses. If a nurse got fired, she could still get a job in any hospital in the city, due to the nursing shortage. Clerks, on the other hand, are more easily replaced and would have more trouble getting another job. While this is true, it is more significant that nurses can count on getting support from other nurses, whereas the clerical-home health aide staff is smaller and could not count on support from the nurses if management came down on them for union activity.

The organizing committee failed to have any formal discussions about the lack of participation by clerks and aides. When the issue was raised, most committee members saw it as unnecessary to discuss. This indifference to the role of clerks among the leadership of the drive reflected the racist, anti-working class view that RN's, who are predominantly white and college-educated, do not need the participation of the clerks, who are mostly Black and have less formal education. This flies in the face of most organizing drives, where the leadership has come from non-profes-



sional workers and the professional strata have been the most backward in their thinking. And, at CHHSP, despite the organizing committee's failure to draw them in, the majority of clerks and aides still voted in favor of the union. Had they been represented on the committee, the percentage of "yes" votes among them would have undoubtedly been much higher.

The next step for the newly organized unit is to win a contract. A negotiating committee has been formed, with representatives of all the different job categories. Lists of demands are being written up and ratified, with negotiations to start in the near future. One of the big issues is bound to be "union shop" versus "open shop." Management has already indicated their "concern" about this point and do not intend to give in easily. With the vote having been so close, a lot of organizing work must be done around this demand. The unit must also work on divisions between nursing staff and clerical staff that emerged during the drive, if they are to build a strong and effective bargaining unit.

Layoffs Threaten Boston Schools — Racism Stalls Fightback

Boston's children returned to school as usual, this September, but large-scale cutbacks in the school system will have a devastating impact on the quality of education they receive. Mayor White's refusal to appropriate any more money for the school budget than the legal minimum has meant massive teacher layoffs and slashed school programs. The Boston Teachers Union — weakened and split by internal dissension, caused mainly by their failure to support affirmative action — has been unable to resist the layoffs and cuts, which went through without any real fight.

The exact number of layoffs is still unclear, but it is certain to be over 1000. Including paraprofessional aides, who are also being laid off, this means a cut of almost 30% in teaching staff, while enrollment is down only 6% from the previous year.

CUTBACKS

Despite claims that the impact on class size will be minimal, there is no way around the fact that more students will be jammed into each classroom. In some elementary schools, as many as 39 children may be placed in one classroom.

At the same time, many programs are being cut back or eliminated entirely so that children will receive educational offerings stripped to the bare basics. Last year, there were 240 elementary school teachers who specialized in music, art, and reading. After the cuts, there will be at most 75 left. In the high schools, principals have been told to decide what classes to cut. Kindergarten I, which let students start school a year earlier, has been completely cut, affecting 2400 kids. And the English Language Center, which taught English to adults, was also eliminated.

Physical education programs have also suffered. Swimming classes have been eliminated, as have all but the major varsity sports. Women's sports are being especially hard hit, as many of the women's coaches are being laid off. Even the number of school crossing guards has been drastically reduced, so children have to cross busy intersections without aid.

The immediate cause of the crisis is Mayor White's decision to appropriate only the minimum required by law — \$210 million to run the schools. Last year, the schools spent \$225 million — so the budget has been cut \$15 million, even without counting inflation.

The Mayor's and City Council's lack of concern for Boston's schoolchildren is revealed by their response to the possibility of police and fire layoffs, as compared to teacher cuts. Earlier this year, White, citing the impact of Proposition 2½, ordered the layoff of police and fire personnel. He and the Council spent the next few months trying to pin the blame on each other for the city's financial problems. However, this summer, they reached an

agreement that found new revenue — if the state legislature approves — to rehire the laid-off police and firefighters. Nowhere in that package is any money intended for rehiring laid-off teachers and restoring school programs. White and the Council have simply decided they can get away with letting the school system sink.

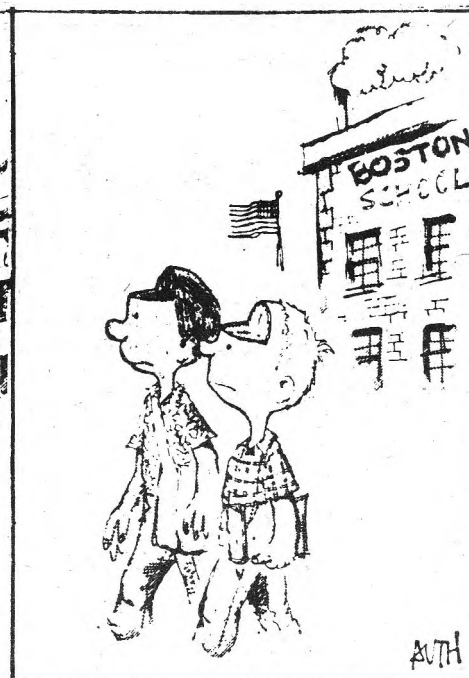
RACISM AT CITY HALL

Mayor White is willing to write off the public schools, because it now serves predominantly minority children. While the minority population of the city is 25% overall, minority schoolchildren make up 65% of the school system. White parents' resistance to desegregation led many to move out of the city or put their children in parochial or private schools. In addition, Boston's School Committee was long dominated by politicians who were more interested in resisting desegregation and demagogically exploiting the racial issue, than in maintaining the quality of education. Boston schools had a terrible reputation as patronage havens for politicians and warehouses for students. So, many who could afford it took their children out of the public school system.

The layoffs were the culmination of a year-long campaign by White to cut the school budget. He portrayed school costs as out of control and the School Committee as irresponsible spendthrifts. He inflated the amount the system would end up spending last year — claiming it would be about \$40 million over, when it was actually only \$15 million over. He refused to pay salary increases negotiated by the teachers' union, until forced to by court order. The *Globe* and *Herald* jumped right in with the chorus that "Spending had to be cut."

The School Committee — most of whose members care little more for the children's education than White — played right along with the campaign. One member, Gerald O'Leary, was elected on the basis of keeping school costs down and then was convicted of trying to extort \$625,000 from a bus company for the school bus transportation contract. Another member is on trial for the same charge, and a third member has been implicated. The committee also refused to make any serious effort to keep strict accounting of its money.

The only hope for blocking the cuts this fall would have been a strike by the Boston Teachers' Union. The BTU's contract, which stipulated that no tenured teachers would be laid off until June of next year, was violated by the School Committee (similar to Philadelphia, leading to the teachers' strike there). The demands of no layoffs and adequate funding of the school system were in the best interests of both the teachers themselves and Boston schoolchildren and their parents. However, the union was badly divided over the question of how to respond to the layoffs. As a result, it was in no position to wage the kind of



determined struggle that would be necessary to force adequate funding from the city.

The union's Executive Board recommended a strike, but the membership meeting on September 7th — two days before the opening of school — revealed a union badly split over the issue. A vote for an immediate strike was defeated. A hastily introduced compromise resolution was introduced, giving the Executive Board authority to call a strike in two weeks if no substantial progress was made in negotiations with the city. This passed by only a narrow margin, and after many teachers who had voted against a strike had left the meeting.

Knowing that the union had little muscle behind its threatened walkout, Mayor White refused to budge. The Executive Board went back to the membership on September 20th and, amid strong and bitter debate, a strike was voted down by almost 2 to 1.

There were a number of reasons why the union was too weak to resist the attack. Out of narrow professionalism, many teachers argued that a strike would hurt the children. This argument stood reality on its head — it is the layoff of over 1000 teachers and the cutbacks in many programs that are hurting the children. Restoring jobs and programs would have helped them. Also, Reagan's attempt to crush PATCO, and a similar threat by new school superintendent Robert Spillane, had a chilling effect. With many unemployed certified teachers in the area, many teachers were afraid Spillane would, and could, follow through on his threat.

RACISM AT THE UNION HALL

The key division that weakened the union and sapped its militance was between white and minority teachers, and between the union and the minority community. The failure of the union to support the struggle against racial discrimination in the school department — and, in fact, its willingness to sacrifice gains that had been made — divided the union and cut it off from its strongest potential allies in the minority community. With minority children making up 65% of the school population, the strongest support for demands aimed at maintaining the quality of education came from the minority community.

However, the BTU adopted a position which opposed maintaining affirmative action in layoffs and, instead, advocated layoffs by strict seniority. Because of a history of race discrimination by the Boston School Department, most minority teachers have only recently been hired and would bear the brunt of the layoffs. Concretely, up until five years ago, the Boston teachers were almost all white. In the mid-1970's, a court-ordered affirmative action plan was set in place. As

a result, minority teachers now make up 19% of the teaching staff — still well below the percentage of minorities in the city. The BTU's position was a statement to the minority teachers and community that the union was concerned mainly with the layoff of white teachers. This destroyed the basis for a united union and strong union-community alliance. Without this unity, there was no chance to win what would have been a long and bitter strike against the city.

In anticipation of this year's layoffs, Judge Arthur Garrity ruled that affirmative action must be upheld in layoffs, so that the number of minority teachers would not fall below the 19% figure. Without this court order, the layoff of 1000 teachers by strict seniority would have eliminated most minority teachers from the system — and wiped out all the gains from the affirmative action plan.

There was strong opposition to Garrity's order from the majority of white teachers in the union. A "Seniority Caucus" was formed to oppose this. White teachers protested that they were being laid off simply because of their race, neglecting the fact that layoff by strict seniority would have meant that minority teachers would have been laid off simply because of their race.

By taking this backward position, the BTU played right into the hands of the city administration. White was able to posture as the upholder of equality, while at the same time undermining the chance for Boston's schoolchildren to get a quality education.

NO ALLIANCE WITH THE COMMUNITY

The union's position had a destructive impact on building an alliance between the union and community, which has seriously weakened the fight for quality education. The BTU is in the position of defending a nearly all-white corps of teachers for a student body that is two-thirds minority.

Last spring, White threatened to refuse to appropriate the extra money the school department needed to get through the rest of the school year. This would have meant schools closing two months early. In response to this attack, the Coalition to Support Public Education was formed, which included parent activists, students, and the BTU. A demonstration calling for funding to keep the schools open drew 1000 people.

Because the union had never shown real support for the concerns of the minority community, parent activists in the coalition were justly suspicious of the union. The common interest in keeping the schools open was an excel-

(Continued on page 10)

Philly School Strike: PFT and the Community

by Debbie Bambino

Once again, here in Philadelphia, public education is on the line — the picket line, that is. Our kids have lost over 45 days of school and there's still no end in sight. Mayor Green is standing firm and has launched a double-barrelled attack against the union and quality education. A general strike has been called for by the AFL-CIO Central Labor Council for October 28th (see article on front page), in an effort to force the city to back down from its flagrant attempt to bust the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT).

Green and Co.'s proposed cuts in the school budget would eliminate or drastically reduce sorely needed programs and services, like remedial reading and math, bilingual education, desegregation, and all elementary libraries, to name a few. These cuts are being leveled at a student population that is 70% minority and overwhelmingly poor and working class. The Mayor's racist and anti-working class intent is clear. He's willing to sacrifice our children's future for the advancement of his own political career. After all, anyone who can successfully bust the largest union local in this state will look pretty good to the business community and big boys in Washington.

On the other side, the union has taken an uncompromising stand against the cuts, at the same time making it clear that they are willing to defer salary and benefit increases to facilitate a settlement.

The battle lines have been drawn and the stakes are high. Everyone's clear that our kids' futures are hanging in the balance. So why is it that the community and the union stand divided at this critical juncture? Why have Green and his buddies in the media been so successful in their attempt to paint the union as the arch-villain in this crisis?

While it's true that the media has consistently lied and distorted the union's position in this strike, this doesn't account for the widespread mistrust and antagonism of the community, particularly the Black community, toward the PFT. In fact, their biased reporting has had the effect of pouring salt on a longtime festering wound. Historically, this wound has grown out of the union's racist failure to address itself squarely to the just demands and concerns of the community.

PFT PAYING PRICE FOR HISTORIC RACISM

While the official position of the PFT has been in support of desegregation, Black studies and bilingual education, concrete initiatives have been largely left up to the individual teacher. The union has not been in the forefront of these struggles, which while they are critical in the overall fight for quality education, obviously take on particular importance for minority students.

Beyond this lack of leadership and support there is a widespread, self-proclaimed image among white teachers that they are dedicated, though sometimes reluctant, missionaries in the "jungle" or "ghetto" schools.

And they maintain that they desperately need relief in the form of prep-time, if they are to keep what sanity they have left. Repeated references to "combat zones" and a whole range of descriptions of life in the inner-city classrooms are necessarily played out in the overall approach of these teachers toward their students. After all, it stands to reason that if you view your students as semi-human, you will adjust your practice and expectations accordingly.

At a recent forum on the school crisis, which was sponsored by the PCNO (Philadelphia Council of Neighborhood Organizations), a white teacher talked about the "combat zone." When he was challenged for his racism, he defended himself by explaining that his remarks were based on a lower economic class of children and were not racially motivated. Far from defending his position, he underlined his racism with a strong dose of anti-working class bias as well.

Hand in hand with these attitudes towards students comes an equally racist view of minority parents, who are seen as irresponsible and totally unconcerned. Ironically, some of the same teachers who refuse to hold evening parent-teacher conferences at their schools, in order to facilitate the participation of working parents, will turn around and justify their practice by the overworked blanket statement that "these parents" just don't care and they won't come out anyway!

All too often, the union has continued to demonstrate these attitudes in this strike by adopting an "us against the world" stance, automatically writing off parents and students as anti-teacher. Black parents in particular have often been pre-judged as more interested in getting rid of their kids than in quality education. The assumption is that Black parents will scab regardless of the issues or the union's practice toward them. A concrete expression of this is the union's attitude toward alternative or "strike schools" and day care centers. The union has seen them as "scab" schools that prolong the strike and therefore should be publicly ignored and privately denounced.

Another sore point between the union and the community is the whole question of "teacher accountability." Here again, instead of dealing with the issue concretely, investigating the problem and proposing steps which are mutually agreeable to the union and the community, the reaction is immediately defensive. Parents are given a pat response like: "If a teacher is rated unsatisfactorily for two consecutive years they will be dismissed." Parents more often than not aren't interested in getting a teacher fired. They are, however, interested in concrete responsiveness on an issue or issues related to their children's education. Furthermore, if a teacher is irresponsible, two years of our children's education without some sort of decisive change in practice is much too long.

In addition, the generalizable failure of the union to solicit direct parent participation in the development of education-related policies and negotia-



tion proposals has fostered the situation we find ourselves in today — a situation where differences between the union and community can so easily be raised to the forefront while the real prime offender, Mayor Green, gets off light. If there were an ongoing, principled working relationship between the union and the community, we could not be divided by the likes of Mr. Bill, whose concern for our children is non-existent.

GREEN'S STRATEGY: DIVIDE AND CONQUER

The antics of Green and the School Board show clearly their recognition of our differences, differences which they have sought to turn to their advantage each step along the way. That's why they focus on salaries and increased taxes and never on the cutbacks in programs and services. And that's why the first concerted effort to break the strike came at the Cleveland School, in the heart of the Black community.

At Cleveland School, Mayor Green was able to use Black State Senator Milton Street to do his dirty work for him. Street organized parents to send their children to school and personally escorted scabs across the PFT lines.

But while Street has admittedly played a backward role in this struggle, there is no excuse for the type of racist derision that t-shirts which say "Pave Milton Street" convey. Here again, the union has allowed differences with a Black elected official to become primary over and above their differences with the person who is responsible for this entire crisis.

INCREASED TAXES OR ALTERNATIVE FUNDING

Finally, the Mayor consistently focuses on increased taxes, in full recognition of the fact that the city's real estate and wage tax base is predominantly white due to increase unemployment and redlining, etc., in the minority communities. Since the tax base is predominantly white and the schools are predominantly minority, the Mayor can once again effectively manipulate racism, this time the racism of the white community, and turn them against the "greedy" teachers and against minority students, as well. All the while, the Mayor neatly sidesteps his responsibility to fund quality public education through alternative sources like, for example, a corporate net income tax or a tax on the oil refin-

eries, both of which have successfully netted this city millions in the past.

If we are going to maintain any semblance of quality public education in this city the time is now to turn this situation back around on Green and Co. Parents and community activists must unite with the union in this fight, raising our criticisms and struggling to achieve a principled and ongoing relationship. The union has already taken some steps forward in its relationship to the community. These steps must be expanded and deepened. We must recognize this struggle as part of a growing attack on our standard of living and basic rights, not only in Philadelphia, but across the country as well.

For example, in Detroit recently, two entire districts or 26 schools were shut down entirely and the city has threatened to close the entire system next September due to a lack of funds. This year, Green is demanding drastic cutbacks. If he breaks the union and wins this strike, next year we could be a lot closer to Detroit!

S.O.S. COALITION

The Save Our Schools Coalition, of which PWOC is a member, is an alliance of labor and community groups, parents and teachers who believe that the interests of parents and students in defending the quality of education coincides with the interests of school employees in defending their contract. The coalition is taking a stand in this strike against the cutbacks, against union-busting, and against racism. The coalition also sees itself as an ongoing organization which will struggle for quality integrated public education after the strike is settled. It intends to make sure that the relationship between the union and the community is more than a public relations phenomenon during this crisis, but rather an integral component of the educational system in this city.

SAVE OUR SCHOOLS COALITION PROGRAM

- 1) Honor the contract;
- 2) No cutbacks;
- 3) Alternative funding; and,
- 4) Quality integrated public education.

For more information on the Save Our Schools Coalition, call 224-1377.

Reagan Calls for New Budget Cuts

by Jim Griffin

Ronald Reagan has his budget axe out again. Last month, he pledged to chop another \$13 billion out of the budget, mostly from social programs. In addition, the President sought new tax legislation that would raise an additional \$3 billion. But this time around, few gave this new wave of budget cuts much chance of passing a now-nervous Congress. As the new cuts for fiscal 1982 are being considered, the Reagan budget for fiscal '81 went into effect October 1st — with devastating consequences to the poor. (see article on page).

NEW HOLES IN THE SAFETY NET

The new round of cuts comes on top of already massive projected cuts for fiscal 1982. Reagan would impose a 12% across-the-board cut in non-military discretionary spending — that is, spending not already mandated by law. This will be particularly burdensome to those agencies which have already been sharply cut. In addition, Reagan is calling for exacting another \$2.6 billion from entitlement programs such as public assistance. This would come from a series of yet undisclosed changes in eligibility requirements. Reagan also will reduce federal loan guarantees and eliminate the Departments of Education and Energy, both of which were already slated for eventual destruction.

Reagan quietly backed away from earlier pledges to cut Social Security. Congress, responding to a massive public outcry, had already made clear that these plans were a dead letter anyway. The President also made light of nutritional guidelines for school lunches that would, among other things, have substituted ketchup, which is half sugar, for a vegetable. This was all a bureaucratic mistake, he explained with a characteristic chuckle.

The Pentagon, the pampered child of the Reagan regime, was once again spared all but token cuts. \$3 billion was trimmed, not from the existing budget, but from the projected increase in defense spending.

Reagan also promised new government revenues through eliminating "abuses and obsolete incentives in the tax code" and charging user fees for many government services. While Reagan talked about the need for business to pay its "fair share" of the tax bill, giveaways to the rich and the monopoly corporations have been a distinguishing feature of the Reagan White House and there is no reason to think this latest round of tax "reform" will be any different. One specific measure proposed by the White House which is likely to be promoted is the elimination of the energy tax credit for individuals, an incentive to save energy that helped middle- and lower-income families reduce their heating costs.

ECONOMIC PROGRAM IN TROUBLE

The new round of cuts was deemed necessary because Ronald Reagan's economic program is in trouble. A sluggish economy, plagued by high

interest rates, is not exactly what the "Supply-Siders" in the Reagan cabinet had in mind when they cut the budget and simultaneously slashed taxes on business. But the predicted rush of new investment and prosperity has not materialized. As a result, the administration had to revise upwards its estimate of next year's budget deficit from \$42.5 billion to well over \$60 billion. The high cost of government borrowing, along with the prospect of reduced economic growth and, thus, less than projected increases in tax revenue, also called into question Reagan's target date of 1984 for a balanced budget.

Financial and business circles, while happy with Reagan's pro-business policies, have been increasingly concerned with the failure of interest rates to come down. The large federal deficit means more borrowing by government, which drives up interest rates. As the projected size of the deficit grew, Wall Street became more panicky. Falling prices of stocks, bonds, and securities and increased political pressure on the White House were expressions of this new mood.

A major debate within the administration followed. Some argued for no further cuts on the grounds that any more reductions in social programs would be politically dangerous. Another faction favored scaling down the increases in military spending. The winners argued for a new round of non-military cuts. With these cuts, Reagan argues, he can still meet his timetable for a balanced budget, carry through on the largest peacetime expansion of the military in history, and preserve the fabled "safety net," which is supposed to protect the "truly needy" from harm.

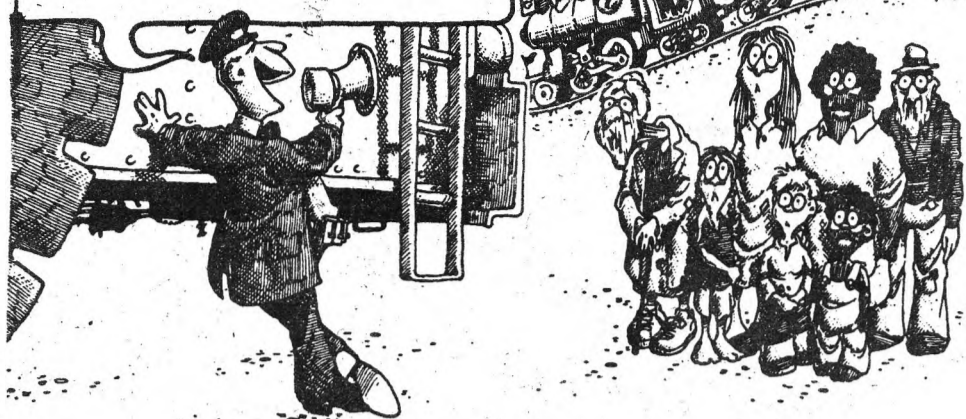
As in his earlier appeals, Reagan talked as if there is no other road but the one he is travelling if we all want improved economic conditions. This is sheer bunk. The additional \$16 billion Reagan wants to save could all be trimmed from the defense budget without even making a dent in the Pentagon's bloated waistline. The AFL-CIO suggested a 3-step plan for raising the same amount of money without cutting either social programs or the military increases. They would postpone the planned big tax breaks to the oil companies for a year, to save \$1.3 billion; reduce the tax cut for those making more than \$42,000, to save \$9 billion; and reduce the investment tax credit, a form of subsidy to big business, to save \$6 billion.

FEW PLEASED

Following his speech, Reagan put on a smile and chortled about all the phone calls, letters, and telegrams he got applauding his program. But from Wall Street to Main Street, the indications are that the days of easy sledding for his administration are over.

Financial markets around the world plunged, while the New York Exchange fluctuated sharply. In the view of Wall Street, the new round of cuts and the modest projected increase in revenue are not nearly enough to deal with the problem. Few expect that these new measures will have any impact on interest rates, and many

ON BEHALF OF REAGAN, I'D LIKE TO SAY WE'RE REAL GLAD YOU FOLKS COULD COME OUT FOR YOUR COMPLIMENTARY RIDE ON THE MX MISSILE SYSTEM! I SUPPOSE SOMEONE'S ALREADY EXPLAINED THAT YOU'RE GETTING THIS INSTEAD OF YOUR FOOD STAMPS....



believe the Reagan administration is still badly underestimating the size of next year's deficit.

On Capitol Hill, even members of his own party were doubtful that the cuts would go through. Many Republicans announced that they would not support them. The Democrats showed some signs of stirring from their slumber and are mounting a real fight against this new round of cuts. "Things are changing around here so fast you can't tell the players without a scorecard," one White House insider told the *New York Times*. Representatives on both sides of the aisle are angry that, with the new round of budget cuts, the administration is renegeing on many of the deals it put together to steer the original budget package through Congress.

Solidarity Day

(Continued from page 7)

principal source of division within the working class, is critical to forging a united movement. Yet, many unions have opposed affirmative action, while others pay only lip service to the measures necessary to advance toward real equality. Similarly, the unions have dragged their feet in relation to the struggle against sexism, as exemplified by the Johnny-come-lately position of the AFL-CIO on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Not only do these serious weaknesses set back the struggle for unity within the ranks of labor, but they also serve to divide the unions from their natural allies, the movements of the oppressed nationalities and women.

Thirdly, the top leadership of the AFL-CIO remains firmly tied to the Democratic Party and opposed to organizing a political party of, by, and for working people. The Democrats are no alternative to Reagan and the Republicans, as four years of Jimmy Carter and the sorry capitulation of the Democrats in congress to Reaganism illustrate. There will be a pronounced effort, in the coming year, to deliver the emerging movement into the waiting arms of Ted Kennedy or some other budding savior from the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. Instead, if we are to avoid the mistakes of the past, labor must organize independently. It must not demand consideration as a junior partner in an unholy coalition with racist boll weevils and corporate money-bags, but must fight for a program in which the needs of the working people get top billing.

These obstacles are not simply the result of mistaken policies on the part of labor's top leadership. They reflect the position of the leadership as a privileged stratum of officials, far removed from the membership they represent. The whole philosophy of the Kirklands is one of class col-

laboration — that labor and management have common interests and can, and should, cooperate. But the whole reason we needed Solidarity Day in the first place was that our interests as workers stand in direct opposition to those of the employer class, politically as well as economically. It is only to the extent we translate this understanding into a program of struggle that we will be able to build an effective fightback.

Even at the top, there are forces who are moving in this direction — like William Wimpisinger of the Machinists, who has taken a strong stand against military spending and is willing, at least, to entertain a break from the Democratic Party. But the real force for change will have to come from below. What's needed is a rank and file movement that will press for a class struggle approach to the fight against Reaganism. Solidarity Day demonstrates the ripeness of conditions for the development of such a movement.

What occurred on September 19th undoubtedly put a scare into the politicians in Washington. But precisely because it was so successful it must have made Lane Kirkland pause, as well.

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A HOUSE DIVIDED: Labor and White Supremacy

"This short book was a first attempt to answer certain questions central to bringing about socialism in this country: why haven't socialist aspirations taken permanent root within the U.S. working class? Why hasn't the U.S. working class succeeded in forming a mass labor party? What is the relation of racist discrimination to these failures? How has white supremacist thinking acquired such a formidable hold on a broad section of white workers and how can that hold be broken? In short, what must be done for socialism to gain a mass following in this country?"

—from the authors' Preface

by Roxanne Mitchell and Frank Weiss

Comment by Harry Haywood

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Solidarity Day - Labor Takes the Offensive

by Ron Whitehorne

*When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run,
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun.
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one,
But the union makes us strong!*

— "Solidarity Forever"

On September 19th, official Washington got a taste of union power, as over 400,000 working people descended on the city. All told, a half million people demonstrated across the country on Solidarity Day, the AFL-CIO initiated protest for jobs and justice and against the Reagan-led, right-wing offensive. Perhaps even more important in the long run, workers themselves glimpsed the enormity of their collective strength, the "power greater than their hoarded gold" that comes with unity.

The size of the demonstration exceeded all expectations. The AFL-CIO had predicted 100,000 demonstrators. Critics of the action within the labor movement believed far fewer would show and that the demonstration would end up confirming the weakness of the unions, lending support to Ronald Reagan's view that Labor could not mobilize its own membership.

Instead, spurred by the PATCO strike, a new round of budget cuts, and the mounting offensive against racial equality and democratic rights, trade unionists and progressive forces generally turned Solidarity Day into one of the most massive protests in history. The unions were out in strength — banners, hats, and placards from literally hundreds of unions were in evidence. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) had what was probably the largest single contingent, numbering upwards of 60,000. The International Association of Machinists (IAM) also produced a large contingent — 40,000 members and a range of community and peace groups who were invited to march with the Machinists. The United Auto Workers (UAW), United Steelworkers (USW), and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) also brought large delegations.

A surprise to some, and a disappointment to the Reaganites, was the substantial support for the rally from the building trades unions. The Reagan administration had sought to get the more conservative building trades leadership to boycott the action. But, faced with growing unemployment and the prospect of the repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act, which guarantees union wages on federally-funded construction projects, leaders and rank and file alike came out in force. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), for example, had upwards of 20,000 members present.

EMERGING LABOR-LED ALLIANCE

But this was not simply a union demonstration. Labor's allies were well represented. The Solidarity Call became a lightning rod that attracted the support and participation of virtually all those Americans who are losers in the game presently being played in the White House and on Capitol Hill. First and foremost, the leaders of the mainstream civil rights organizations were quick to join with the AFL-CIO in building the demonstration and succeeded in mobilizing

large numbers. The NAACP, for instance, brought 15,000 to Washington. The combination of multi-national trade union delegations and contingents from Black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American organizations made Solidarity Day a true reflection of the racial and national diversity of the U.S. people. The coming together of labor and substantial sectors of the Black Liberation Movement, in particular, is a positive step toward the kind of alliance that will be necessary to defeat Reaganism.

In addition, the Women's Movement was strongly represented. An 8,000-strong contingent from the National Organization of Women (NOW) marched. Peace organizations, environmentalists, the elderly, gay rights activists, consumers, and many others all had an organized presence in the march. It was an example of the leading role that labor can and should play in building a broad movement to defend the interests of the masses of the U.S. people.

This was true in spite of the vacillations, wrong-headed policies, and class collaborationist philosophy of the top AFL-CIO leadership. The politics of the Solidarity Day Call were vague, couching opposition to the Reagan economic program in the most general terms. Rally organizers downplayed the question of racism and, consistent with the federation's position of support for defense spending and a Cold War foreign policy, ignored completely the war build-up as a driving force in the present right-wing offensive.

Yet, at the same time, Lane Kirkland and the top leadership did not feel able to impose the backward politics of the Federation Council on Solidarity Day. Instead, they felt compelled to allow participating groups to raise whatever demands and slogans they chose within the framework of the broad call for jobs and justice. Thus, many unions, as well as civil rights and peace forces, targeted the bloated military budget, U.S. intervention in El Salvador, support for apartheid in South Africa, and related issues as expressions of Reaganism's hostility to working people. The attacks on affirmative action, voting rights, desegregation, and other hard-won gains of the movement for racial equality also emerged as a theme of the day, although one that both in the slogans in the ranks and in the speeches from the podium was badly understated. Support for the ERA, which only has nine months left to pass, was another issue that was strongly projected, not simply by women's groups but by many unions as well.

THEM AND US

The central theme of the rally, repeated over and over again in thousands of different ways, was the age-old theme of "Them and Us" — "Them" being the President, his millionaire cabinet, his supporters in Congress, and the Fat Cat country club crowd who are the real and only beneficiaries of the Reagan program; and "Us" being the working people who built this country, keep it running, and are called upon to make all the sacrifices. As usual, the rank and file showed more imagination than most of their leaders in communicating this message. One electrical worker carried a sign made out of paper plates that read, "At my house we don't eat on china" — a reference to Nancy Reagan's purchase of a White House



china set for \$200,000, at the same time school lunch programs are being reduced by a third and ketchup is being redefined as a vegetable.

The attacks on the unions, symbolized by the attempt to bust PATCO, predictably was a major concern of the demonstrators. A disciplined PATCO column of 6,000 air controllers — half the union's membership — showed that the air controllers are not about to roll over and play dead. Many marchers expressed the view that more must be done in support, including a national job action.

Solidarity Day marks an important shift in the labor movement. The dangers posed by Reaganism are rousing thousands of workers to action and the impact is being felt at the top levels.

A comparison of Solidarity Day with the 1975 rally for jobs organized by the Industrial Department of the AFL-CIO underlines this point. In the earlier demonstration, late AFL-CIO President George Meany, who consistently opposed the tactic of mass action, along with much of the hierarchy in the Executive Council, succeeded in preventing the AFL-CIO as a whole from endorsing the action. This time, Lane Kirkland broke with the traditional AFL-CIO stance and took the majority of the Council with him. In 1975, the unions that did support the rally were perfunctory in turning out their membership and made no effort to reach out to progressive forces beyond the labor movement. In 1981, not only did the unions bring out their own members, but many made resources available to community, civil rights, and peace forces, actively seeking the involvement of these allies. In 1975, 50,000 people sat passively in a stadium and listened to speeches, mainly by Democratic party politicians. Attempts by a handful of ultra-leftists to generate "militance" by disrupting the rally only served to underline the absence of militance among the bulk of the workers present. Relative to Solidarity Day, the participants in the 1975 action tended to be older and more likely to be union officials. There was little spontaneous rank and file participation and enthusiasm. But on September 19th, it was clear that masses of workers wanted to be in Washington, knew why they were there, and wanted to let Reagan and Co. know it.

Solidarity Day grew out of pressure, at the base and middle levels of the trade union structure, for a national

demonstration against Reagan's anti-working class policies. Lane Kirkland and the majority of the AFL-CIO Executive Council responded positively, if only partially, to this pressure. This marks a real difference from the Meany style of leadership. It also is a sign of the times: Labor is under sharp attack and has been increasingly isolated and on the defensive. It does not take a great deal of foresight to see that the union movement cannot simply stand pat or conduct business as usual.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Solidarity Day was an overwhelming success. It put the lie to the idea that the labor movement is dying and politically impotent. Within days after the rally, Congresspeople on both sides of the aisle were sending messages to the White House that the President would have to retreat on his newest round of budget cuts. A half-million working people in the streets did not go unnoticed, even if a Reagan aide publicly took the posture that the rally was no more significant than a Beach Boys concert.

At the same time, September 19th was only an opening round in what is necessarily going to be a protracted fight. Lane Kirkland said in Washington that "We have not forgotten how to fight." But how far, and in what direction, will Kirkland and the labor bureaucracy carry this fight? In three important respects there have been, and will continue to be, sharp resistance to developing the political requirements for an effective fight-back.

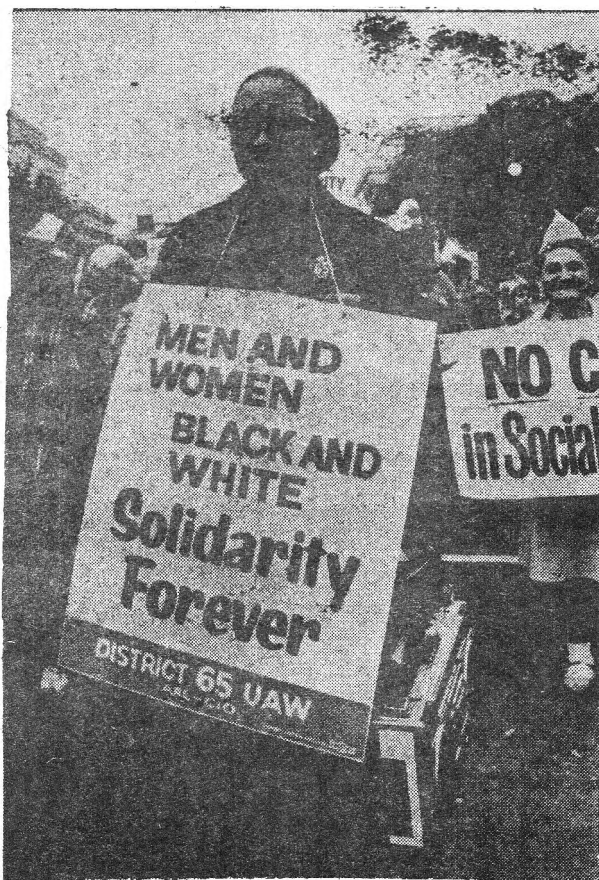
First of all, the AFL-CIO leadership remains wedded to a pro-Pentagon, anti-Soviet foreign policy. Not only is this foreign policy harmful to labor in its own right, but a guns-and-butter approach is no substitute for the economic policies of Reaganism. A bloated military budget is inflationary, generates few jobs, and takes resources away from social needs. While there are sections of the labor leadership that favor a peace policy and this sentiment is on the rise, these forces remain a distinct minority at the top levels.

Secondly, the labor bureaucracy has a poor record in the fight against racial and sexual inequality. The composition of the Council itself symbolizes this. The struggle against racism, the

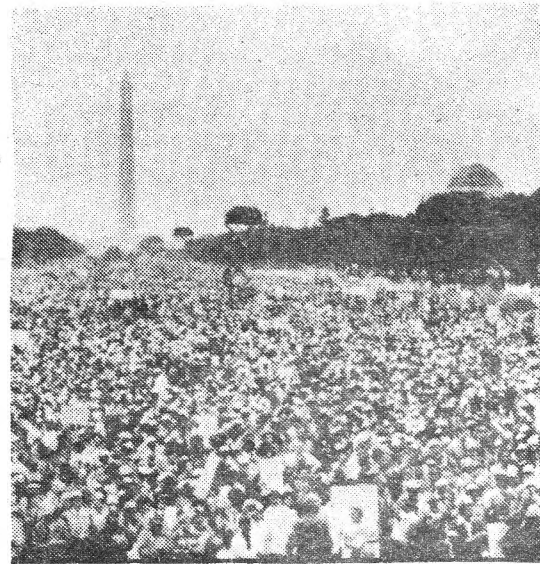
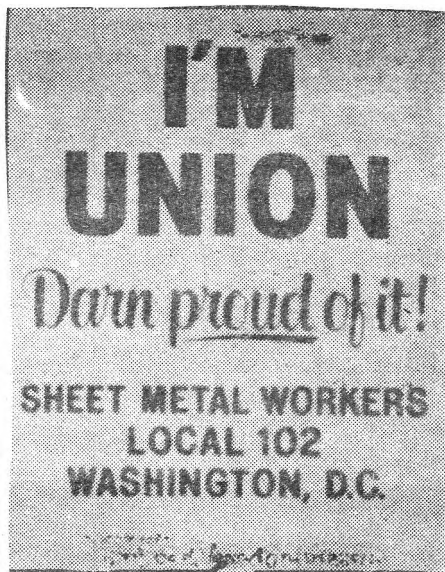
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...A Force to be

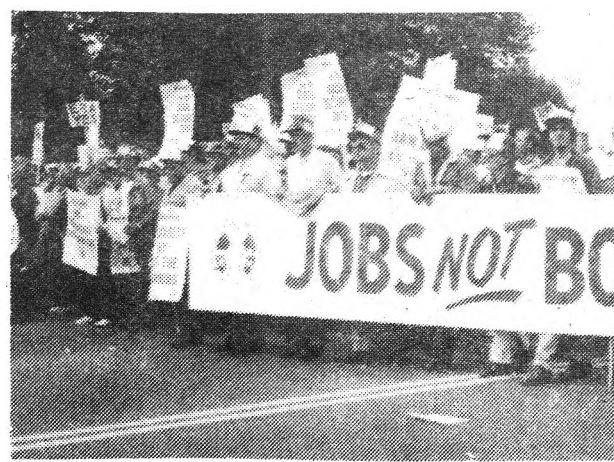
September 19th, Solidarity Day, marked the biggest demonstration in this nation's history. Over 400,000 strong, the alliance of labor, civil rights groups, the women's movement, senior citizens, and community forces told Ronald Reagan what they thought of his policies and cutbacks. The following pictures and speech excerpts give some sense of the unity, power, and determination which were brought to bear on the 19th. Solidarity Day echoed the militant labor struggles of the 1930's and civil rights struggles of the 1960's, demonstrating that the people's movement is still alive and is, in fact, a force to be reckoned with.



Guardian photo by Jerzy Kowalski



Upwards of 400,000 gathered in Washington, D.C., September 19th



"We're here to deliver a message — a message saying, loud and clear, that we reject the kind of government Ronald Reagan is trying to give us — a government of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich..."

"This President tells us his economic program will bring prosperity for all. Under his programs, he says, America will be 'like a shining city on the hill.' Well, I've studied his blueprints for America, and in them I've seen his shining city on the hill. It's a city where workers toil in unsafe and unhealthy workplaces. It's a city where poor children can't have a decent hot lunch at school...I've seen his shining city on the hill and, brothers and sisters, we are here to say 'We won't live there!'"

— Douglas Fraser, President, UAW

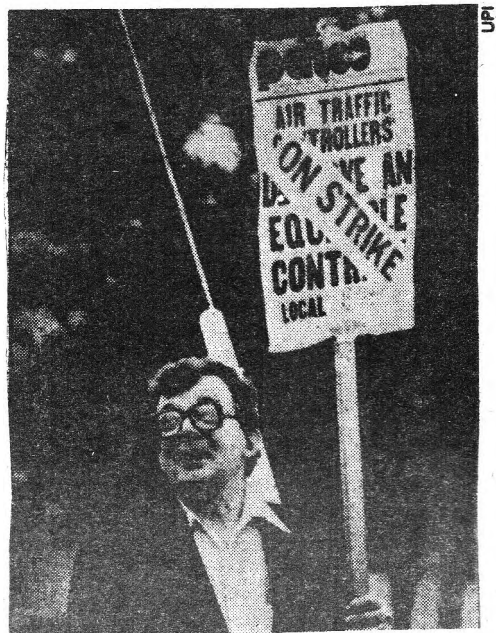


"It was Luther King and the March on Washington for civil rights..."

"In a nation where the step in our dream of..."

"Yes, we come to challenge the challenge of despair which faces all Americans..."

— Cor... Non-V...



"I have become embittered at an administration that cuts social programs in the name of 'waste' and refuses to cut defense spending. The strongest military in the world means nothing if people are starving in the streets..."

"I am angry at this administration...which sees public employees as less than full citizens...We all have needs that must be addressed — freedom from poverty, sickness, unsafe working conditions...equal rights for all and dignity for all..."

— Steve Wallaret, President, PATCO Local 291.



photos by Ken BeSaw

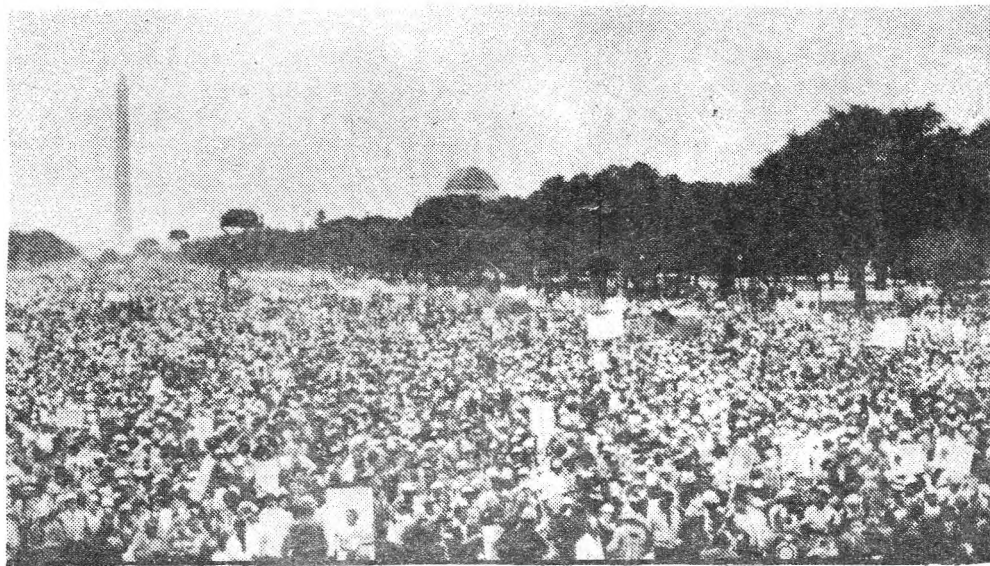
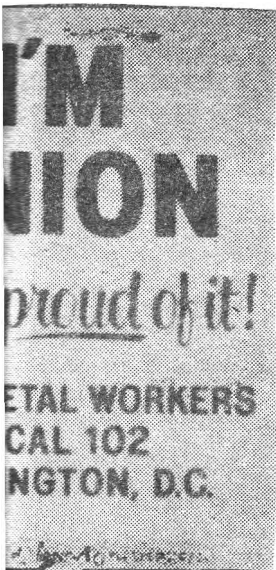
"Ronald Reagan and his millionaire Cabinet are stretching and tearing the social fabric of our nation by denying the poor basic subsistence, by taking jobs, training, and opportunity from working people; by denying the elderly the hope of financial security, by retreating on equal rights for women and minorities..."

"We do not want handouts, we want jobs...We do not choose to remain in the barrios and ghettos of America — we want an opportunity to have safe and decent housing...We do not again want to endure a maladministration of justice — we demand equal justice...We do not want separate and inferior educational facilities. We seek educational opportunity for all..."

— Tony Bonilla, President, League of United Latin American Citizens

...A Force to be Reckoned With

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Upwards of 400,000 gather for Solidarity Day in Washington, D.C., September 19th.

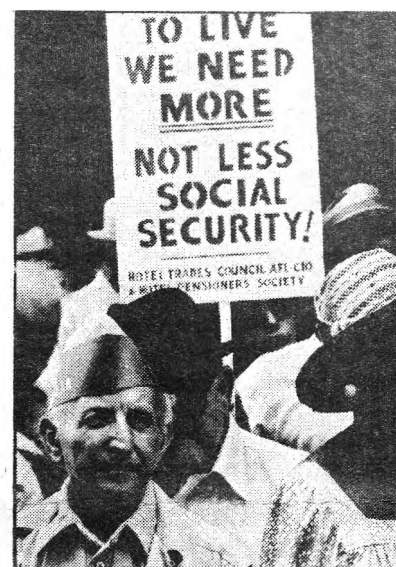


"It was little more than 18 years ago that Martin Luther King Jr. stood before a crowd much like this one and shook the conscience of America...The great March on Washington in 1963 was the largest civil rights demonstration in American history..."

"In a very real sense, Solidarity Day is a continuation of the great March on Washington, the latest step in our long journey toward fulfilling the American dream of freedom, justice, and equality for all..."

"Yes, we have come to protest. But we have also come to Washington with an affirmative vision, a challenge to the lawmakers of this great land...We challenge you to leave behind the politics of fear and despair and to embrace, instead, humane policies which foster decent living standards for all Americans."

— Coretta Scott King, President, MLK Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change



"We have come too far, struggled too much, and have too much to show for all that we have achieved for the past 20 years...It's time to get it swept away without a fight. And we've got to know how to fight."

"We are out front and we shall stay there until we have won and wait for better political weather to each other to return to our common sense and a new mandate for a humane and just society."

"More schoolhouses and less jails, more learning and less crime, more honest work and less crime, more justice and less greed, more justice and less revenge."

— Lane Kirkland,

"Ronald Reagan and his millionaire Cabinet are stretching and tearing the social fabric of our nation by denying the poor basic subsistence, by taking jobs, training, and opportunity from working people; by denying the elderly the hope of financial security, by retreating on equal rights for women and minorities..."

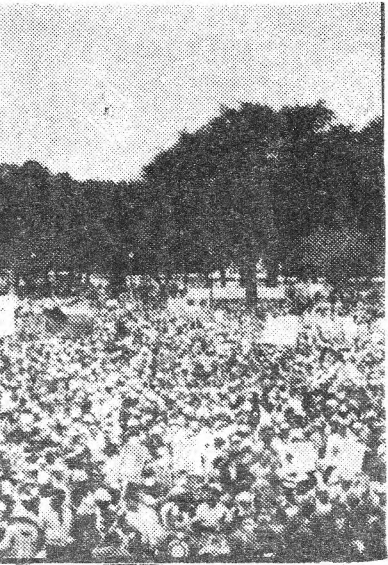
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— Tony Bonilla, President, League of United Latin American Citizens



photos by Ken Basaw

Reckoned With



Solidarity Day in

"Where over 51% of minority youth cannot find a job, there is a clear and present danger. Mr. President, a society which endures billions of dollars in military cost overruns, yet cannot afford to continue a hot lunch program for our nation's school children, is playing with social dynamite...A society that will flirt with apartheid and discrimination in South Africa can only weaken our moral authority — and that is a clear and present danger...A nation that equivocates over protecting the rights of Blacks and minorities constitutes a clear and present danger..."

"We have come to fight those who will turn the clock back on the civil rights decisions of 1954 and the affirmative action of the 1960's...To those who seek to turn the clock back, we're going on anyhow. We are the people. We have come to raise our voices. We are united...We are not afraid. We are not going to turn back. We are not going to let anybody make us move back..."

— Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director, NAACP



Postal Workers slam cuts



More than 18 years ago that Martin Luther King Jr. stood before a crowd much like this in Washington in 1963 was the largest civil rights demonstration in American history...

In the same real sense, Solidarity Day is a continuation of the great March on Washington, the latest step in our journey toward fulfilling the American dream of freedom, justice, and equality for all..."

We have come to protest. But we have also come to Washington with an affirmative vision, a vision that we, the lawmakers of this great land...We do not want to leave behind the politics of fear and to embrace, instead, humane policies that will raise the standard of living for all Americans.

— Martin Luther King, President, MLK Jr. Center for Social Change



George Cohen

"We have come too far, struggled too long, sacrificed too much, and have too much left to do, to allow all that we have achieved for the good of all to be swept away without a fight. And we have not forgotten how to fight."

"We are out front and we shall not fall back to hide and wait for better political weather...Let us all pledge to each other to return to our communities and to build a new mandate for a humane and just America."

"More schoolhouses and less jails, more books and less arsenals, more learning and less vice, more constant work and less crime, more leisure and less greed, more justice and less revenge."

— Lane Kirkland, President, AFL-CIO



Guardianphoto by Jerzy Kowalski

"Our backs are against the wall. Everything we have fought for, for so long, is at risk."

"I'm particularly aware of the risk. The ERA, which provides equal justice for us, has just nine and one half months left for ratification. The bottom line of the ERA is money and political power."

"Let us not fool ourselves who the real opposition is. Some profit from denying women their rights, just as they profit from denying trade unionists, Black and ethnic minorities their rights."

— Eleanor Smeal, President, NOW



October 1st - A Day of Infamy

On October 1st, the new Reagan budget went into effect, a budget that its supporters claim marks the first step into a new era of prosperity for all. For some, this new economic program will mean new riches — for those who make over \$200,000 a year, for those who invest heavily in stocks and bonds, for those who own factories and can thus take advantage of depreciation allowances and investment credits, for those who deal in the production of military hardware. Yes, for this handful, there was plenty of reason to rejoice on October 1st.

But for the rest of us it is another story. All working people can expect to be hurt, in one way or another, by the range of cutbacks that Reagan and his millionaire buddies have put over. But particularly hard hit will be the poor, both those working and those unemployed, a disproportionate number of whom are minorities.

To grasp the impact of the Reagan

budget cuts, let's take a hypothetical case. Jane Doe is a single parent with three children, living in Philadelphia. She works at a job that pays slightly more than the minimum wage. In a four-week month, Jane earns \$536 before taxes. Until now, she qualified for an additional \$364 a month in Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC). She also qualified for Medicaid, the program under which the state paid for most of her and her family's medical expenses. She received \$29 a month in food stamps. She got an energy assistance grant, day care services, and free school lunches for her children. With these various federally funded programs, Jane Doe was not able to live well, but she was able to provide clothing, food, and shelter for herself and her family.

Now, Jane Doe will lose her \$364 AFDC grant and her \$29 a month in food stamps. She will no longer qualify for Medicaid. Her energy assistance grant will be sharply reduced. She will

probably lose her day care services, and school lunches will now cost her a dollar per meal. Faced with her income being slashed by over 40% and a dramatic rise in the cost of necessities — food, medical care, and day care — Jane Doe will be hard pressed to survive. Ironically, she and thousands more like her may be forced to quit their jobs in order to maintain eligibility for essential services.

If Jane Doe happened to be working for CETA, she would be out of a job, since all CETA positions are to be eliminated. If Jane Doe lives in public housing, she can expect a rent increase. Rents previously based on 25% of the tenant's income will now increase to 30% by 1986. About one-third of the Section 8 units, where tenants receive a rent subsidy, will be eliminated.

And, if Jane Doe happened to be Black, she would more likely have been unemployed already. And if she



Look at it this way—your glass is half full.

had a job, she'd be much more likely to be laid off, because of lack of affirmative action protection in layoffs. And, she would be half as likely to find a job, because of cutbacks in affirmative action and other job training programs.

Independent Politics Makes Gains in New Bedford

by Danny Gilburg

Independent politics in New Bedford got a boost recently, with a strong showing in the city primaries by newcomer Viola Pina, for Ward 4 City Councillor, and incumbent Margery "Ruby" Dottin, for School Committee. In addition, the participation of some 350 area people in Solidarity Day, in Washington, D.C., on September 19th shows the potential for mass-based political action in New Bedford.

Viola Pina, a Black woman with a background of community activism, won 27 percent of the vote in the Ward 4 councillor's race. Her emergence as a serious candidate for City Council is significant, both for her progressive politics and in view of the total lack of Black representation on the City Council. In a city made up of 15-20% Blacks, none of the eleven city councillors are Black. Blacks running for the five councillor-at-large positions have been held back by an electorate that is mainly white. And Blacks running for ward councillor have been handicapped by gerrymandering. For example, in Ward 4, Black political power is diluted by combining mainly Black and racially mixed working class neighborhoods in the West End with large sections composed primarily of well-to-do white business people and professionals. In the past, Black political candidates, such as Donald Gomes, have run repeated campaigns in Ward 4, only to be defeated by heavy percentages in the well-to-do white neighborhoods.

PROGRESSIVE PROGRAM

Pina's strong showing is the result of her progressive program, which is in the interests of all poor and working people, Black and white, in the ward. Unlike many candidates, who campaign mainly on personalities, qualifications, and vague promises, Pina has taken a clear stand on important issues. In her campaign literature, she promises to:

- "work to see that the majority of Community Development monies go to people who need federal loans to revitalize their homes and develop full utilization of parks and schools so that youth are involved in constructive programs;"
- "work to organize the people power to keep and support day care programs;"
- "work to stop redlining in parts of our community;"
- "work against any unjust in-

creases by Commonwealth Gas and Electric;"

— "work to insure that tenants of housing developments have a strong role in making decisions that affect them. This includes having a tenant on the Housing Authority;"

— "support the struggles of all workers."

She also points to her involvement in recent community struggles, such as fighting the closing of St. Luke's health clinics, opposing Proposition 2½, and fighting for equality in the judicial system, regardless of race or economic background.

While Pina's campaign speaks to many of the vital issues facing the city, some other issues also need to be emphasized. For example, the need to fight racial discrimination through such measures as affirmative action in city hiring, promotions and layoffs, and promoting anti-racist education in the schools, should be raised. The need to use the power of the City Council to rally popular support and lobby in Boston and Washington for rescinding the cuts in social programs also requires attention.

Pina is running a highly visible campaign and is backed by an organization with substantial roots in the Black community.

DOTTIN OPPOSES CUTS

Ruby Dottin's campaign for School Committee is also significant. Dottin — a Black woman with a background in education and civil rights struggles — was originally brought onto the School Committee after being nominated by the city's Black community, in a series of well attended meetings. She has distinguished herself on the School Committee by her support for the teachers and her opposition to cuts in education. In the last year, she opposed the proposed shut-down of three schools, layoffs of teachers, and cutbacks in special education programs.

While she has a progressive voting record, Dottin's campaign suffers from not running on a concrete program. In addition, she has not used her position as Committeewoman to be a strong, public voice around educational issues.

In addition to Pina and Dottin, a third independent, progressive Black candidate ran for office in the pri-

maries. Greg Williams, a long-time activist and veteran of previous campaigns for city councillor, ran for Mayor, winning 6-7% of the vote. Williams' program took progressive stands on the use of Community Development money for housing rather than downtown and waterfront development; opposition to utility company rate hikes; provision of quality education and health care services to the people; and so on.

There is far more support for Williams' program than his primary showing reflects. This is because of Williams' failure to run a more politically significant campaign, by building a broad-based campaign organization rooted among the people and by running a more visible campaign.

The Pina and Dottin campaigns represent a step forward in building an independent political movement in New Bedford. They are concerned with the

issues, not their own personal political careers or vested interests. And they stand independent of the Republican and Democratic parties, which have increasingly shown their loyalty to the needs of big business, rather than the people.

Both parties supported major social spending cuts this year, both nationally and in Massachusetts. What's needed is to build a people's movement — and ultimately a People's Party — independent of the two parties, based on the active involvement of unions, community and civil rights groups, and other people's movements. Supporting and building the independent progressive campaigns, such as those of Viola Pina and Ruby Dottin, will help further this goal. All progressive people are particularly encouraged to put energy into the Pina campaign in the short time before the final election.

Racism in the NB Media

(Continued from page 2)

the letters contain "inaccuracies" — meaning they conflict with the *Standard Times'* version of the story.

The *Standard Times* and WBSM are protecting their friends in city government from some of its sharpest critics. Like the rest of the U.S. media, they share and protect the interests of the

capitalist class. Jack Custodio, "Third World News," and Everett Hoagland do not only voice the interests of minorities; they speak against injustices toward all working people. The media — like Reagan and Co. — are promoting racism to divide the working class and separate it from its strongest allies.

Boston Schools

(Continued from page 4)

lent basis for building more unity. But, once it realized that support for affirmative action was part of the struggle for quality education, the BTU refused to participate in the coalition.

The union's failure to support the struggle against racism has been key in weakening the fight for quality education in Boston. As a result, the city administration has won this past round. However, the battle isn't over yet: with more cuts from Reagan and another year of Proposition 2½ cuts,

the schools are sure to be a continuing focus of attack.

The fightback must be built now. A city-wide organization of parent activists needs to be built, as well as a coalition between the teachers union and the community. The latter can only happen if the BTU reverses its present position and supports equality for all teachers. If they do so, a strong, united movement can be built that can stop the attack on public education in its tracks.



Unity Party in NYC

Barbaro Opposes Koch for Mayor

by Ron Whitehorne

New Yorkers will have a choice on November 4th, when the city elects its mayor. Incumbent Ed Koch has both the Democratic and Republican nominations — a fitting comment on the differences between the two major parties. But Frank Barbaro, an assemblyman from Brooklyn running with broad support from organized labor and minorities, will be on the ballot as the candidate of the newly formed Unity Party.

Koch has presided over the continued decline of New York City, as services, particularly in minority neighborhoods, have been cut back to satisfy the demands of the banks for fiscal austerity (see box). Yet, Koch has managed to escape responsibility for this situation, in the minds of many New Yorkers. The former silk-stocking liberal has turned to racist demagoguery, scapegoating Blacks and Hispanics for the city's problems. As the darling of the New York media, Koch has fashioned an image as a "no-nonsense" guy, doing the best he can. "Alibi Ed," as his opponents style him, has tried to shift responsibility for every problem to every other agency except City Hall — be it Washington, Albany, or City Council.

Even though Koch won the recent primary handily, the present campaign has seen the carefully fashioned image of a popular and invincible mayor, in the tradition of Fiorello LaGuardia, begin to unravel. The aggressive, populist challenge of Frank Barbaro, first in the Democratic primary, now as an independent, is effectively exposing Koch as the local equivalent of Ronald Reagan.

BROAD COALITION SUPPORTS BARBARO

In an election that was delayed for almost two weeks because of the city's failure to observe the Voting Rights Act in redistricting, Barbaro garnered 38% of the vote. Koch was denied the 60% margin he had predicted he would gain. Barbaro made a respectable showing in working class neighborhoods, in all five boroughs. He overwhelmed Koch in the Black neighborhoods by a 2-to-1 margin. A high Black voter turnout for Barbaro, and for Black candidate David Dinkins,

who ran against Koch-backed Andrew Stein for Manhattan Borough President, was a strong expression of rejection of Koch and his racist policies.

Barbaro's campaign suffered from a near blackout by the media. In addition, Koch outspent Barbaro by better than 13 to 1. Given this, his showing was counted as a victory by his supporters. Barbaro's campaign has also become the vehicle for an important process of realignment in New York politics — the reconstruction of a progressive coalition of labor, minorities, and the disenfranchised. This, even more than the immediate results of the campaign, is an important political development.

Barbaro is a former longshoreman who led a rank and file movement, on the New York docks, for union democracy. As a longtime assemblyman from Brooklyn, Barbaro has an impressive record of fighting for popular interests and against the monopolies. Unlike many other Reform Democrats, who have rolled over and played dead for Koch, Barbaro has been committed to waging a consistent fight against the Mayor and his policies.

KOCH CUTBACKS ATTACKED

The Barbaro campaign has been a forthrightly populist effort that has sought to brand Koch as the instrument of big money. Barbaro has attacked Koch's program of cutbacks, giveaways to big business, and racist neglect of the city's Black and Puerto Rican population. Barbaro has called for expansion of vital city services, consumer and minority representation at all levels of government, affirmative action in government construction, and shifting more of the burden for the cost of government from the working people to the banks and corporations.

Barbaro has actively backed the Harlem community's fight against the closing of Sydenham Hospital, has introduced and fought for a range of housing and tenant legislation, and fought successfully to get the State Pension Fund to pull out of South Africa and J.P. Stevens, in favor of investing in home mortgages. Barbaro has been a consistent supporter of women's rights and is committed to



New York mayoral candidate Frank Barbaro in September primary.

signing a gay rights bill promised, but then abandoned, by Ed Koch. Barbaro is also a supporter of self-determination for Puerto Rico and the recent boycott of the South African Rugby Team.

The Barbaro campaign has won the support of most of New York's unions. He was endorsed by the New York Central Labor Council, as well as dozens of individual unions. The Communications Workers, in announcing their support, stated a common sentiment among trade unionists: "We deny that Ed Koch has any greater a mandate to govern for the few of New York than Ronald Reagan has to govern in the interests of the nation's upper class." In addition, Barbaro has won broad backing from the Black and Hispanic movements, grass roots community groups, and virtually the entire spectrum of the progressive community.

The question now is how much of this support will carry over past the Democratic primary and into an independent campaign. Most predict that on the basis of Barbaro's showing, he will be able to maintain the breadth of his support. At the founding of the Unity Party in early September, before the primary, John Hudson of the Labor

Committee for Barbaro said: "If Barbaro makes a good showing in September, virtually all labor supporters will transfer their support to the Unity Party and maintain labor support through November."

This would mark a major step toward political independence on the part of the city's unions. In the 1940's, New York had a strong labor party, the American Labor Party (ALP). In the last years of that decade, as part of the drive by right-wingers to eliminate left and communist influence in the unions, the ALP was replaced by the Liberal Party, which, far from being a real independent vehicle, has become a faint echo of the Democrats, or even a spoiler for Republicans. Liberal capitulation to Koch and his program has alienated important sectors of labor and propelled them toward an independent stand.

Barbaro personally, as well as the majority of his key supporters, are committed to reforming the Democratic Party, rather than building a new party. One of his campaign themes during the primary was that Koch was not a "real" Democrat. Nevertheless, Barbaro and those around him have been forced to step outside the two-party straitjacket, and that is all to the good.

GRASS-ROOTS EFFORT NEEDED

A major weakness of the Barbaro campaign — and with it, the Unity Party — is the absence of any grass-roots structure. This is a reflection of the Barbaro forces' ambiguous attitude toward an independent campaign. Committed as they are to a Reform Democratic strategy, building a viable independent organization makes no sense. Yet, in the absence of such an organization, it will be difficult for Barbaro to contend effectively with Koch. The initiative and active involvement of grass-roots activists is the only real counter Barbaro can pose to the monied organization of Koch and the two parties.

The Unity Party is also fielding a slate of Council candidates, including incumbents Gilberto Gerena-Valentin and Ruth Messinger, South Bronx activist Jose Rivera, and Queens' Aaron Weiss. While beating Koch in November is a long shot, the Barbaro campaign and the Unity Party mark a major step forward in forging a united fightback against Kochism and Reaganism, as well as movement toward an independent alternative to the two capitalist parties.

New York: "Cutback City"

Under Mayor Ed Koch over the past three years, New York, in order to appease the bankers who have bled the city for years, has been steadily and systematically reducing city services. With the decline of services comes the decline in the quality of life, particularly for poor and minority residents. With Ronald Reagan in the saddle, New York today is a picture of the future of the nation's cities. Some of the results of the Koch budget axe are as follows:

SUBWAYS

Breakdowns have doubled since 1977. One out of every five trains runs "significantly" behind schedule. Fires on subway tracks are up by 40% — to 5200 last year. 30% of the doors on subway cars do not work; maps are missing in 70% of the cars; and, 17% of the cars are dark or dimly lit.

SCHOOLS

They are an alleged success story for the Koch administration. But enrollment is down by 13.8% over the last decade, largely because of the continued flight to private schools on the part of the middle class. According to a

professor of education, "The city's schools leave children lagging far behind that of private school students in the city, and of all other school children in the state."

BUILDING CODES

Cutbacks in building inspection have meant that housing is less safe than ever. Code enforcement violations are way down because fewer inspections are made. Meanwhile, landlords are having a field-day, as the courts are dismissing more and more violations — up 20% in the last year.

HOUSING

Construction of residential housing in New York declined by 46%, last year. Meanwhile, 30,000 units were abandoned, and 15,900 rental apartments were converted into condos. Poor and middle income New Yorkers alike are feeling the crunch.

HOSPITALS

Harlem's 119-bed Sydenham Hospital was closed in November of last year and the two clinics promised to replace it have not been opened. A third of

the city's ambulances are out of operation, and response time for emergency calls is six minutes more than the national average.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Commission on Human Rights has the biggest backlog in its history, with only 11 workers processing complaints. It takes more than ten months for nearly half the complaints to be settled. The number of complaints for bias is at an all-time high — 2,948 cases in the first four months of this year.

WELFARE

900,000 welfare recipients have not received any increase in the size of their grants since 1974. The \$258 grant for a family of four, established in that year, is worth \$129 today because of inflation. 600,000 of the recipients are children.

PARKS

In New York's 572 parks and 900 playgrounds, fewer than half the drinking fountains work and one-third of the "comfort stations" are classified as unusable.

Angola Under So. African Gun

In late August, South Africa invaded Angola, an independent socialist country in southern Africa. Since liberating itself from Portuguese colonial domination in 1976, the Angolan people have been continuously subjected to incursions into their country by the South African army. But the recent invasion, with South African troops penetrating 150 miles into Angola, is the most serious threat to Angolan sovereignty since 1976. And South Africa's escalated aggression is a result of the increasingly open support to the apartheid regime by the Reagan administration.

South Africa claims that they are entering Angola only to follow SWAPO (South West African People's Organization), which they claim is a terrorist invader into Namibia. SWAPO, which is recognized by the United Nations as the only true representative of the Namibian people, is fighting to liberate Namibia from South Africa, which has occupied it since shortly after World War I.

In Namibia, SWAPO has been leading the struggle for liberation since 1960 and currently controls much of northern Namibia. It has mass support both in the rural areas, where along with carrying out the armed struggle, it provides medical and other services to the rural communities, and in the towns and cities, where it has a long history in the labor movement.

Through the United Nations, SWAPO is trying to negotiate a peaceful settlement to bring an end to the 20-year war in Namibia. The South African government knows that in any fair, UN-monitored elections, SWAPO would win hands down, so they are trying to arrange a "settlement" that would by-pass this process and establish the white Democratic Turnhalle Alliance Party as the head of an "independent" Namibia. To accomplish this, South Africa is devoting enormous military resources to crush SWAPO.

It is clear, however, that South Africa is not only after SWAPO, but also aims to destabilize Angola. The South African Army (SADF) has attacked Angolan towns and villages, killing thousands of Angolan citizens; destroying radar and bridges; and disrupted important transport routes.

In the most recent invasion, the SADF has occupied much of southern Angola. While Angolan resistance is strong, they have not been able to push back the invasion, since South Africa has significantly more sophisticated air weaponry (much of it American-made).

South Africa undoubtedly feels that Angola is a threat. It is in the process of building a non-racist, socialist society benefitting, and supported by, the vast majority of Angolans. It provides an inspiration to the oppressed peoples of South Africa and Namibia, both struggling against white South African racist rule. It is a staunch supporter of SWAPO and of the African National Congress (ANC), a leading liberation movement in South Africa, providing them with refugee camps and military and political bases from which to carry out the struggle for the liberation of their people. The South African government aims to establish a buffer zone between socialist Angola and Namibia, controlled by the counter-revolutionary and pro-South African Angolan organization, UNITA.

But for all its efforts, the South African government is fighting a losing battle. With the liberation of Mozambique, in 1975, and Angola, in 1976, from Portuguese colonialism and of Zimbabwe, in 1980, from white domination, and with the ever-intensifying struggle for liberation in South Africa and Namibia, the apartheid system is slowly being backed into a corner. But like all cornered rats, it is putting up a vicious fight — hence, its invasion of Angola.

U.S. MOVES CLOSER TO MILITARY INTERVENTION

Under the Reagan administration, the U.S. government has come out in open support for this bankrupt and doomed system. The U.S. was the only government to vote against, and veto, the UN Security Council resolution condemning the invasion. Early in his term, Reagan said: "Can we abandon a country that has stood by us in every war we have fought, a country that, strategically, is essential to the free world and its production of minerals? [emphasis added]" This puts U.S. policy toward South Africa in a nutshell.

So. African Rugby Team Run Out of U.S.

The biggest U.S. anti-apartheid protests in years greeted the recent U.S. tour by South Africa's national rugby team, the Springboks. The Springboks were invited to the U.S. by the Eastern Rugby Union, after the ERU received a \$25,000 "contribution" from a South African government agent and ERU president Tom Selfridge accepted a \$50,000 secret "contribution" from the South African Rugby Board. The clear intention of the tour, approved by the U.S. State Department, was to promote apartheid in the U.S. — but the plan backfired.

Everywhere they went, the Springboks were met with demonstrations, mostly organized by the broad-based Stop Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART) coalition. SART forced cancellation of games in New York City, Rochester, New York, and Chicago. Protests also forced the teams to play all but one game in total secrecy. For instance,

a game was held September 25th, on a farmer's abandoned polo field, in Glenville, N.Y. The one public game, in Albany, N.Y., was met by 3000 protesters.

Also, the ERU headquarters, in Schenectady, NY, was bombed on September 21st. And just before the September 25th game, a bomb tore through the headquarters of the Evansville, Indiana Rugby Club, which had voted to play the Springboks but were stopped by protesters.

In summing up the Springbok's U.S. tour, SART's Richard Lapchick said, "The anti-apartheid message was spread to millions of Americans. The fact that tens of thousands of people were ready to protest wherever they played is testimony to the American people's rejection of the Reagan administration's reactionary South Africa policy."



Angolan women demonstrate against apartheid.

To carry out this policy, the U.S. is prepared to risk its diplomatic relations with the rest of Africa and with many other parts of the world. It is supportive of South Africa's efforts to by-pass a UN resolution to the Namibian struggle. And, in State Department documents, Chester Crocker (Assistant Secretary of State) refers to SWAPO as "terrorists" — while African countries and most other nations internationally recognize SWAPO as the legitimate liberation movement in Namibia and have called for a settlement through the UN. The U.S. has vetoed all efforts to put pressure on South Africa by imposing an international trade boycott and is threatening to call for lifting the arms embargo against South Africa and to make it legal for U.S. companies to sell arms to South Africa.

Currently, the U.S. has military attaches in South Africa and, earlier this year, the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Jeanne Kirkpatrick, entertained two South African military officials. The administration moved a step closer to direct military intervention, in late September, when the Senate voted to repeal the Clark Amendment. Passed in 1976, the Clark Amendment prohibits U.S. military or paramilitary aid to any forces in Angola without Congressional approval. It has been a steady target of the Reagan administration, because its repeal would enable them to give direct military assistance to the South African-backed guerrilla group, UNITA, thereby undermining Angolan stability and Namibian independence.

To go into effect, the repeal must still be voted on in the House. But passage in the Senate was a significant victory for Reagan, a vote of approval for his South Africa policy.

OPPOSE U.S. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR SOUTH AFRICA

While the Reagan administration is trying to convince us daily that U.S. working people's interests lie in supporting apartheid South Africa, the opposite is true. The only ones who get anything out of U.S. support for South Africa are the large corporations — Ford, Exxon, Firestone, Standard Oil, Citibank, etc. — who have large investments in South Africa and who make super-profits from the cheap labor enforced by the apartheid system. Workers in the U.S. lose all the way!

First, low wages, a result of severe repression of the Black workers in South Africa, lead companies to invest there, rather than here, exporting jobs abroad. In Massachusetts alone, 30 companies have either runaway to

South Africa, shutting down operations here, or have expanded in South Africa rather than here. Goodyear, Gillette, General Motors, Ford, 3-M, and many others are major investors in South Africa. The extra profits these companies make in South Africa enable them to force take-it-or-leave-it contracts down American workers' throats, beating back the labor movement by threatening to move production.

As companies have left the state, they have eroded the tax base, letting the burden of property taxes fall more heavily on the homeowners. Many taxpayers, fed up with this burden, were convinced to vote for Proposition 2½ last November. They got stampeded into tax cuts that are hurting the working class primarily, with minorities getting hit the hardest as needed jobs and services are being cut back.

U.S. banks, such as the First National Bank of Boston, loan millions of dollars to South Africa to support apartheid, making almost double the profit they would elsewhere. Meanwhile, these same banks restrict credit for home mortgages in working class and minority neighborhoods.

STOP U.S. AID TO APARTHEID

Finally, with the U.S. government supporting wars in El Salvador and Angola, military spending soars. The military budget is the largest, proportionately and in absolute terms, since the end of the Vietnam War. Reagan tells us it has to be, because of the "Soviet threat" — including, in his view, Angola. As well as diverting money from providing decent housing, education, jobs and social services, the size of the military budget — and Reagan's stated intentions — suggest that we may go to war at any time.

In 1976, President Ford threatened to send troops to Angola and was only prevented by the U.S. people's close memory of Vietnam and resistance to more war. Reagan has shown himself less sensitive to the demands of the U.S. people, so he may decide to enter the war, regardless. Only if we oppose the Reagan administration's support for South Africa, and if we support the struggles of the Black people in Angola, Namibia, and South Africa, can we resist Reagan's drive towards war and his attack on our lives.

In order to build a strong multinational movement against apartheid in this country, we must first address racism, which stands as the primary obstacle to forging such a movement.

Ireland, H-Block/Armagh Struggle

(One of our readers in Boston recently visited Ireland and came back with this report. For background on the prisoners' struggle, see The Organizer, June 1981.)

From the housing projects of Dublin to the narrow streets of rural towns like Gort, in County Galway, you see the slogans painted everywhere: "Remember H-Block!" "Brits Out!" Posters of Maggie Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, cover many a lamp-post, with the heading, "Wanted: For Murder and Torture of Irish Prisoners." And black-edged portraits of hunger strikers Bobby Sands, Frankie Hughes, Patsy O'Hara, and seven more young Irish men remind you who are the latest victims of Britain's centuries-old domination of Ireland.

The deaths have piled up over the summer: No. 8, Kieran Doherty, 25 years old, August 4; No. 9, Thomas McElwee, 23 years old, August 8; No. 10, Michael Devine, 27 years old, August 20. And still Mrs. Thatcher has refused to budge on the H-Block and Armagh prisoners' five demands:

- 1) The right to wear their own clothes;
- 2) The right to refuse to do prison work;
- 3) Freedom of association among political prisoners;
- 4) The right to organize recreational facilities, to have one weekly visit, one letter in and out per week, and to receive one parcel per week;
- 5) The right to time off their sentences for good behavior.

But while Thatcher is determined to treat the Irish freedom fighters as common criminals, refusing even to accord them the political "Special Category Status" (which is much like the 5 Demands) that they held until 1976, the nationalist Irish have shown that their determination is equal to hers.

On the very day that Mickey Devine slipped into death, the people in the Northern Irish constituency of Fermanagh and South Tyrone went to the polls in a special election to replace their late M.P. Bobby Sands. They elected none other than Sands' campaign manager, Owen Carron, on a "Support H-Block" ticket. Despite a blitz of negative propaganda from the big British media and their allies in the Irish and U.S. press, Carron gathered a larger margin of victory than did prisoner Bobby Sands last April. The voters of the border region showed once again what the slogans and posters on walls all over Ireland have shown. In the words of a Dublin school teacher: "This issue [H-Block] is the biggest Republican issue since the twenties." Why?

HUMANITARIAN SIDE

Obviously, there's the humanitarian side of the issue. The hunger strikers



Escorted by masked Irish nationalists, Tom McIlwee's eight sisters carry his coffin from the family home to church. McIlwee was the 9th prisoner to starve to death at Maze Prison.

have been willing to undergo a terrible death in order not to be treated as common criminals. The Boston *Globe* (Friday, August 2, 1981) reported what they face:

"Any idea that starvation leads to a blissful, euphoric death is nonsense. By the time death comes, starving people are blind, deaf, speechless, and in a coma, but they are not peaceful — until those last few hours. Their limbs are bloated, their abdomens swollen. Otherwise, they are dry as tough, old parchment, no longer able to muster enough fluid even to generate tears. They can no longer cry. Their tongues are thick and bright red. They are cold through and through. Their skin is shrivelled and scaly; their hair loses its color and falls out. Their gums ulcerate and their teeth loosen. They suffer from constant bouts of nausea and diarrhea.

"'One of the horrible parts of starvation is that the victims are conscious until very close to the end,' according to Dr. Jerome Cassera, associate physician-in-chief at New England Medical Center... 'It's a long, slow, and dreadful process,' he says."

People all over Ireland, Britain and, indeed, the world have been touched by the courage of the hunger strikers and appalled that Margaret Thatcher has allowed the "long, slow and dreadful process" to continue without bending an inch. The 5 Demands seem so basic and simple that her refusal even to negotiate has called forth condemnation, on a human rights basis, from individuals, groups, and nations of many different political positions.

Mr. O'Leary, leader of the Irish Labor Party and Tanaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) in the conservative Fine Gael-led government of the Irish Republic, despite his sharp differences with the IRA, has called the British government "uncaring and unresponsive." The Gaelic Athletic Association,

Ireland's equivalent to the U.S. Amateur Athletic Union, has allowed numerous H-Block protests at half-time in the Gaelic football matches. Internationally, bodies as diverse as the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the Soviet government have condemned Thatcher's intransigence.

IRISH FREEDOM — MAIN ISSUE

But the determination of the nationalist prisoners and the British government's deaf ear to humanitarian appeals have brought forth and highlighted not just the immediate issue of whether Margaret Thatcher would rather let Irish nationalist prisoners die than let them wear their own clothes and associate together. The whole H-Block struggle has refocused Irish, British, and world attention on the underlying, and longstanding, political issues: The partition of Ireland by Britain, the systematic discrimination against Catholic Irish in the North, and the effect of both on Ireland's ability to be a free, economically developed country with jobs, schooling, and housing for all.

If you take a drive today around the southern 26 counties — the Republic of Ireland — you will see, especially in the west, numerous thatched cottages. You will see men and women raking hay by hand in half-acre plots bounded by stone walls. You will see donkey carts bringing milk down country lanes to the nearest creamery. All this is very picturesque in a movie, or for a tourist — but it means a tough life for many in the rural areas of Ireland.

When you get to the cities, Dublin and Cork, you see relatively few industries, and those you do see are almost all foreign-owned: British, American, Japanese. You will learn that many of these companies have only agreed to set up in Ireland on the condition that taxes be kept very low for them, thus keeping revenues low for the Irish government — hurting its ability to fund schooling, roads, public housing, and so on.

What all this adds up to, for the Irish farming or working class family, is that prospects for well-paying jobs and income are few. The young of Ireland continue to leave in droves for England, the United States, and elsewhere in search of a livelihood.

The Republic of Ireland is thus much like many a "Third World" country — over 40% rural, having little control over the little industry it has, and exporting its youth to work in other countries.

In the northern six counties, the British-controlled region, there is much more industry. In the 19th cen-

tury, as the Catholic Irish began to demand basic political rights and land reform, a majority of the Protestant Irish and British capitalists moved to the North, setting up large textile industries and shipbuilding in Belfast and Derry. Over the years, they struck deals with bigoted and corrupt labor leaders among the Protestant Irish workers: Support us politically, they said, and we'll guarantee you jobs. Rather than uniting with their Catholic class brothers and sisters in struggling for all of Irish labor's interests, the Protestant workers chose to unite with their bosses. That unity has been the basis for resistance to a united Ireland, and for Protestant Irish workers' collusion in the discrimination against Catholic Irish in everything from jobs to political power.

Thus, while overall unemployment in Northern Ireland has reached 17% today, almost all those unemployed are Catholic Irish. In some Catholic areas of Belfast, almost 50% of the adults can't find jobs. Again, as in the South, many of the young are forced to leave Ireland to make a living.

CLASS CHARACTER

These conditions, North and South, are the factors that drive the nationalist Republican movement. And solutions to these conditions are posed by the hunger strikers. The vast majority of Irish farmers and workers would benefit from a united, democratic Ireland, one with an industrial as well as agricultural base, one with equality for all and not special privileges for a few.

But the great business owners benefit most from a divided Ireland, from an impoverished South and a divided working class in the North. In these conditions, labor is more easily exploited. So, maintenance of these conditions is the main factor driving Margaret Thatcher's big business Tory government, and her intransigence on the hunger strike.

The class nature of the conflict is easily illustrated by a quick look at who the hunger strikers and other nationalist prisoners are.

Bobby Sands, first of the prisoners to die, left school at age 15 and started as an apprentice coach builder, with the W.H. Alexander Company, when he was only 16. He joined the National Union of Vehicle Builders (NUVB) and worked 2½ years, until threatened at gunpoint to leave his job. His family had a similar experience, being forced to leave the mostly Protestant neighborhood of Rathcoole, where they had lived for 21 years, after a trash can was

Update: Hunger Strike Ends

The Irish nationalist prisoners ended their 216-day hunger strike, October 3rd. And four days later, the British government announced several reforms for the Irish nationalist prisoners. Most significant is that the prisoners will be allowed to wear their own clothes at all times. This represents a partial victory over the British. "The right of the prisoners to wear their clothes has been won by the deaths of ten H-Block martyrs," commented Gerry Adams, Irish nationalist leader.

The British also promised to "take steps" to increase job training and

education, and to provide restricted free-time association among the Irish prisoners. And, for prisoners agreeing to give up the protest, the British offer even more: more liberal mail and visitor privileges and restoration of one-half of time off for good behavior earned before the protest began (they still lose all "good time" earned during the protest).

These conditional reforms are aimed at squashing the prisoners' protest, which has brought international attention to the struggle for independence in Northern Ireland.

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Racism and the Decline of the OC

by Clay Newlin

The following is the first of a series of articles summing up the lessons of the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center's (OC) Campaign Against White Chauvinism. This article briefly sets forth our perspective on the source of the OC's near-collapse and the tasks that lie immediately ahead. In subsequent articles, we will elaborate on such controversial questions as the OC's position on the consciousness of white chauvinism, seeking out the most accommodationist, and culturing accommodation, the role of interracial relationships, and the history of the Communist Party U.S.A.'s internal campaigns against white chauvinism.

Reality has a way of shattering even the most sacred illusions. And it intrudes upon the fantasies not only of bourgeois society, but all too often those of communists as well.

The latest illusion to be punctured is the anti-revisionist movement's view that it, and it alone, was willing to rigorously confront and vigorously oppose all forms of racism in our society. Though we have seen numerous organizations, both in the mass movements and on the left, flounder as a result of their unwillingness to face racism, we were nonetheless sure that it would not happen to us. After all, our movement was historically nurtured by, and developed as a key outgrowth of, the great struggles for civil rights of the 1960's. Ours was a movement that was literally forged in the struggle against racism — or so we thought!

THE OC FALLS DOWN

But the near-collapse of the Organizing Committee for an Ideological Center (OC) exposes the hollowness of our claim to anti-racism. Barely fifteen months after initiating a campaign against white chauvinism in its ranks, the OC has been decimated. Its national leadership has been reduced from seven to just two members, functioning local bodies have declined from eighteen to six, and in excess of eight percent of the membership has resigned. In addition, the OC faces nearly universal opposition within the communist movement and is severely isolated on the left. Indeed, what was once widely regarded as the most promising revolutionary organization on the left is now largely held in contempt.

The breakdown of the OC illustrates graphically how far the current anti-revisionist movement will go to avoid facing the deep-seated white chauvinism in its ranks. Formerly, the forces that made up the OC had played the leading role in combatting opportunist views. The OC led the struggle to consolidate an anti-revisionist tendency around the view that it was the U.S. bourgeoisie and not the Soviets who constituted the main enemy of the world's peoples. OC forces also were in the forefront of the struggle for a centralized, movement-wide process which alone could yield principled unification of Marxist-Leninists. And finally, most OC members staunchly supported the view that a genuine party could be built only through fusion with the advanced elements from the working class and national movements.

But when faced with a protracted struggle against white chauvinism, the overwhelming majority of these same forces fell down. Having long thought

themselves to be virtually free of chauvinism or accommodation to it, they were unwilling to confront the real depths of racism in our movement. Instead of applying Marxism-Leninism to the problem, they attempted to cover the existing racism with opportunism.

Just how far the opponents of the campaign have gone in their turn towards opportunism is indicated by the fact that all now belittle the problem of racism in our movement. They will still grudgingly acknowledge that our movement remains overwhelmingly white despite the fact that national minority workers are the most open to communism. But they deny that this contradiction has anything to do with white chauvinism in our ranks.

Instead, they seek to rationalize the white composition of our movement by pointing to both our theoretical weaknesses and those in our mass practice. It is our lack of developed theory on racism and our weak practice in the anti-racist struggle, they argue, that has kept national minorities out. Of course, they ignore the fact that both the inadequacies of our theory and our practice are themselves an expression of the chauvinism in our movement.

Furthermore, in their attempts to counter the campaign, its opponents even go so far as to implicitly debase the struggle against all forms of opportunism. Asserting (correctly) that since no white communist is intentionally racist, they then proceed to argue (incorrectly) that racism in our movement is therefore unconscious. This view opens the door for whites to argue that we should not be held accountable for our chauvinist practice — after all, that practice is merely an unconscious reflex reaction to the material conditions of our racist society.

But even more significantly, to apply such thinking to the struggle against opportunism, in general, would be absolutely disastrous. For example, we would all agree that no communist is intentionally revisionist. But what Marxist-Leninist would argue that, therefore, revisionism is unconscious?

Perhaps the best demonstration of the degeneration of the campaign's opponents is their refusal to engage in a principled struggle over their differences. Opponents have consistently objected to putting forward their views in writing, consistently resisted struggling over these views with supporters of the campaign, and, in nine cases out of ten, refused even to meet with supporters.

So the majority of those who, in past years, led the communist movement's struggle against opportunism now advocate peace with white chauvinism. And even despite their majority status, they also refuse to engage in principled struggle with the few remaining supporters of the OC's campaign. White chauvinism's ability to shackle our movement needs no better testimony than this.

A MOVEMENT BASED ON OPPORTUNISM

Though testament to the power of white chauvinism, the OC debacle can also prove to be an advance. The minority supporting the campaign must refuse to give way to the opposition but confront squarely the harsh reality of white chauvinism among anti-



While Blacks have long been in the forefront of labor and community struggles, due to racism they have been largely absent from the party-building process.

revisionists.

The first requirement of such a confrontation is recognition that when it comes to white chauvinism, our movement has been constructed on a fundamentally opportunist basis. Rather than basing relations between whites and national minorities fundamentally on mutual respect and equality, multinational unity has been constructed on the basis of white chauvinism and capitulation to it.

Whites who come into the party-building movement have little or no genuine grasp of our own white chauvinism. Schooled by our society in the ideological tenets of a bourgeois liberal approach to the race question, we become self-satisfied "anti-racists" long before we are communists. We see ourselves as modern missionaries whose destiny it is to uplift the "downtrodden minority masses."

Thus, while many do have at least an elementary critique of racism in our society, racism tends to be viewed almost entirely as an institutional problem. And even to the minimal extent that it is regarded as an ideological weakness in the people's movement, it is always seen as "their" — the white workers'! — problem.

Sad to say, the anti-revisionist movement has not only fundamentally failed to challenge this situation, but in significant ways reinforced it. On the one hand, it has played up the role of the capitalist system's responsibility for racism and, on the other, been quite attentive to dispensing rhetoric about racism in the trade union movement — all the while extolling its own virtues as the future "vanguard" of the struggle against racism.

Placing these facts in the overall context of U.S. society, it should not be hard to understand why so many white communists quickly turn to advocating peace with white chauvinism. Any genuine campaign against white chauvinism in the movement faces a formidable opposition. It must oppose not only the white chauvinism so central to the maintenance of the bourgeoisie's political power, but also the entire history of racism within the people's, left, communist and anti-revisionist movements!

At first thought, one would expect (as we certainly did) that at least the national minorities in the movement would support the campaign. True, they only made up a small percentage of the membership, but it would nevertheless be difficult for whites to justify opposition when faced with solid support of the campaign by minority comrades.

Initially, minority comrades did gravitate towards support of the campaign. But the more we exposed the underlying racist paternalism characterizing the practice of whites, the more minority comrades tended to become first uneasy with, and then opposed to, the campaign.

It became more and more clear that we had missed an important dynamic of the relationship between white chauvinism and capitulation in our movement. As a result of the racist paternalism that had characterized both the ideology and the bulk of the practice of white communists, our movement has been the most selective in its recruitment of minorities. By and large, those minorities who viewed white condescension as respect were welcomed with open arms — or, perhaps, a pat on the head. But the minorities that rejected paternalism were kept out, usually under the guise that they were "nationalists" and "anti-white."

The above-described recruitment of the relatively more accommodationist-minded minorities has ensured white dominance of our movement in two important respects. First, those minorities most likely to challenge our paternalism (who for obvious reasons tend to predominate among the most politically conscious) are kept out of the movement.

Second, the "chosen few" become politically isolated and thus dependent on their white patrons. To be recruited into a movement dominated by paternalism demands that a minority comrade sacrifice the interest of their people in a consistent struggle against white chauvinism, in the name of becoming a "communist." And once that choice is made, the minority comrade becomes isolated from the pressure of the masses and thus dependent on the whites who dominate the communist movement.

A DEADLY ALLIANCE

The political compulsions of this alliance of paternalism and accommodation have proved to be deadly. The more the fundamental paternalism of whites has been challenged, the more the existing minorities have gravitated towards defense of their patrons. Threatened with exposure of the sacrifice of their people's interest, most of our minority comrades began to rationalize or otherwise downplay our racism.

As a result of this situation, white comrades have been able to front national minorities for their own objections to a campaign against white chauvinism. Calling in the debt of gratitude they feel minority comrades owe them for being allowed to enter the movement, they press their minority subordinates into service. It is for this reason that leading minority comrades who were never shown significant respect have suddenly become "recognized leaders" in the movement. And so we now see the OC's leading white critics scrambling to push the formerly-most-prominent minority leader to the forefront of opposition to the campaign.

It is this combination of racist paternalism and accommodationist-minded capitulation which proved to be the

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SNCC Re-evaluated: Racism in the Civil Rights Movement

by Michael Simmons

Marxist-Leninists have a responsibility to sum up history based on the most advanced understanding of the class struggle. The lessons learned from the OCIC's Campaign against Racism and Accommodation has necessitated a re-evaluation of, not just the communist movement, but all significant progressive movements. Clayborne Carson's new book, *In Struggle, SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960's*, provides a starting point for such a process in relation to one of the most important expressions of the modern Black Liberation Movement.

SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) was the most dynamic of the major civil rights organizations. Founded and led by Blacks, SNCC was in the vanguard of the militancy that characterized the Southern freedom movement. Growing from a campus-based organization that coordinated sit-ins and disseminated information, SNCC grew into an organization that at its peak had over 60 staff people and hundreds of volunteers working in communities throughout the South. It also developed a Northern support apparatus that had a presence in most major cities in this country.



Carson's presentation of SNCC's history, is the best to date, but it fails to target the fundamental contradiction in the organization — racism and accommodation. Instead, he chooses to see it as one group of Blacks who viewed SNCC through idealistic spiritual philosophies that transcended race, vs. another group who viewed the movement in terms of a Black movement that had race at its centerpiece. Rather than seeing the racism of the white members of SNCC in manipulating these two trends in SNCC, Carson sees the role of whites as basically that of passive observers reacting to these two trends. It should be noted that Carson's perspective on this coincides with other written accounts of SNCC, either by former members or observers of the organization.

Carson discusses SNCC in three phases. The first phase is the transition from a student-based organization to one of full-time organizers who lived in the communities in which they worked. The strategy was to break down racist barriers to public accommodations and voting by building local organizations. Although struggle emerged in SNCC from the beginning on the role of whites in this effort, the dominant trend was for SNCC to be fundamentally a Black organization.

Carson states that SNCC's initial efforts in Georgia and Mississippi were met with severe police repression

and minimum concrete success. He says that SNCC's initial response to this was to set up a public relations operation that was geared to the Northern white liberal community. But he fails to critique the basis of this decision, its political impact nor any political alternatives that SNCC could have chosen.

UNPRINCIPLED ALLIANCE WITH NORTHERN WHITE LIBERALS

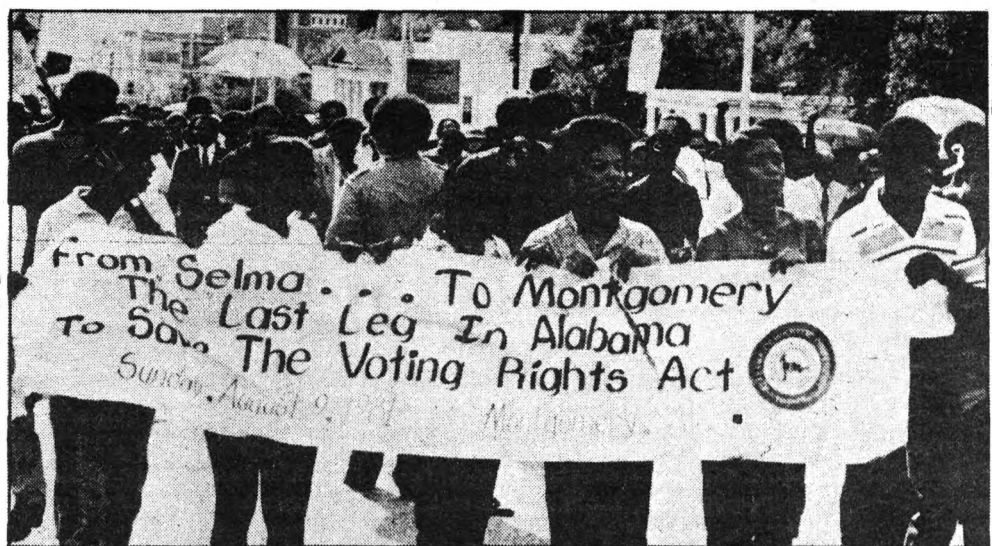
SNCC's response to racism was to be fatalistic toward the overt racism of Southern whites, while liquidating the racist paternalism of Northern whites. This led SNCC to develop a political strategy of an alliance with Northern white liberals, basically writing off any possibility of winning Southern whites to seeing the civil rights movement as being in their interest. SNCC allowed Northern white liberals to posture about their anti-racism at the expense of white Southerners. White SNCC workers were never consistently challenged to take up struggle in the white communities. Had there been a sustained, successful effort by SNCC to build a movement of Blacks and white Southerners, it would have proven to be more durable than relying on the vacillating liberals in the Democratic Party.

Initially, the political impact of SNCC's strategy was most obvious in the North. Carson fails to draw out any consequences to SNCC's Northern operation being run mainly by whites and for the liberal community. The clearest contradiction that was posed was that the most militant organization in the Southern movement was virtually unknown in the Black community in the North, until the advent of Black Power. During this period, there was never any attempt by the whites in the Northern offices to mobilize political support in the Black community for SNCC's work.

BLACK RECRUITS SCREENED BY WHITES

Another consequence was the recruitment of Northern Blacks. Many Blacks who joined SNCC through official SNCC channels had to be approved by whites. In Philadelphia, for example, when I wanted to become a member of SNCC, I had to go through a series of interviews with a white college teacher. I and other Black applicants had to explain to her why we wanted to join the Black civil rights movement! The questions were always focused on our commitment to working with white people and checking to see if we had any latent nationalist tendencies. Our views on organizing Black people and the problems facing the movement were either not asked or were ignored. In this context of seeking the most accommodationist Black people, those who did not show enough appreciation for the whites working in the civil rights movement were rejected. White people were also interviewed. However, similar attention was never paid to their racism. The assumption was that if they wanted to work in the civil rights movement, they couldn't be racist!

It is in SNCC's second phase where this perspective developed into a political strategy of an alliance with Northern white liberals. This led the organization to be constantly concerned with the views of their "allies" before making major political decisions. To consolidate the alliance, a Summer Project was developed that would bring 1,000 Northern white lib-



Some 3000 march through Montgomery, Ala., to support Voting Rights Act.

eral college students to work in Mississippi. The political rationale for this was that the only way to gain national attention about the conditions and repression of Blacks in Mississippi was for the bourgeoisie's sons and daughters to be faced with the same situation. This resulted in SNCC focusing its recruiting not on Southern Blacks, but on Northern whites. Black SNCC workers who opposed whites coming into Mississippi were put on the defensive to prove their anti-racism. They were challenged to "rise above race" and "not to segregate themselves." In this context, the arguments that whites tended to assume leadership roles and that their presence reinforced patterns of racial dependence were treated as narrow, subjective, and based on insecurity. Confrontations with the racism of the white volunteers were viewed as "racial outbursts" or "tirades." The underlying assumption was that accusations of racism were not based on the concrete reality of SNCC. In fact, Blacks' reaction to the racism of the whites in the movement were subjected to analysis by two psychiatrists.

OVERT RACISM OR BLACK "SUBJECTIVISM"?

On the other hand, the views of whites were never subjected to the same scrutiny. Carson quotes these views without any critical comment on the racism of their formulations. The fact that many Blacks felt that merely coming to Mississippi was not an inherently anti-racist stance and that people still had to prove their commitment to the struggle against racism was seen solely as hostility and Black nationalism. Carson allows statements like "I want to be your friend, you Black idiot" to be summed up as "unconscious prejudice." Many of the reactions of the whites to working under Black leadership during the summer were similarly racist. Carson consistently accommodates their racism by stating that "white civil rights workers became targets of Black frustrations." He quotes one white volunteer's assessment of a sharp struggle in the Jackson, Mississippi office as a "race riot." Needless to say, no psychological studies were made to speak to the basis of these formulations.

The social patterns of many SNCC workers changed as a result of the Summer Project. Prior to the Summer Project, the Black SNCC workers socialized with the local residents. Social activities was the one common ground to relate to people, regardless of their political perspective. However, during the Summer Project many Black civil rights workers began to socialize more with the white volunteers and a gap between SNCC and the

Black community began to develop in many projects. By beating back criticisms of racism of the white volunteers, many Black SNCC workers played the role of the overseer for the white volunteers. Criticism made by the community residents over the loose morality and hygiene of many of the volunteers were passed off as Blacks being "hung up on middle class values." Blacks who did not want to socialize in an interracial context and who opposed interracial relationships were ridiculed. In particular, Black women who opposed these social patterns were viewed as narrow, subjective, and jealous.

However, the predominant form of racism in SNCC was paternalism. Carson fails to bring this out perhaps because he, like most SNCC workers, viewed it as respect. White volunteers often ignored the leadership of Blacks and failed to make their views known. Many would attempt to exalt the least political Black person by projecting the view that being poor and oppressed made Blacks inherently profound. Rather than developing political relationships with Blacks were fundamentally personal. White who cultured this accommodation to their racism were seen as positive by most Blacks in SNCC.

The failure of SNCC to face squarely its acceptance of this racist paternalism led to the third phase of SNCC. This phase, though fundamentally positive, was undermined because of this failure. After the Summer Project, SNCC was seeking new directions and was critical of much of its past. Most significantly, the alliance of white liberals with the civil rights movement was called into question. However, because the strategy was not understood in terms of racism and accommodation to racism, the result was a one-sided reaction to racism.

Carson approaches this in a chapter called "Racial Separatism," which focuses on the Atlanta Project of SNCC. The Atlanta Project was developed to mobilize Blacks to support Julian Bond, who had lost his seat in the Georgia Legislature because of his opposition to the Vietnam War. Soon after its inception, based on trying to organize in Atlanta, the Project members began to make a critique of SNCC's historic strategy of alliance with Northern white liberals. The Project's position was that the presence of whites compromised the struggle for a positive racial identity for Black people. They felt that for SNCC to be significant in the struggle for Black liberation, it should be a Black organization and that whites should leave the organization. The Atlanta Project was

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SNCC



Black women have played a leading role in the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement.

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to the War in Vietnam, in particular, and American foreign policy, in general, because it would alienate SNCC's white supporters.

The internal struggle that the Atlanta Project precipitated caused SNCC to change its direction. A fundamental change in leadership occurred and SNCC became the forerunner of the Black Power Movement. Carson concedes the correctness of the Atlanta Project's perspective, but he is critical of its efforts. He suggests that its major weakness was that because some of the leading members were relatively new to SNCC, it did not appreciate SNCC's history as a "raceless communal organization." Rather than rejecting this myth, the Atlanta Project made a critique of it and the failure of the political strategy that developed out of it.

Having been a member of the Atlanta Project and integral to its critique of SNCC and the civil rights movement, I see that the Project's weaknesses caused it to virtually self-destruct as a viable entity within SNCC. While a correct critique was made concerning the racism of the whites in the civil rights movement, we did not understand what allowed it to exist. Rather than take up the question of accommodation to racism, whereby all project members would also be critical of the arguments that SNCC should not take a critical stance

have had to be self-critical, it placed the total blame on the whites in SNCC. This resulted in the Atlanta Project taking an organizational approach to a political problem. The Atlanta Project's failure to grapple with accommodation to racism caused it to see the solution to racism in SNCC as voting whites out of SNCC. Instead, the Project should have struggled with the question of principled multi-national unity. This would have meant not only an on-going struggle against racism in the organization, but also a similar struggle with accommodation to racism.

Carson details the demise of SNCC, as it tried to orient itself to changing political realities. However, Carson fails to sum up this history by critical comments on the liquidation of the racism of Northern whites by SNCC, the failure of SNCC's political strategy during its second phase, and how all these compromised the struggles during SNCC's third phase. Moreover, this history continues to be played out in the people's movement by the failure to address racism and accommodation. For principled multi-national unity to become a reality, a self-critical look at this issue is a prerequisite. Carson's book does present a wealth of information to aid in this effort.

Decline of the OC

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undoing of the OC. Emboldened by the opposition of the very minorities that they sent out to do their bidding, white comrades became more and more willing to openly oppose the campaign. Beginning as a slight trickle of whites leaving the OC, the flow gradually picked up steam to the point where only a mere handful of OC supporters remain.

Appreciation of the full meaning of the OC crisis leads inevitably to the conclusion that the anti-revisionist movement has got to be reconstructed almost from scratch. There is little chance that groups like *Line of March*, *Theoretical Review*, and the *Guardian*, whose very political identities are bound up with white chauvinism, will soon be won to the campaign. And though more likely, former members of the OC will only be regrouped to the extent that they see the correctness of the campaign proved broadly in mass practice. Given the meager number of supporters who remain, such proof is obviously years away.

THE WAY OUT

The way forward, then, is for the small core of supporters of the campaign to assume the task of rebuilding the anti-revisionist movement. Though not giving up struggling with them, we should not base our strategy on winning back our former comrades. Instead we must turn our face squarely towards the advanced elements and seek to forge principled unity with them.

In order to make such principled unity possible, however, we must first ensure thorough consolidation of the campaign's supporters. Past practice has shown that those who merely express unity while practicing disunity are often more successful in organizing opposition to the campaign than our most vocal critics. Thus, we must continue the campaign so as either to win over or weed out those who are merely pretending unity.

But even more importantly, we must develop and consolidate around a thorough summation of the major lessons of the campaign. A thorough critique of the history of the anti-revisionist movement's white chauvinism, together with an analysis of the OC's experience in conducting the campaign and a response to the major arguments of the opposition should be written up. In addition, shorter summations of key

areas of mass work examined in light of the lessons of the OC's campaign should be drafted. Insofar as possible, each comrade's unity with the analysis should be tested by requesting that they draw out concrete examples which either support or oppose it. After several months' preparation, a national conference should be called to formally consolidate the OC's unity.

Though focusing primarily on internal consolidation, we should also continue our outreach. In particular, we should focus on forging political unity with the less accommodationist-minded national minority advanced workers that we have previously written off. To do this, we will have to begin with a critical review of our political summation of national minority workers, re-examining especially those workers who have been historically summed up as "distant and aloof," "anti-white," or "nationalist."

Where re-examination proves our summation to have been in error, as it will in many cases, we should discuss with those workers both the historical white chauvinism in the communist movement and the roots of our particular summation of them. This will create the context for a process of struggling for principled unity on the basis of communism and not capitulation to white chauvinism.

Whites who seek to enter our movement must prove their willingness to confront their white chauvinism *before* they become communists. This does not mean that whites must demonstrate a full and correct understanding of the role of racism in our society, but it does mean minimally showing a commitment to struggle principledly and honestly to overcome white chauvinism.

By correctly combining a focus on internal consolidation with minimal but real steps towards outreach, the current campaign supporters can take an important first step towards rebuilding our movement. We can ensure that lessons of our past are learned and that a new beginning is made. And most importantly, we can help make certain that *this* time, communists strive to forge a multinational unity based, not on white chauvinism and capitulation, but on mutual respect and equality.

Ireland

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thrown through their front window, followed by gunshots.

Martin Hurson, sixth of the prisoners to die, was eighth of nine children born to parents who tended thirty hilly acres of land near Dungannon. While in high school, he worked on the family farm and, upon leaving school, he started work as an apprentice fitter-welder at the Findlays Company. Like many other young Irish men, he later left to find a job in England, working for McAlpines, in Manchester. Home-sick, he returned after a year and a half, to work on the farm and at Power-screen International at Dungannon. Soon afterwards, he was arrested by the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Joe McDonnell, fifth of the hunger strikers to die, was, besides being an all-Ireland champion Gaelic football player, an apprentice bricklayer. Like Hurson, he also spent time in England searching for a job.

The trade union sub-committee of the National H-Block Committee, in Dublin, has drawn up a preliminary list of trade unionists among the nationalist prisoners in H-Blocks. They've found at least ten members of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU), seven members of the Allied Transport and General Workers Union (ATGWU), three members of the electrical workers union (AUEW), three members of the furniture workers (FTAT), and so on.

As this profile shows, it is the working class, along with small farmers, of

Ireland who have kept alive the long struggle for an independent and united Ireland. The hunger strike by the nationalist prisoners to win recognition of their struggle — including armed struggle with the British army — as a political struggle and not a criminal act, is the latest front in this fight for freedom.

More and more Americans are becoming aware of the justice of the prisoners' struggles. A Boston H-Block/Armagh Committee recently held a rally of over 100 people to commemorate the tenth anniversary of internment without trial in Northern Ireland. Eoin O Murcu gave a first-hand account of the H-Block campaign in Cork, Ireland. Themba Vilakazi of the African National Congress of South Africa drew out the parallels between the Irish struggle and the national liberation movement against the racist South African government. Vilakazi

and Judge Margaret Burnham, a member of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, challenged the audience, most of whom were Irish-Americans, to take up as fervently the struggle for equal rights for Blacks in Boston as for equal rights for Catholic Irish in Northern Ireland. They received strong applause for their speeches.

The Boston H-Block/Armagh Committee, like a similar group in New York, is seeking to build "a broad based, democratically organized coalition of individuals and groups (regardless of race, creed, color, and political persuasion) united in active support of the prisoners' Five Just Demands. The Boston H-Block/Armagh Committee can be contacted at 385 Washington Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

(Next month: The state of the liberation movement)