

changeover comments . . .

Arena for Struggle

Ravitz: Toward Our Own Courts

Election fever. That shoddy circus, ELECTION YEAR, has returned for the forty-fifth time in the history of this country and for the forty-fifth time the charade of popular control of the government is being played out for the psychological benefit of the tens of millions of people who desperately try to believe that they do have some power to establish economic justice, equality for all people and a social environment that enhances rather than destroys the quality of life.

Progressive people with a critical analysis of this society are compelled to conclude and point out that national electoral politics are a hollow farce in which contending groups of rich power-brokers manipulate the media, candidates, parties and platforms in the most cynical and reprehensible manner while they flatter the people of this country with endless propaganda about the truth, beauty and inherent superiority of bourgeois democracy.

Electoral Activity Important

We reject these illusions of power for the bitter, but liberating understanding of what these electoral games really mean. No candidate ever ran for President on the platform of war, racism, sexism, pollution, welfare for the rich and the suppression of the legitimate struggles of the people of this country for a better life — but that is the precise policy which has been pursued by every one of them after they have taken office.

But to flatly reject participation in presidential electoral politics as wasteful, foolish and illusory, in terms of real political power at this time, is not to say that there are not electoral struggles which can be meaningfully pursued. Where it is possible to put forward a candidate whose program directly assails the power structure; where that campaign can have a significant effect on the

Who Said This?

"Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to do the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifist for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country."

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"Ravitz has demonstrated a real faith in and understanding of popular control."



election (including winning); where that campaign can be used to educate, organize and mobilize large numbers of people into continuing activity—then progressive people have a duty to initiate and pursue such campaigns.

We need to understand here that electoral activity is in fact an event of substantial importance in the lives of a huge number of people in this society. It can be a time when social problems are critically aired and both progressive and reactionary solutions are put forward. While participation in the electoral process will not, in itself, solve significant

problems, it does represent an opportunity for people to organize themselves, and put forth political positions in such a way as to create a large base for successful struggle. We cannot ignore such opportunities.

CHANGEOVER believes that the candidacy of Justin C. Ravitz for the Recorder's Court bench in this city meets the above criteria. Ravitz, a criminal defense attorney of extraordinary skill, a member of the Motor City Labor League, and the primary writer of the LAW TALK column in this paper, will conduct just such a campaign.

Justin Ravitz, along with other attorneys including members of the firm Philo, Maki, Ravitz, Cockrel, Robb, Karfonta and Spearman, has:

- Successfully defended hundreds of people arrested for political dissent.
- Successfully defended the victims of the police attack in the "New Bethel" incident.
- Conducted the successful jury challenge which opened the way for the people of this city to exercise some direct control over the judicial process.
- Conducted the Wayne County Jail suit which resulted in that institution being declared the barbaric dungeon that it is.
- Successfully challenged the state marijuana laws resulting in the release of hundreds of people from prison.
- Conducted the STRESS suit which has so threatened and exposed Mayor Gribbs, Commissioner Nichols and Prosecutor Cahalan that they have had to stake their political lives on the continuation of that proven execution squad.
- Uncompromisingly attacked all real criminal activity—especially that perpetrated by police, judges, prosecutors, sheriffs and bondsmen.

Moreover Ravitz has demonstrated a real faith in and understanding of popular control. The jury system is the only instrument of public power in which the decisions are actually made and implemented by people themselves and not by the flunkies of power-brokers. As an attorney, Ravitz has gone directly to the people of this community as they sit on those juries—and they have not failed to understand who the real criminals are and have acted accordingly.

Victory Possible

As a judge of Recorder's Court, Ravitz will never acquiesce to institutional illegality, but will publicly expose it and personally work to eradicate it. The people of this city have no choice but to struggle for control over the institutions which distort and destroy their lives. In this election, at this time, for that office—Justin C. Ravitz represents an opportunity for a victory in that struggle.

Let's take it.



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ORGANIZE! ABOLISH STRESS! RAVITZ. RECORDER'S COURT AUG. 8.

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