

At the same time the corporate blue-blood's opposition to Rizzo is carefully qualified and conditional. Thatcher Longstreth and the Chamber of Commerce crowd have a genuine fondness for an administration that has cut taxes on big business and poured millions of the tax payers' dollars into downtown urban renewal and commercial development. If worse came to worse, they could certainly live with another Rizzo term.

With his now famous "white rights" speech in Whitman Park, Frank Rizzo embarked on a political course that diverges from the game plan of the city's corporate elite. Rizzo has cast his lot with the national right-wing revolt. Rizzo wants to become a national spokesman in the fight against busing, affirmative action, the death penalty, fair housing laws and a host of other issues. (Frank has a certain problem in championing the tax revolt, having raised local property taxes by 30% two years ago).

As the mayor of the nation's fourth largest city, Rizzo is in a much stronger position to promote his national ambitions than as a private citizen. Rizzo's new course means heightened racial polarization and jeopardizes the city's relations with the federal government. This is what makes the big boys in the corporate board rooms nervous. At this point in time they are not prepared to go the route of extreme reaction represented by Rizzo and the New Right.

As one business leader told the *Inquirer*, "There is a feeling out there that as long as the city keeps fighting knockdown, drag-out battles with the federal government, and as long as we keep hearing harsh rhetoric about ethnic wars, that it's not going to be possible to turn the economy of this city around."

THE BATTLE AHEAD

The ruling class opposition to the Charter change probably has come too late to have much impact on Rizzo's decision to publicly support such a change and thus announce his candidacy for a third term. Despite the fact that Rizzo has avoided a direct endorsement of the charter change effort, he has clearly committed all of his political resources to it. He has already made his move, and with an ego three times the size of the Tinicum Swamp, Rizzo won't back off now.

The real opposition to Frank Rizzo's ambitions, however, does not come from the corporate board rooms overlooking Center City. It comes from every neighborhood and community in the city. Next month we will take a look at this grass-roots opposition to Rizzo and we will also examine how a badly divided labor movement regards Rizzo's attempt at a third term.

THOUSANDS MARCH AGAINST RIZZO AND POLICE BRUTALITY

August-September 1978

by JIM GRIFFIN

They came from the north, the west and the south, their ranks swelled by shoppers and passersby. They chanted: "We're all fired up, ain't gonna take it no more" and "Four more years, hell no, Frank Rizzo got to go." By 12:30 somewhere between two and five thousand predominantly Black marchers had converged on City Hall. It was the most massive and militant demonstration locally in recent years, signalling the resurgence of the Black people's movement in the face of sharpening attacks by the Rizzo administration.

STOP RIZZO THE THEME

It was the police beating of an unarmed Delbert Africa following the MOVE shootout that ignited the long smoldering resentment of police abuse defended and encouraged by the Mayor. But the focus of the rally was not on MOVE. It was an across the board attack on Rizzo and his racist policies. Signs, slogans and speeches singled out Rizzo's "white rights" campaign and his bid for a third term via the charter change.

Both state representative Dave Richardson and community activist Milton Street, two of the march organizers, focused on the task of registering and getting out the No vote to defeat Rizzo's third term bid this November. This theme was echoed by countless other speakers. There was also a call to boycott the First Pennsylvania Bank and the Gallery. First Pennsylvania is headed up by John Bunting who is actively backing the charter change. The bank had redlined Black neighborhoods, invested in South Africa and has been instrumental in bleeding the city's school system. The Gallery, the ultra modern downtown shopping mall, symbolized the priorities of city planners who neglect the neighborhoods in favor of expensive center city projects.

Another theme of the rally was the need for Black unity to defeat Rizzo's attacks. This unity was reflected in the broad spectrum of political forces pres-

ent. There was also clearly some division in the attitude of the demonstrators toward MOVE. While all united in condemning the police beating of Delbert Africa, many booed when a MOVE representative began quoting the thoughts of John Africa. And while speakers refrained from directly criticizing MOVE, there was a clear intention to keep the focus on the broader questions. MOVE's muddled philosophy with its emphasis on the rejection of technology and an outlandish life style offers the masses of people, who are struggling to improve their living conditions, nothing. Furthermore, MOVE's all or nothing, no compromise stand in relation to the city is not "revolutionary" but in fact only plays into the hands of Rizzo. Black unity in the face of Rizzism is important, but it cannot and should not be a cover for refusing to criticize actions and trends which are harmful to the Black Liberation Movement.

THE TASKS AHEAD

Stopping Rizzo is a big task. The massive mobilization at City Hall and the call for voter registration are important ingredients of the recipe to beat Rizzo. It is also going to be important to build the broadest unity of all anti-Rizzo forces and to the degree possible, coordinate the campaign for a no-vote. Presently, the anti-Rizzo movement is fragmented into several groupings who could and should be working much more closely. Even more important, beating Rizzo is not simply a matter of organization. The political orientation of the movement will determine whether it can fully mobilize the potential anti-Rizzo vote while undercutting and neutralizing much of Rizzo's support.

This means the movement must expose what Rizzo stands for. We have to bring home to the masses that Rizzo is the enemy of all working people and the friend of the most reactionary sectors of big business. We have to do this on the basis of the issues that affect the lives of the masses of Philadelphians. These political tasks are part and parcel of both the work in the wards and the city-wide actions. If we do all these things Rizzo's political coffin will be sealed.