

PICK YOUR POISON...

With confetti and balloons, smiles and promises, the Democratic and Republican Parties recently chose their candidates. Now they've taken their shows on the road, treating us to two months of solid baloney.

When the noise dies down after November, will it make any difference in the lives of the people, who gets elected? While people are rightfully skeptical, they're not apathetic---they want answers and they want them quick. Ford's visit to campus proved that---some 14,000 students turned out, and more waited outside. According to the "Daily", had there been an organized presence inside, it is estimated that Ford would have been drowned out by boos.

The reason the rulers of this country are making such a big deal out of the elections is because they're in a bind. Their position at both home and abroad is increasingly shaky. In southern Africa, black people are rising in open rebellion. The U.S. has 1 billion dollars invested in South Africa alone, and for years the apartheid system has enabled corporations such as Ford, Chrysler, and International Harvester (to name a few) to make additional profits from the exploitation of cheap black labor. With this system on its way out, however, front men like Kissinger are frantically trying to disown apartheid and figure out a way to preserve American profits and influence in the event of a black takeover. Because of the tremendous economic and strategic importance of this area, the Soviet Union is also trying to muscle in by hitching its star to that of the liberation movements, and hoping to ride their backs to power. This conflict and competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union is being acted out, not only in southern Africa, but in every corner of the world, and when the stakes get sufficiently high, this conflict is going to lead to war.

On the home front, things are bad and getting worse. No real dents have been made in solving the problems of unemployment and inflation, and while people will listen to what the politicians have to say, their patience has definite limits. All the hoopla about the elections is an effort to stall for time, to divert people from taking more drastic action in confronting the problems we face. Furthermore, their proposals for change, far from making things better, would actually increase people's suffering.

A JOB FOR EVERY AMERICAN---Carter promises to "get the economy moving again by providing a job for every American who wants to work". He would couple this with a "simplified and fair" welfare system with "strong work incentives". Translated, this means that if you're on welfare or unemployment and a plant goes out on strike, you can be forced to scab on it. If you won't then you've 'refused employment' and you're cut off benefits. Federal plans like this already exist. In places like New York City they haven't been used to create any jobs, but to replace laid-off city workers with lower-paid workers from the unemployment and welfare lines.



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What are our alternatives?

Also claiming to represent the people, Ford talks a lot about cutting taxes to "relieve the burden workers face". This talk of tax reform is a camouflage for attacks. Because the way Ford wants to cut taxes is by cutting social services. For example, besides cutting unemployment benefits and job training, Ford's present budget would cut already low veterans' benefits 9.5%, school lunch programs 7.6%, and higher education by 14.3%.

For all the hoopla about how the Republican Convention was going to be a real battleground between opposing ideas and programs, when push came to shove, how small these differences turned out to be! And now, the same show is being acted out between Ford and Carter. We're told this is our ultimate freedom in America. "If you don't vote, don't complain". But with all the well-publicized 'differences' it's hard to see any disagreement on the major issues confronting Americans---unemployment, the economic crisis, U.S. aggression and the danger of a new war (Carter, for example, is as much of a hawk on foreign policy issues as Ford).

The fact is we won't get anywhere by relying on these elections or on any other. Carter and Ford have only two things in mind---doing a good job for the rich ruling class that runs this country, and getting elected. The most they can differ on is a little bit about how best to serve the interests of the capitalists, and a lot on who should get the job.

The elections are a trap---getting us to channel our anger into a deadend charade. They would like the people to stop struggling, striking and demonstrating and put our faith in the candidates. And if they can't win our faith, they want us to believe that we can at least pick the "lesser of two evils". But the only way to force anything out of the rich is the way it's always been done---not by relying on their candidates but by struggling against the system. We've seen that "picking the lesser of two evils" is the same as choosing between poisons---and we're not about to swallow it.

WE DEMAND: JOBS FROM GOVERNMENT OR INDUSTRY AT UNION WAGES,
OR COMPRIBABLE INCOME UNTIL WE FIND A JOB!

U.S. RULERS OUT OF SOUTHERN AFRICA!

Orientation Program:

DATE: thurs., sept. 23

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: International Center

speakers, music & discussion.

*If you would like to contact us, come to the program or call us at 995-9957 or 663-5361.

Revolutionary Student Brigade

