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MAKING DEBBY LEONARD'S CLUW COUNTER-RESOLUTION PERFECTLY CLEAR

Rick Congress, Houston Branch

August 2, 1975

In her article entitled "On Affirmative Action and Preferential Layoffs" (*SWP Discussion Bulletin* vol. 33, No. 10) Debby Leonard places herself in the camp of Milt Alvin on the issues of defending women and nonwhites against bearing the brunt of the current layoffs. Her argumentation is the same as Alvin's although slightly more restrained.

However what is especially interesting about Debby's article is the appended counter-resolution she drafted for the national CLUW fraction of the party to present to the CLUW National Coordinating Committee meeting held in Houston a few months ago. It speaks volumes about the vacuousness of her position. When faced with how to deal with the question of defending the gains of affirmative action in a clear manner which is required when the fraction is to fight for a resolution which hopefully will open the way for concerted action, she comes up with a proposal that sails off into several different directions, begs the real issue, and is neither "useable, educational, nor defensible".

In the grab bag of 14 whereases and resolves (plus a couple of "furthermores") she states that:

A) women and minority workers have made recent gains in employment B) now they are losing these gains through massive layoffs C) a lot of other workers are being laid off too D) CLUW should say that its just as bad that whites are being laid off as it is that minorities and women are being laid off and therefore CLUW proposes:

A) a shorter work week with no cut in pay; B) an extensive public works program; C) a cut in the defense budget to finance this public works program; D) union initiative in organizing the unemployed; E) a break with the Democratic and Republican parties via independent labor candidates; F) and a national trade union conference to map out a plan to fight the layoffs and other economic ills.

The first comment that comes to mind is that she forgot to call for armed workers detachments, soviets, nationalization of the economy under workers control, and for political revolutions in the deformed and degenerated workers states. Why not round out the document so that the entire unrevised story can be told? She manages to march right by the specific issue at hand with 3/4 of the socialist program inscribed on her banner; why stop there? Joe Hansen's remarks on Milt Alvin's criticism of *Militant* articles apply here as well. Debby Leonard must feel that there is an insufficiency of principle in dealing with only partial demands or immediate questions.

Reading further we find a clause which states, "CLUW insists that it is illegal to lay off workers hired under affirmative action programs and also illegal to violate union contracts by overstepping seniority agreements."

In her discussion article she warns against the "treachery" of sowing illusions in the bourgeois courts. Maybe she should have stricken that section so that people might not think that she is soft on bourgeois legality. She might

reconsider that section on the more rational basis that it makes no sense whatsoever. Her crackpot views on legality aside, a reading of this clause reveals total confusion on her part and serves to expose the counter-resolution as a fake.

If it is illegal to lay off workers hired under affirmative action programs, and it is illegal to overstep seniority agreements, then that means she is opposed to laying off women and minority workers, and is opposed to *not* laying them off at the same time. Not overstepping seniority agreements means that nonwhite and women workers will be the first fired. Its one or the other. Either amend the seniority agreements or accept women and nonwhites bearing the brunt of the layoffs.

To make her position perfectly clear just strike out all the Whereases except for the one that reads: "CLUW maintains that all layoffs are bad; no layoff is less bad than another layoff."

The other parts of her resolution that bemoan the firing of nonwhites and women, and state that CLUW must fight for their specific needs are so much decoration; a tip of the hat to the real issues, in order to try and cover up her abstentionist position on the tasks of defending Blacks and women against racist and sexist attacks (which is what the preferential firings going on represent).

According to the logic of Debby's line there is no need to fight for special compensation or demands for women and minorities. The layoff of a white male with five years seniority is strictly equal to the layoff of a Chicana with one year on the job (Debby can tell her that labor power equals labor power). And if a fight for their special problems on the job is waged, then that is dividing the class. Her resolution states in paragraph number 4: "The Coalition of Labor Union Women, while fighting for the particular needs of women and minority workers who are paying a high price for generations of discrimination on the job, is concerned that the government and big business not be successful in pitting worker against worker." How does she avoid that disunity? By dissolving the specific needs of the most oppressed into the general needs of the class as a whole. In practice she tells them that their problems are not so bad given the big picture. She should wait for the less oppressed more bigoted majority to move on unemployment in general, and not cause divisions by raising their own demands first. She nods to the need to fight against special oppression and then sails on by without offering any way to wage that fight.

In the third paragraph of her resolution she says, ". . . women and minority workers are losing these gains won in a period of relative prosperity because the federal government and large corporations are not meeting the demand for full employment."

Minorities and women are not losing their jobs wholesale, and are not catching the main burden of unemployment because of the lack of a full employment policy on the part of the bosses and the government. Obviously the

ruling class has a need to lay off workers in a major economic downturn and has no qualms about doing it. But the fact is that women and Blacks and Chicanos are getting the worst deal and losing recent gains because of past discrimination on the part of the bosses and the union bureaucrats. The original SWP resolution for the CLUW Coordinating Committee's consideration deals with this as follows: "The seniority system, which developed under the discriminatory hiring practices of the employers is used in the present economic crisis to lay off the last hired workers, which includes in many instances all those hired under affirmative action programs and in all instances a disproportionate number of women workers . . ."

So what does Debby Leonard think the party should have CLUW stand for on the issue of defending the gains of affirmative action? It should declare that the layoff of a

Black or woman is no different than any other layoff. The massive layoffs in the Black community are nothing special, equivalent to the joblessness among whites. And that seniority, forged under conditions of racism and sexism and reflecting those conditions, should not be "overstepped". And while CLUW should fight for the special needs of women and Blacks, these needs don't include not being the last hired and the first fired. CLUW also must be on guard against dividing the working class.

There you have Debby's resolution. It has a sack full of fine demands such as 30 for 40, but it uses these demands as a cover for dodging the real issue. The demands that she lists in her counter-resolution for CLUW are best used when not counterposed against a concrete fight against racism and sexism.

Discriminatory Layoffs and the Turn in Party-Building Priorities

by Jean Tussey, Cleveland Branch
July 29, 1975

The pre-convention discussion so far has not revealed any major differences in the party with the central thesis of the Political Resolution: that the beginning of the radicalization of the working class now provides new political opportunities for the party in the mass movement and the unions, necessitating a *turn* in our priorities.

In view of the historic significance of this turn, and the tests it poses of our political maturity and flexibility, I expected more discussion articles on the changes in the objective situation and the changes in political tasks and organizational functioning indicated.

At first, the discussion and polemics over the party's position on discriminatory layoffs seemed out of proportion and a diversion. But as it developed, it is now clear that the time and space devoted to this subject reflects the fact that the party has already responded to new opportunities for political work in the mass movement and is addressing itself to the concrete and current problems of the workers' organizations.

Comrade Milt Alvin's articles on his differences with the position we have developed on discriminatory layoffs, and now his proposed amendment to the National Committee draft Political Resolution, on "The Problem of Layoffs," are confused and disoriented, in my opinion. They certainly provide no clear guidelines for action to implement the party's turn to working class organizations today.

I agree with the "Reply to Comrade Alvin" in Discussion Bulletin No. 10 by Linda Jenness, Frank Lovell and

Baxter Smith, and do not want to repeat the points they made.

In his "Comments on the Trade Union Movement, Affirmative Action and Seniority," in Bulletin No. 11, Frank puts the issue of discriminatory layoffs in context, in relation to the situation in the labor movement today.

I would like to deal in more detail with the resolution I introduced in the Coalition of Labor Union Women: within the context of the discussion in CLUW, and with Comrade Debby Leonard's criticisms of our resolution.

First, Comrade Chris Hildebrand's discussion piece, "Placing Our CLUW Work in Perspective," documents very competently the fact that CLUW was in the vanguard of the labor movement in adopting a program of action to fight layoffs and unemployment. The CLUW resolution adopted last January includes practically all of the well-known transitional demands and calls for mass actions and demonstrations for Jobs for All.

Union women were first to respond in this way because they know better than anybody else that our gains under the affirmative action struggles against sex discrimination in employment were the most recent acquisitions in restricting the employers' ability to divide workers. Mass layoffs and plant closings wipe them out.

Deepening depression can also wipe out unions that cut unemployed workers off their membership rolls. That's why CLUW women can get a hearing in their unions for proposals for fighting layoffs and unemployment.

But the resolution on Depression, Unemployment and Layoffs adopted January 19, 1975 by CLUW did not deal with the special problem of discriminatory layoffs that permit the return to the patterns of sex discrimination which existed before affirmative action programs were instituted.

The National Co-ordinating Committee referred the question of affirmative action and seniority to the next NCC meeting. It was generally recognized that it was a complex matter, and the women wanted more time to investigate the relation between the variety of seniority systems that exist in our unions and their effect on patterns of sex and race discrimination.

The question has been discussed in CLUW meetings since the founding conference in March 1974. A consensus resolution on "Affirmative Action on the Job" was discussed at the Sept. 22, 1974 CLUW NCC meeting. It included all the propositions on which there had been general agreement in the workshops at the founding conference. But action on alternate proposals, particularly dealing with affirmative action and seniority was deferred.

At the CLUW NCC meeting in Houston May 31, Affirmative Action and Seniority was the main point on the agenda. An educational panel presentation preceded the discussion of resolutions.

Speakers were UAW vicepresident Odessa Comer (who replaced Olga Madar when she retired from the post); I.U.E. general counsel Winn Newman; Amalgamated Clothing Workers vice president Diana Nunes; and EEOC district office counsel Tony Armandarioz.

They reported on the history of the legal struggles against race and sex discrimination in employment, and on the development of different union applications of seniority and affirmative action.

Interestingly, the two women union officers argued against "tampering with seniority" while the male union attorney demonstrated that "seniority is not sacrosanct" and has been varied, giving preferential treatment to correct inequities both by negotiations and by law.

Winn pointed out, for example, that the Veterans Preference Act after World War II protected men from loss of seniority and gave them preference in hiring when they returned from the armed forces. "Many unions did more," he added, "credited those who had never worked in the plant with preferential seniority." This helped replace women who worked during the war.

In the discussion, an Oakland CLUW member pointed out that her chapter supports the suit of the women in Fremont, Calif. where every woman hired in the GM plant has been laid off. She asked Odessa Comer:

"Why did the UAW support superseniority for servicemen after World War II and not for women in the Fremont case now?"

Comer's reply was: "Two wrongs don't make a right." An answer that did not impress many, since we know that many union contracts have provisions to protect the seniority of those in military service indefinitely, but not women on maternity leave.

Comrade Debby Leonard's article "On Affirmative Action and Preferential Layoffs," includes the texts of the three resolutions that were discussed at the Houston CLUW meeting, and also the two resolutions we discussed in the national SWP CLUW fraction.

Those of us who drafted the resolution I introduced obviously included the first two paragraphs from Comrade

Debby's resolution. We felt they helped motivate our position on the need to protect the gains of the affirmative action programs.

We did not include many of the other very good propositions in her resolution, or in the other two resolutions introduced, because they were 1) superfluous, having been dealt with in other CLUW resolutions, like the one on unemployment, or 2) irrelevant to the issue of how to approach the struggle against discriminatory layoffs and 3) they evaded taking a position or took what we considered an incorrect position on the main point of difference: that wherever a seniority system is used to perpetuate the discriminatory hiring, firing, and employment practices of an employer by allowing a reduction in the percentage of women and minority workers gained through affirmative action struggles, we stand for altering or amending that seniority system so as to protect these gains.

I want to assure Comrade Alvin that we had a clear assessment of the relationship of forces at the meeting, and no illusion that our resolution would pass. So whatever else he may accuse us of, opportunism is not appropriate.

As a matter of fact we were surprised and gratified by the amount of support the resolution received. Even those who disagreed with us appreciated the fact that we dealt directly and clearly with the key issues and did not beg the question.

Our resolution was the last one discussed. The conservative resolution of the CLUW administration on "Affirmative Action and Seniority" had been adopted. In speaking on our resolution I explained that I was introducing it because it dealt with a specific issue that none of the other resolutions had addressed themselves to, discriminatory layoffs. It did not deal with the general question of our campaign against mass layoffs and unemployment.

After the meeting there was general recognition that this is only the beginning of the discussion. The problem of how to fight sex discrimination in employment in a period of contracting economy is one that CLUW will have to grapple with at future meetings, and at its first Constitutional Convention in December.

Barring unforeseen changes in the objective situation, we expect to continue to win support for our position on defense of the gains women and minorities have made in the struggle against discriminatory employment practices, just as we shall continue to fight to defend the other gains of the labor and women's and civil rights movements.

Despite the fact that Comrades Debby Leonard and Milt Alvin emphasize different aspects of their disagreement with the resolution we support, the basic mistake of both, in my opinion is the same. Comrade Joseph Hansen, in Bulletin No. 8, identifies it as the mistake of "identifying the overall slogan for the working class as a whole for the entire period of the death agony of capitalism, with the struggle within a particular plant right now."

For those of us who function in the labor movement, as Comrade Debby and I have done for some time (and as the majority of the party probably will in the not too distant future, if the key thesis of the Political Resolution proves correct), the whole slogan of "jobs for all at no reduction in pay" is not the answer to what to do about the discriminatory layoffs in Fremont, Houston or Cleveland.

Within the context of the general struggle for jobs for all

with no reduction in pay, we have to consider which tactics are applicable in specific layoffs.

In the day to day struggle against the boss and the government through our unions, we have to formulate specific tactics and demands that express relevant transitional demands in terms of the experiences and practices of our fellow union members.

Comrade Debby's difference with our CLUW resolution, in my opinion, stems from the fact that she has not yet thought through how she would motivate a proposal for dealing with discriminatory layoffs in her own union situation, or how to advise other women in her CLUW chapter to deal with layoffs that can eliminate them from their jobs, from the union . . . and from CLUW.

In her Discussion Bulletin article, Debby says that "there is nothing sacred about the seniority system as it is presently structured," and describes many of its negative features, including some of its effects on minority and women workers.

Then what's wrong with proposing to change one of those negative features?

Our resolution says that "wherever a seniority system is used to perpetuate the discriminatory hiring, firing, and employment practices of an employer by allowing a reduction in the percentage of women and minority workers gained through affirmative action struggles, CLUW stands for altering or amending that seniority system so as to protect these gains."

But Debby says that from "violating (sic) present seniority structure so as to retain the same proportion of women and minorities on the job" a number of dangerous positions follow: "1) Appeal to the bourgeois courts."

Debby points out that our resolution proposed that CLUW oppose in every way possible any reduction through layoffs in the proportionate number of women and minority workers hired under affirmative action programs.

If this includes appealing to the courts in suits against unions, "it is only a step from appealing to the bourgeois courts to supporting bourgeois politicians who have taken a 'good stand' on this issue. . . ."

This is not a very good argument. Opposing disproportionate layoffs of minority and women workers "in every way possible" is not a directive to rush to the courts. However, in those cases where such a layoff occurs, what is wrong with filing a grievance with the union and a suit against the company at the same time?

It has been done in a number of cases. If it happened in my union, I would propose that the union support the suit. If the union chooses instead to join the company's defense, the union would be crossing class lines, not the worker fighting the discriminatory layoff.

Some of the "more enlightened" union leaderships are beginning to support or even initiate suits on behalf of women and minority members, whether on principled grounds, or because it's a practical way to "get off the hook" on a discriminatory practice of some kind that is now illegal (thanks to the struggles of the civil rights, women's and sections of the labor movement).

As for the danger that going to the bourgeois courts will lead to supporting bourgeois politicians, unfortunately the unions and most workers support bourgeois politicians

irrespective of whether they do or don't go to the bourgeois courts.

The second "dangerous position" Debby sees following from our resolution is the concept that "some layoffs are not as bad as other layoffs," that a job is more the right of one worker (a minority or female) than another worker (a white male). And she reminds us that the Transitional Program "demands employment and decent living conditions for all."

In the real world of the daily struggle between the workers' organizations and the bosses at this stage of the decline of American capitalism and the *beginnings* of the radicalization of the working class, every union contract, as we know, expresses the relationship of forces between the union and the company. Every union contract is a compromise between what the workers want and what the union, with its present leadership, is able to get.

Every union contract contains some kind of seniority recognition clause aimed at restricting the arbitrary power of the employer to give preferential treatment on any basis he chooses in order to pit worker against worker.

Most union contracts provide that in the event of layoffs, recognized as a recurring phenomenon under capitalism, "some layoffs are 'better' than others" in the sense that layoffs according to a seniority formula which restricts the arbitrary power of the boss are better than "preferential layoffs" in which he lays off those *he* prefers to lay off.

No one has to tell workers that no layoffs are good. What workers want to know is what can we do about it? What next? What next depends on where the workers in the concrete situation are organizationally and at what stage of radicalization. The correct next step, is those proposals that will help the workers in the concrete situation make the *transition* to a higher level of class consciousness and radicalization, and a stronger, more united class organization.

In a case where women and minorities are laid off disproportionately on the basis of a seniority system that did not restrict discriminatory hiring and employment practices, the next step for uniting the workers in that union (eliminating the divisions on the basis of race and sex) is to amend or change that seniority system (not "violate" it) so that the same proportions remain after the layoff as before.

The third dangerous position flowing from our resolution on discriminatory layoffs, according to Debby, is that we are accepting the inevitability of layoffs and giving priority to the concept of "quota" (read: proportional) layoffs instead of the demands for *full* employment.

If we were raising the issue of discriminatory layoffs where it is not relevant, instead of 30 for 40, etc., we would be incorrect. But the error would not flow from the resolution we introduced in CLUW.

It would reflect a lack of understanding of the Transitional Program and method, a lack of experience in the labor movement, or both.

I think Debby underestimates not only our comrades, but also the union women in CLUW if she thinks either are incapable of combining the struggle for jobs for all with the struggle to defend the gains of the struggles against discriminatory employment practices.

On the Question of Defense of Incipient Fascist Leaders in the Union Movement

by Debby Leonard, Houston Branch

July 27, 1975

On Saturday, July 19, the following article and a photo appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*, prominently displayed in the Sports Section:

"Entex Gas Fires KKK Mayoral Hopeful Over Literature

"Entex Inc. Friday fired Scott M. Nelson, Ku Klux Klan candidate for mayor, from his job with the company on the grounds he violated 'basic standards of courtesy and good behavior.'

"Guy Dawkins, administrative manager of Entex's Houston division, said that one reason for Nelson's discharge was that he mailed campaign materials 'slurring blacks' to top company officials.

"Nelson, 36 an Entex employee for almost 15 years, worked as a delinquent bill collector at an annual salary of about \$9,000.

"Entex is one of the city's two natural gas utilities.

" 'I think it is unfair for them to fire me for my pro-American personal beliefs,' Nelson said. 'If I had been a member of the NAACP, I don't think this would have happened.'

"Nelson, a self-styled racist, said he believes his firing was triggered by his mailing his mayoral campaign materials to a half-dozen top Entex officials.

" 'I believed it would probably get back to them anyhow, and I would rather have them say they got it from me rather than someone else,' Nelson said.

"In a letter notifying Nelson of his discharge, Dawkins said the campaign material 'contains slurs directed at black people which are insulting or degrading to say the least, and which are of a nature likely to incite racial discord and resentment.'

"The letter said Nelson previously had received a disciplinary suspension for distributing such campaign material on company time and been warned that further distribution of such items could mean his discharge.

"This referred to a one-week suspension Nelson received in 1973 when he was a school board candidate.

" 'It is the company's judgment,' the letter said, 'that your above described activities, considered in their entirety, are contrary to your obligations as an employe to adhere to basic standards of courtesy and good behavior.'

"Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 4-227, which represents Entex employes, filed a grievance in Nelson's behalf after he was fired Friday.

"However, union secretary-treasurer Joe Christie said the union has not yet determined whether it is a legitimate grievance which should be carried to arbitration.

"Nelson, of 7614 Magnolia, is imperial wizard of the Texas Fiery Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and head of the Ku Klux Klans of America, a national organization."

The *Houston Post* carried a similar item. It is important to note that Scott Nelson is not just a worker with racist ideas, but a local and national leader of the Ku Klux Klan, an incipient fascist organization.

I was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Houston in 1971, when the Ku Klux Klan bombed our campaign headquarters as part of an ongoing campaign,

in complicity with the Houston police and the Sheriff's Department, to terrorize Black militants, revolutionaries and antiwar activists with pipe bombs, machine-gunning, cross burnings, hate calls and other forms of intimidation. Publicly circulated Klan literature refers to Blacks as "savages," "jungle bunnies," "rapist," "degenerates." etc. The Ku Klux Klan is an incipient fascist formation, with a long history of virulent racism, anti-Semitism and anti-Communism.

I am now a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 4-227, the same union representing Scott Nelson, Imperial Wizard of the Texas Fiery Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and a national Klan leader. OCAW Local 4-227 has 4,500 members in some 40 different plants and shops in the Houston area. The plant where I work, Atlantic Richfield refinery (ARCO), is the largest in the local, with some 1200 members. Nelson worked at Entex, a utility company, where the union won a partial victory in a strike several months ago.

One matter should be clarified. Scott Nelson is not a member of the union. However, this does not change situation. Texas is a "right-to-work" state, an open shop state. By law, a union with a contract at a plant is required to represent, file grievances for, etc., every worker in every department under their jurisdiction at the plant. So OCAW is required, by law, to represent Nelson. Furthermore, in a union shop area or industry, Nelson would have had to join the union and would be a dues-paying member; it would not change the basic discussion. As a matter of fact, the rank-and-file in my union often demands that the bureaucrats fight for a non-member in the plant, often a new hire on a trial period, who has been victimized. The bureaucrats duck this responsibility. Also, if a Black worker, who has mistakenly not joined the union in protest over its racist policies, is victimized, we demand that the bureaucrats take his grievance. Ironically, the hesitance to pursue arbitration for Nelson, the Klan leader, indicated in the newspaper article, undoubtedly stems from the consideration of his non-dues-paying status, and this might well be used to justify not defending him. In my opinion, considering the above, this is poor justification and, of course, cannot be stated publicly since it's illegal and, were the Party position not what it is, this is a maneuver, should it occur, that I would have liked to take on. The fundamentally anti-union, class enemy status of the Klan is the same, whether they hold a dues card or not.

ARCO is about 25% Black and Chicano-it is difficult to estimate the number of Black and Chicano members in the local as a whole. The leadership of Local 4-227 is notoriously racist and sexist. They have led a campaign in the local and the Houston labor movement as a whole against support to the Coalition of Labor Union Women; they refused to endorse activities in support of desegregation of Boston schools. There are no Blacks in the local leadership; there is one Black committeeman, with 33 years seniority, on the ARCO union committee. The union discriminates in handling grievances, downplaying and in

some case refusing to vote money to arbitrate, or even dismissing at the initial steps of the grievance procedure, grievances of Blacks and Chicanos, especially if discrimination is contended in the grievance. Anti-union leadership sentiment is very widespread at the plant among Black and Chicano workers and the more conscious young white workers. There is frequent talk among Blacks and Chicanos of dropping their union membership and filing suits against the union. A few informal rank-and-file militant tendencies have organized in the local during the past several years, but have each been broken up or given up without putting up any substantial fight.

I am well-known at ARCO as a former Socialist candidate for Mayor. I am the only SWP'er in the plant, but two former members of the IT, applying for readmission to the Party, also work at the plant. One of them is an alternate committeeman.

All of these things, and others, should be considered in deciding the best tactical approach to the Klan and the union. But it is clear to me that we cannot support a move to use full union resources to fight for a leader of the Ku Klan Klan, an incipient fascist whose organization calls for, and has practised, torture and lynching of Blacks. He is a publicly avowed racist and as such is opposed to the objective interests of the working class.

I contacted the Houston SWP organizer to propose an intervention in the union to oppose arbitration on behalf of this notorious Klan leader and a demand that OCAW publicly disassociate itself from him and everything he stood for. I told him I wanted to think over the specific tactics more thoroughly. I also requested permission to consult with one of the former SWP'ers at the plant. The organizer said I could talk with this individual about the situation and he would call me back the next day about my general proposal.

The following day the organizer informed me that he had consulted the SWP National Office and that they were in disagreement with me. On the contrary, he said, they stated I should *support* and *speak for* and *motivate* the union following through with arbitration in support of the Klan leader. The organizer said he had not spoken with them regarding a possible statement of disassociation from the Klan by the union, but thought that would be that agreeable *providing* I coupled it with a clear statement of support for the Klan leader's defense by the union. I found this political advice totally unacceptable and impossible for me to consider implementing, so I was told that I could avoid participating in the union discussion.

However, before the above-mentioned discussion with the organizer took place, I had already discussed the situation with several Blacks, Chicanos and a few whites in the plant. A Black committeeman said he thought the union should, and would, vote against the grievance arbitration on behalf of this public Klan spokesman. Another Black worker said he thought the union would vote for arbitration, but hoped it didn't. A young Black worker said he supported everyone's right to his beliefs, but there was a limit—and the Klan was past that limit. He said he didn't want his union dues used to support a lyncher. Other comments of Blacks and Chicanos were similar or more vitriolic in opposition to support of the Klan. Most of the whites didn't have much to say one way or the other.

I think that the division in this situation is a reflection

basically of an increasing adaptation by some comrades in the SWP to the defense of bourgeois democracy and, because of that, a difference on how to handle incipient fascist elements fighting for support in the working class. Demands for continual extension of "bourgeois" democracy are substituted for defense of "workers" or "trade-union" democracy. On the one hand, the Party asserts that the *Draft Political Resolution* represents a fundamental turn to the working class, based on an analysis of the present economic and political conjuncture and the increasing radicalization of the working class and projects the building of a class-struggle left-wing in the union movement; on the other hand, the Party asserts that this class-struggle left wing should be organized on the bourgeois democratic principle of defense of every union member, including a publicly declared Klan leader.

Lenin deals with the fallacies of a non-class approach to democracy in his polemic against Kautsky:

"In Russia the bureaucratic apparatus has been completely smashed up, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been expelled, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets now control the bureaucrats, and *their* Soviets now elect the judges. This fact alone is enough to cause all the oppressed classes to recognize the Soviet government, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as being a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

"Kautsky does not understand this truth, which is so obvious and intelligible to every worker, because he has 'forgotten,' 'unlearned' to put the question: democracy *for what class?* He argues from the point of view of 'pure' (i.e., non-class? or above-class?) democracy. He argues like Shylock: all I want is my pound of flesh. Equality for all citizens-otherwise it is not democracy." (V. I. Lenin, *Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*)

Democracy is a class question. It is not a problem for the union, as an organization for workers defense, to defend an incipient fascist leader who has had a falling-out with some representatives of the bourgeoisie. This falling-out is temporary; it is up to the bourgeoisie to decide how to handle this lackey of theirs, whom they will support enthusiastically against the working class should their present control through bourgeois democracy be threatened. (It is not even excluded that this racist is operating in collusion with management to divide workers in this period.)

You cannot educate workers by defending a class enemy's rights to support from the working class, no matter how many "bourgeois democratic" explanations you sugar-coat the pill with.

The "bourgeois democratic" approach is a trap. It says that the victimization of a Klan leader is the same as the victimization of revolutionary socialist at least in this period because neither has mass support in the working class. The logic goes that we better defend the Klan leader or we might be next. It is true that in a more reactionary period and in some situations we might make a tactical decision not to project an active intervention but to keep silent. But in no case should we push for union defense of an incipient fascist leader! If we extend this defense of bourgeois democratic rights into the working class and defend the Klan, we are depriving Black, Chicano, women

and revolutionary workers of their democratic rights. When a public spokesman for the Ku Klux Klan enters the workers movement and demands defense from the working class so he can disseminate racism, we must draw the line. In the union movement we have a distinct advantage over the Klan—a class advantage. We expect and anticipate that the same workers who are most virulently opposed to the Klan—and do not advocate defending a Klan leader—will support us when we are victimized. Other workers who sit on the fence when it comes to the Klan will also defend us. If this is not true, our estimation of the ability to begin building a left-wing class struggle tendency in the unions is wrong. A key demand of that tendency will be rank-and-file control of the union and “workers” or “trade-union” democracy. These demands, not “bourgeois democracy” are the bridge to workers control. Formal bourgeois democratic rights are subordinate to the substance of workers democracy. We cannot let a Klan leader’s bourgeois democratic rights override the pressing need to combat racism in the union movement. We want to isolate this right-wing element, push them into a corner: We won’t tolerate them and we have no obligation to urge the union movement to defend them.

It has been said that the union bureaucrats operate within the framework of bourgeois democracy, but the rank-and-file doesn’t yet have complete “bourgeois democratic” rights in the union. True. But rank-and-file control of the union, which is the only way to extend democracy in the union, is a class demand, a demand for “workers democracy.” Cannon deals with this question in *Socialism and Democracy*:

“In practice, the American labor bureaucrats, who piously demand democracy in the one-party totalitarian domain of Stalinism, come as close as they can to maintaining a total one-party rule in their own domain. Kipling said: ‘The colonel’s lady and Judy O’Grady are sisters under the skin.’ The Stalinists bureaucrats in Russia and the trade-union bureaucrats in the United States are not sisters, but they are much more alike than different. They are essentially of the same breed, a privileged caste dominated above all by motives of self-benefit and self-preservation at the expense of the workers and against the workers.

“The privileged bureaucratic caste everywhere is the most formidable obstacle to democracy and socialism. The struggle of the working class in both section of the now divided world has become, in the most profound meaning of the term, a struggle against the usurping privileged bureaucracy.

“In the Soviet Union it is a struggle to restore the genuine workers’ democracy established by the revolution of 1917. Workers’ democracy has become a burning necessity to assure the harmonious transition to socialism. That is the meaning of the political revolution, against the bureaucracy, now developing throughout the whole Soviet sphere, which every socialist worthy of the name unreservedly supports. There is no sense in talking about regroupment with people who don’t agree on that, on defense and support of the Soviet workers against the Soviet bureaucrats.

“In the United States the struggle for workers’ democracy is pre-eminently a struggle of the rank-and-file to gain democratic control of their own organizations. That is the necessary condition to prepare the final struggle to abolish capitalism and ‘establish democracy’ in the country as a whole. No party in this country has a right to call itself socialist, unless it stand four-square for the rank-and-file workers of the United States against the bureaucrats.”

The conflict between bourgeois democracy and workers democracy is apparent in the contradiction between the reactionary character of the union bureaucracy’s adaptation to bourgeois democracy and the revolt of rank-and-file workers which forces them into illegal positions, such as public employee strikes. These strikes are illegal under bourgeois democracy, but are a living expression of workers democracy.

The pronounced focus on demands for the continual extension of bourgeois democracy permeates much of the SWP’s present political approach. The preoccupation with “bourgeois democratic” demands is at the heart of the SWP leadership’s position on “preferential layoffs.” Their analysis is that it is necessary to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution by extending its gains to women and minorities. This incorrect formulation is leading the Party astray. The objective base for the women’s movement and the civil rights movement is the struggle for extension of bourgeois democratic rights to women and minorities and should be understood and supported as such. But it is not the base for the workers movement and should not be the base for the revolutionary movement. When the limitations imposed by bourgeois democracy result in a conflict with the demands and interests of workers as a class, we must support workers democracy. Democracy is a class question.

Do we say that a national leader of the Ku Klux Klan, an organization with a well-established record of lynching, night-riding, pipe-bombing and terrorism against Blacks, Chicanos and other worker militants is entitled to defense by the workers movement? No!

ARE THE JAPANESE AMERICANS AN OPPRESSED NATIONAL MINORITY?

by Patti Iiyama, West Side Branch, Los Angeles Local

July 31, 1975

While the draft political resolution, "The Decline of American Capitalism: Prospects for a Socialist Revolution," lays an excellent foundation for the party's turn towards new opportunities in the working class, I find that I must take issue with its characterization of the situation facing Japanese Americans in the United States.

The draft political resolution states on p. 11: "Even national or racial groupings that *are not oppressed national minorities or nationalities* in the United States suffer from the pervasive racism and xenophobia intensified by the ruling class in periods of social crisis. Antisemitism aimed at Jews and white racist prejudice against Japanese-Americans are clear examples." (Emphasis added.)

This is the first time to my knowledge that the party has taken the position that Japanese Americans do not constitute an oppressed national minority. I have done a fair amount of research on this question, and while I have arrived at no absolutely definitive conclusion, it is my opinion that the evidence tends to contradict the document on this point, supporting the contention that they are indeed oppressed on the American mainland (excluding Hawaii).

Now it should be noted that this question is certainly not one of earth-shaking importance. But where there are concentrations of Japanese Americans, especially in California, an incorrect position could create real problems in our day-to-day work.

The draft resolution, on the other hand, *does* classify Chinese Americans as an oppressed national minority. Here again, though, the data I have found so far seems to indicate that there is no such clear-cut distinction between the social positions of these two groups.

What constitutes racial or national oppression in the United States? There is no one set of criteria which neatly define oppression and which we can apply to a national minority to determine whether they are oppressed. Systematic oppression, however, can be deduced from a pattern of job discrimination, housing segregation, deprivation of political rights and other social, political and economic exclusion from society.

The case of the Japanese Americans is a complicated one. It has been especially complicated by the fact that the Japanese have emigrated from an imperialist nation that has become one of the most powerful centers of capitalism in the world, but which is non-white. Unlike white immigrants from colonial countries who were able to become assimilated (e.g., the Irish), the Japanese immigrants encountered systematic oppression due to their race, even though they were from an imperialist power. This contradiction has influenced their treatment and social position: it appears that they have been oppressed in the past and probably continue to be in the present, because they are Asian, but are permitted to become to a certain degree more privileged than other oppressed nationalities or national minorities.

A stereotype has been built by the media and sociologists of the Japanese Americans as the "Horatio Alger" of the racial minorities in the United States, as professional and "white collar" workers who are college-educated and earn middle class incomes. Like most myths, certain aspects are true; Japanese Americans are more upwardly mobile than Blacks or Chicanos. Nevertheless, they have been limited in their mobility and not assimilated by white society.

In evaluating the Japanese, Chinese or Pilipinos in terms of oppression—that is, those national minorities who are clearly not as oppressed as Blacks or Chicanos—we must be particularly careful in accepting stereotypes without adequate factual knowledge.

Historically, the Japanese Americans have been an oppressed national minority in the United States. The Japanese were brought to the United States at the turn of the century as a source of cheap labor for railroad construction and maintenance, agriculture, lumber, mining, fishing and canneries.

Several effective methods were used to keep them segregated in their place: (1) exclusion from the trade union movement, which prevented them from participating in most urban economic activities; (2) denial of the right to citizenship-by-naturalization, which excluded them from many businesses and professions and was not granted until 1952; (3) the passage of the Alien Land Acts which prevented Japanese from owning land and seriously restricted their agricultural expansion; (4) the passage of discriminatory legislation directed against Japanese, such as restrictive covenants in housing which effectively segregated Japanese in ghettos (Little Tokyos) and laws prohibiting intermarriage between Japanese and whites; (5) exclusion of Japanese immigration through the 1924 Immigration Act which was not reversed until 1952; (6) the evacuation, incarceration and expropriation during World War II of 112,000 Japanese, two thirds of them citizens of the U.S., for "military security," although no cases of sabotage or arson were ever proved against any of them.

For a more detailed account of the historical oppression of Japanese in America, see my article, "Racism and the Japanese Americans During World War II," in the April, 1973 issue of the *ISR*.

The fact that a racial minority has historically been oppressed does not, of course, mean that they are still oppressed today. There seems to be a general consensus that the Japanese Americans were an oppressed national minority in the past. (Although for those who hold they are not oppressed today the question must be answered—when *did* their status change?)

Before presenting data about Japanese Americans, I would like to say a few words about the statistics used. I did not have the time to do intensive research, so the picture presented here is still rather sketchy. Unless otherwise noted, the statistics are based on a series of 1970 Census of the Population reports by the U.S. Bureau of the

Census (see end of contribution for listings of specific reports used).

These statistics are rather misleading for several reasons. Some statistics are only available for the population of the U.S. as a whole, which includes Blacks and Chicanos, so the white population averages for these statistics are probably a good deal higher than what is indicated. Even when data are to be found on "whites," the category still includes Spanish-speaking, Spanish-surname people. Again, the actual white statistics are probably higher, especially in California and New York, which have large numbers of Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, respectively.

The category of "Blacks" includes all other racial nationalities and minorities other than Spanish-speaking or Spanish-surname (i.e., Native Americans, Japanese, Chinese, etc.). Consequently, the statistics for Blacks are probably slightly lower than what is indicated.

Furthermore, statistics for the Chinese and Japanese also sometimes combine data for Hawaii with those for the mainland. This, too, is misleading since Japanese and Chinese are not oppressed national minorities in Hawaii. The Japanese are in fact quite assimilated and even privileged in some areas on the islands. This can skew the results favorably for both groups.

As much as possible, I try to differentiate between the Japanese in Hawaii and Japanese on the mainland of the United States and will discuss the special case of Hawaii later.

General Characteristics

The Japanese are the largest Asian American minority. In 1970 there were 591,000 in the United States: 36 percent of all Japanese Americans lived in Hawaii (where they constitute 28.3 percent of the population, second in number only to whites) and another 36 percent live in California. In California, where Japanese Americans are about one percent of the total population, they are concentrated in two major areas: Los Angeles with 105,994 and the San Francisco-Oakland area with 33,500.

The Chinese Americans are the second largest Asian American minority with 435,000 persons. Most of them live in California (39 percent), while 16 percent live in New York state and 12 percent in Hawaii (where they are also 12 percent of the population). Chinese Americans are less than one percent of the total population of California and are clustered, like the Japanese Americans, in Los Angeles (40,798) and the San Francisco-East Bay area (87,837).

Degree of Assimilation

According to popular belief, Japanese Americans have become assimilated into American society as a whole. This would mean that they have a random distribution similar to the whites in terms of social, political and economic characteristics. The facts, however, do not seem to substantiate this concept of assimilation. They seem instead to suggest an opposite pattern—one of segregation, although not to the same degree as for Blacks and Chicanos.

A large majority of Japanese who immigrated to the United States before 1925 have not yet become citizens (54 percent), which puts them at a disadvantage economically and politically. Many jobs, especially those connected to

the government, require U.S. citizenship as a necessary precondition for employment. Of course, they also cannot vote.

This large a proportion of non-citizens is quite unusual; among immigrants still living who came to the United States before 1925, 91 percent have become U.S. citizens. To a large extent, this is due to the laws that until 1952 prohibited the granting of citizenship-by-naturalization to the Japanese.

The Chinese, who were able to obtain citizenship relatively sooner in 1943, also reflect the effects of this discrimination to a lesser degree; 23 percent of those who immigrated here prior to 1925 are still not U.S. citizens.

Citizenship is one indicator of assimilation into a society. As can be seen by these figures, Japanese in this area have not been so well assimilated as is generally assumed.

Another indicator of their lack of assimilation is the fact that a majority of Japanese American adults speak Japanese as their mother tongue. That is, a surprisingly large 62 percent of the total Japanese American population had Japanese, not English, as the language spoken by people in their homes when they were children. This is almost as high a percentage as the Chinese (76 percent) and the Pilipinos (64 percent) who have retained their respective Asian languages as their mother tongue.

In fact, there are more third-generation Japanese who speak Japanese as their mother tongue (28 percent) than Chinese who speak Chinese and have been in the United States for an equal length of time (27 percent). This puts into question the stereotypes of the rapidly-assimilated Japanese who speaks English by the second generation, compared to the less-assimilated Chinese who still does not speak much English by the fourth generation.

Statistics for California point to this high percentage as true for the mainland as well as for Hawaii.

There is another indication of continuing problems for Japanese Americans in facility with the English language. According to a study done in 1974, nearly two-thirds of all Japanese, as well as Chinese, born in the United States who enter the University of California at Berkeley must take the Subject A course in Basic English so that they can "acquire an acceptable ability in English composition." This leads to the conclusion that both Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans share similar difficulties with the English language. Both their rate of taking Subject A is twice that for entering white students.

Thus, the Japanese are not so assimilated into American society as it first appears in terms of language or citizenship. They seem quite similar to Chinese Americans.

Immigration

Although there are substantially fewer Japanese immigrants entering the United States each year (around 5,000) than Chinese (19,000), both Japanese and Chinese immigrants seem to have similar characteristics. Contrary to popular belief, most Chinese immigrants are *not* cheap, unskilled labor. Half of the Chinese immigrants are professional, managerial and technical workers, compared to 53 percent of the Japanese and 69 percent of the Filipinos. The 1965 Immigration Act allowed much higher quotas for the Japanese and Chinese, but set selective standards which favor professional and technical immi-

grants rather than the unskilled.

Both foreign-born Japanese and Chinese men are concentrated in the professional and managerial jobs, rather than in unskilled occupations which bring in little income. For instance, nearly half of all employed foreign-born Japanese men are in the upper-status white collar occupations as professionals and managers (45 percent), compared to only 13 percent of foreign-born Japanese men in skilled and semi-skilled jobs as craftsmen, foremen and machine operators. Similarly, nearly half of all employed Chinese-born men are technical, professional, managerial or administrative workers (42 percent), while only 15 percent are craftsmen and operatives.

The rest, around one-third of both Japanese-born (29 percent) and Chinese-born men (33 percent), are laborers, service workers or farm-related managers and laborers. The Chinese, however, are more heavily concentrated in the service industry (30 percent) than the Japanese (9 percent). This reflects the importance of small retail and food stores and especially restaurants in the Chinese community which are owned and managed by Chinese.

Data are not available on differences in income between foreign-born and U.S.-born Japanese and Chinese men. But it seems likely that foreign-born men earn more than their American-born counterparts.

Foreign-born women, however, do conform to the stereotype of the unskilled immigrants. The majority of immigrants from Japan, China and the Philippines between 1965, when restrictions on Asian immigration were relaxed, and 1973 were women (60 percent). Over three-fourths of the Japanese immigrants were women, many of them wives of American servicemen. In 1970, one out of ten Japanese women were immigrants who had arrived between 1960 and 1970.

The Chinese women are even more heavily immigrant than the Japanese, due to the larger numbers of Chinese entering the country. In 1970 one out of every three Chinese women were immigrants who had arrived during the previous decade.

The pattern of occupations for both Japanese and Chinese female immigrants is quite similar, although the Chinese have a much higher concentration in the professional and managerial jobs. Approximately one-third of foreign-born Chinese women (37 percent) and Japanese women (31 percent) work in such factory-related jobs as craftswomen and machine operators. One-third of the foreign-born Japanese women (33 percent) and one-sixth of the foreign-born Chinese women (15 percent) are service workers, including domestics. This means that the majority of foreign-born Chinese (52 percent) and Japanese (64 percent) women are working in unskilled, lower income jobs. At the same time, a much higher proportion of foreign-born Chinese women are employed as professionals and managers (22 percent) than Japanese-born women (13 percent).

Thus, Japanese immigrants seem to be similar to Chinese with the men more concentrated in professional and managerial positions, while the women, who constitute the majority of immigrants, are concentrated in skilled and semiskilled jobs as craftspeople, operatives and service workers.

Unemployment

In 1970 both the Japanese Americans and the Chinese

Americans had lower unemployment rates than the population as a whole. The Japanese rate (2% for men and 3% for women) was less than the Chinese (3% for men and 4% for women), but both were less than the total population (4% for men and 5% for women).

This may have changed in the Chinese communities, particularly New York City, with the depression and the continuing influx of immigrants. In Los Angeles, however, where many Chinese immigrants live, the pattern of lower unemployment rates seems to have been maintained. Los Angeles City's Community Analysis Bureau found a very low unemployment rate for Chinatown, less than 5% in 1974 when the unemployment rate for Los Angeles as a whole was around 7%.

Therefore, neither the Japanese Americans nor the Chinese Americans seem to suffer the same extent of high unemployment that is intrinsic to the Black, Chicano and Puerto Rican communities.

Income

A frequent figure that is cited as proof that Japanese Americans are no longer an oppressed national minority is their high median family income (median means that half the people are higher and half are lower; statisticians seem to think that the median is more accurate a yardstick than the average).

While seeming to indicate that Japanese have achieved economic success equal to whites, these figures are in fact misleading, because they fail to take into account other factors that change their meaning significantly.

But first, let's look at the family income statistics. According to the 1970 Census, both Japanese American and Chinese American families have incomes higher than whites, which includes Chicanos and other Spanish-speaking people (\$9,961). The Japanese family income is, however, substantially above that of Chinese. In California, for example, the median Japanese family income is \$12,393 compared to \$10,916 for Chinese.

Both Japanese and Chinese families earn far more than either Blacks (a category including all nationalities other than Spanish-speaking) or Chicanos or Puerto Ricans. In 1970 Black families nationally earned \$6,067, while Chicano and Puerto Rican families earned \$7,534.

But these statistics tend to obscure some more telling data. One of the major reasons for the higher income level of the Japanese Americans is that a majority of Japanese households have both husbands and wives working (60 percent), as compared to only 39% of all families in the United States. This high number of working Japanese women greatly increases the total income of their families.

In addition, Japanese women work for a longer period of time than women in the general population; 52% work for a full year, while only 44% of all women are able to do so. Since they work longer than other women, their overall income tends to be higher than the average—even when lower for the actual time worked—and therefore contributes more to the total income of their families.

The Chinese pattern is similar, explaining how the median Chinese family income is higher than whites. Almost as many Chinese women in families work as Japanese (48%). The impact of these additional earners for both the Japanese and the Chinese is to raise the overall income of a family and to obscure the substantial

percentage of individuals earning low incomes.

The income of individuals presents a more accurate assessment of financial status. A study by Harold Wong on "The Relative Economic Status of Chinese, Japanese, Black and White Men in California" (PhD Thesis, U.C. Berkeley Economics Department, 1974), based on the 1970 California Public Use Sample, finds that Japanese men 16 and older earn ten percent less than white men annually. Japanese men earn \$10,611 compared to a white annual income of \$11,769. This is still more than the Chinese, who earn 27% less than whites (\$8,567) and Blacks, who earn 37% less than whites (\$7,082). But it is a significant difference, especially considering that "white" still includes Chicanos. The whites probably earn more than is indicated.

Furthermore, Wong found that in terms of experience, education and occupation, Japanese consistently earn less than whites. Japanese earn 70% of what whites do with up to 15 years of experience working; Japanese earnings begin to increase with more experience until they reach nearly the same level as whites after 35 years of working. The Chinese pattern is similar, peaking in an income level above the Japanese but still below whites after working 15 years, and then decreasing somewhat below the Japanese after 25 years of working.

For every year worked, the whites always earn the most money and the Blacks always earn the least, while the Chinese and Japanese are intermediate. This pattern points to systematic discrimination against Japanese as well as Chinese, although both are less discriminated against than Blacks.

Another factor indicating job discrimination is that Japanese Americans earn less than whites who have the same level of education. Wong's study showed that Japanese income at every level of education is less than that of whites at the same level. Chinese are between Blacks and whites. For education below the 11th grade, Chinese incomes are closer to Blacks, but after the 11th grade their incomes are closer to the Japanese.

Another study of the 1970 California Public Use Sample shows that college-educated Japanese American men aged 25-65 earn substantially less (\$10,946) than college-educated white men (\$12,405), although they still earn more than college-educated Black men (\$7,736). In fact, whites earn \$698 for every year of education they have, while Japanese Americans earn only \$480 and Blacks \$200. Whites return roughly 3.5 times as much money on their educational investments as Blacks and 1.5 times as much as Japanese.

Japanese Americans are closer to whites in their income than to Blacks, but their higher educational level means that they should be earning slightly more than whites—on an average of \$386 per year more. Instead, they are earning less than whites, in spite of their higher educational level. Consequently, for the Japanese Americans' earnings to reach equality with that of whites, their education must actually surpass the white level.

The pattern of job discrimination is also clear when examining how much Japanese, Chinese and whites in the same occupation earn. Japanese American men earn less than whites in virtually every occupation, except for craftsmen and farm laborers and foremen, Wong found. The Japanese probably do not earn more than whites even in these areas, since the category of "whites" includes Chicanos, who are a large proportion of the farm laborers

and earn much less than whites. The Chinese American men earn more than whites only in the occupations of craftsmen and health service workers. The Japanese usually have a higher income than the Chinese, except in transport equipment operatives (\$7,650 for Chinese; \$6,788 for Japanese) and domestic workers (\$3,130 for Chinese; \$2,133 for Japanese).

The biggest gaps between Japanese and Chinese on the one hand and whites on the other occur in the basic occupations that are the two top highest incomes for whites: professionals and technicians, where whites earn \$15,423 compared to \$13,412 for Japanese and \$13,059 for Chinese; and managers and administrators, except farm, where whites earn \$16,580, while Japanese earn \$13,581 and Chinese earn \$10,457. Chinese display significant differences in income with whites on more levels than the Japanese do.

But the consistent pattern indicating systematic job discrimination against Japanese Americans still seems fundamental to the California economy. Wong found that even though Japanese are more proportionately employed in the professional-technical-managerial-administrative level than whites, they earn less money. Obviously, they are able to move only into the lower rungs of these occupations, which pay less. Chinese have a similar pattern to the Japanese but earn less, although they still earn significantly more than do Blacks in all of the higher paying jobs.

Some statistics for Japanese American men, however, have been obscured by governmental manipulation of figures. It appears that nationally, Japanese American men 16 years of age and older earn more (\$7,574) than white men (\$6,772) and Chinese men (\$5,223). But it should be noted that "white" includes Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. The data for white men also includes males aged 14 and older, while for everyone else it is for males aged 16 and older. The white data therefore are biased lower than they should be; after all, what is the average income of males aged 14 and 15? It is believed that if the data were provided for men who really white and 16 years and older, the Japanese income would have been less than white.

Japanese American women, of course, earn much less than the men. Japanese women in the United States as a whole earn \$3,236 a year, whereas Japanese men earn a median of \$7,574. This gap is similar to the gap in income of U.S. women as a whole compared to men, which is evidence of the long tradition of sexual discrimination in this country.

But are Japanese American women discriminated against because of their race as well as their sex? Unfortunately, neither of the studies done on the 1970 California Use Sample includes the women, so there is not much information available.

Figures are available that purport to show that Japanese American women earn more than Chinese and white women. In California, for instance, the Census shows that they earn \$3,247 per year, while white women earn \$2,874 and Chinese women earn \$2,505. These figures are meaningless, however. They do not take into account the wide variation in number of weeks worked, whether the women worked full-time or part-time and whether they were supporting themselves or families or were supplemental incomes to their husbands. Japanese women work more weeks on the average than other women, so it would be logical for them to earn more. On a weekly basis, though,

they probably earn less than white women. Unless these figures for income are adjusted for these factors or at least broken down to indicate these factors, they do not mean much.

There are also no data available comparing Japanese, Chinese and white women's incomes in terms of experience, education and occupation, as Wong did for men. Until there is more research, I feel that these findings are inconclusive.

Thus, there appears to be a pattern of oppression in the incomes of Japanese men: they consistently earn less than white men who have the same level of experience, education and occupation. Although the Japanese Americans in some areas earn more than the Chinese, they never earn more than whites. The basic pattern of incomes is that whites earn the most, Blacks earn the least, and Japanese and Chinese are intermediate.

Occupation

There is a common stereotype of the Japanese American as a middle class professional. It is true that Japanese men nationally are more concentrated in the professions and managerial/administration positions (33%) than the U.S. population as a whole (25%). Japanese women so employed are the same as U.S. women (20%). It is interesting to note that the Chinese are even more centralized in the professional and managerial occupations than the Japanese Americans; 40% of all Chinese working men and 23% of all Chinese working women are in these categories.

Both Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans seem to cluster in the professions where language skills are not so important as physical skills, such as optometry, pharmacy and medicine. They appear to be in the lower rungs of these professions, as indicated by their income relative to whites. Another indicator of their lower position within a profession, as pointed out by Prof. Harry Kitano, is that there are many Japanese American teachers in elementary and secondary schools, but few are tenured at the college level (most Japanese with tenure are from Japan). It was not until relatively recently—the early or middle 1950's—that Japanese were even able to get jobs teaching on any level (see Kitano, "Japanese Americans: The Development of a Middleman Minority," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XLIII, No. 4, November, 1974). I did not have time to find the statistics on this, but it does tally with my observations. More research needs to be done, though, in order to say this conclusively.

At the same time that there is this large proportion of Japanese American and Chinese American workers in higher status and income jobs, it is also true that there are substantial numbers of Japanese and Chinese on the other end of the scale, in unskilled, poor-paying occupations. Wong points to the large clusters of Japanese men in California in the nonfarm laborer category (14.5% compared to 3.1% for whites and 2.5% for Chinese). On the other hand, large numbers of Chinese men in California are concentrated in the food service industry (23.2% compared to 1.9% for whites and 2.9% for Japanese).

Also, although many Japanese in California work as craftsmen (13.8 percent), they have systematically been excluded from many craft jobs by all-white craft union policies (except in Hawaii, where their proportions are similar to whites so employed). This discriminatory

exclusion from the crafts is seen in California, where more whites (21.9%) and, strangely enough, even more Blacks (17.8%) are employed in this occupation than Japanese or Chinese (11.4%).

Overall, there are many more Japanese and Chinese employed as laborers, farmers or service workers than there are whites. In California, for example, 23.2% of the Japanese men and 30.7% of the Chinese are so employed, compared to only 9.8% of the whites. The "white" figure is probably even lower, because it includes Chicanos, many of whom are probably clustered in these unskilled jobs. Both Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans are much more similar to Blacks than to whites; 30.6% of all Blacks are employed in these lower-paying, lower-status jobs.

The majority of the American population is employed by private companies, and Japanese and Chinese are no exceptions. It is interesting to note that in California fewer Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans and Black men work for private companies than whites, Wong found. Nearly three-fourths of the whites work for private companies, while around two-thirds of the Blacks, Chinese and Japanese do so.

Instead, more Blacks than any others are employed by the federal government, including the Armed Forces (13.6%); more Japanese are self-employed in their own unincorporated businesses (20.4%); and the Chinese are split between being grouped in state government (5.7%) and self-employed in unincorporated businesses (12.1%). The Chinese and Japanese are owners and proprietors of small wholesale, retail or food stores, restaurants and laundries. The Japanese enterprises are small scale. Japanese who are self-employed in their own unincorporated businesses earn less (\$10,967) than both the Chinese (\$12,932) and whites (\$15,190) so employed. In fact, only Black small business owners earn less, \$8,774.

Japanese women do not appear to differ much from U.S. women as a whole in their occupational patterns, although again there is a lack of data. The majority of Japanese American women are either clerical or sales workers (41%) with another 24% in more menial service occupations. This is similar to the U.S. population as a whole, where 42% of all women are clerical or sales workers and 22% are in the service occupations. One-fifth of both Japanese and all women are professional, technical, managerial or administrative workers (20%).

Chinese American women have a slightly different pattern. Like the Japanese Americans and all other women in the United States, Chinese women are mainly employed in low-level white collar jobs such as sales clerks, typists and secretaries (37%).

Many more Chinese women, however, operate machinery, such as sewing machines, laundry machines and light factory equipment, than Japanese or all women (24% compared to 15% for Japanese Americans and 16% for women as a whole). This reflects the existence of the Chinatown sweatshops. On the other hand, fewer Chinese women are employed in the service industries (16% compared to 24% for Japanese and 22% for all women). And slightly more Chinese women than either Japanese or all women are professionals and managers (23%).

Thus, although their patterns of occupation are slightly different in emphasis, Japanese American and Chinese American women appear to be employed in the more

menial occupations, although no more so than the average of women in the United States.

The men's pattern, however, is different. The Japanese American and Chinese American men are more concentrated than the whites in the professions and administrative positions, but at the same time are more clustered than whites in the menial occupations—Japanese as nonfarm laborers and Chinese as food service workers. Both Japanese and Chinese men are more similar to Blacks than whites in their occupational patterns; around one-third of all three minorities are employed as laborers, farmers or service workers, while less than one-tenth of all whites are so employed.

Education

Japanese Americans are noted for their educational achievements; it has been through their emphasis on higher education that Japanese Americans have been able to attain upward mobility to the professions. Nearly three-quarters of all Japanese American men have completed high school (70%), and nearly one-fifth have completed college (19%). This is well above the U.S. average of 54% completing high school and 13% completing college.

The Chinese American men are more contradictory with extraordinarily high educational attainment contrasting with a significant population of uneducated. Fully one-quarter of all Chinese men have obtained their college degrees, double the U.S. average and higher than any other racial minority in the United States. On the other hand, nearly as many have only finished elementary school—23% compared to 15% for the Japanese and 27% for all men in the U.S.

With such a large proportion of Chinese and Japanese college graduates, it would be expected that their median level of education would be substantially greater than that for the U.S. as a whole. Instead, both the Chinese and the Japanese are only slightly higher than the U.S. median of 12.1 years of school completed (12.6 years). This reflects the fact that although there are more Japanese American and Chinese American men who are better educated than whites, there is a greater number of Chinese American and Japanese American men without an advanced education.

The same general patterns in education are characteristic of the Japanese American and Chinese American women. More Japanese women finish high school (67%) and college (11%) than the U.S. average (55% high school graduates and 8% college graduates). It is interesting to note that fewer Japanese American women graduate from college, however, than any of the other Asian American women including Filipinos, of whom 27% finish college.

The Chinese women, like the Chinese men, are heavily concentrated on both ends of the spectrum. More Chinese women have completed college (17%) than Japanese women or all U.S. women. At the same time, more Chinese American women have only completed elementary school (28%) than Japanese (17%) or all women (25%).

Even though they have more college graduates than U.S. women in general, both the Japanese American and Chinese American women have fewer college graduates than the Japanese American or Chinese American men. This is because both Asian groups tend to emphasize higher education as desirable for men rather than for women.

Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans may soon

reach an even higher educational level, as seen by the number of youth 18 to 24 years old currently enrolled in college. Contrary to popular belief, more Chinese than Japanese are enrolled in college; nearly three-fourths of all Chinese American men in that age group are enrolled (71%), compared to 56% Japanese Americans and only 37% for the total United States. More Chinese women, too, are enrolled than Japanese—over half (58%), representing more than the men or women of any other racial minority. Japanese women of that age are 48% enrolled in school. The Chinese American pattern of large numbers of both educated and uneducated may, then, be changing.

Although Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans are better educated than whites, this does not appear to work to their advantage. In California, for instance, according to Wong, Japanese American men have a higher educational level than whites in virtually all the broad occupation categories. But, as was shown before, they earn less than whites in nearly all of these occupational categories. This gap in education compared to whites is the greatest among skilled and unskilled workers, especially Japanese American farm workers who have a mean education of 12.6 years compared to 9.4 for whites (including Chicanos) and 9.2 for Blacks.

The Chinese, on the other hand, are closer to the whites. In most occupational categories, they have a little less education than whites and more education than Blacks.

Poverty

The U.S. Census Bureau defines poverty as a range of incomes adjusted by family size, sex of the family head, the number of children under 18 years of age and farm/non-farm. According to the Bureau, in 1970 the average poverty level for families is \$3,388 a year, while for individuals it is \$1,834. Obviously, there are many more poor people than these figures would indicate, since even in 1970, few families or individuals could survive on so little money.

According to this definition of poverty, fewer Japanese Americans are poor than Chinese Americans. In California, for instance, only 6.3% of Japanese families are poor, while 9.9% of the Chinese families are defined as having fallen below the poverty level. Among individuals this pattern also holds; 13% of the Chinese Americans are poor, compared to 8% of the Japanese Americans.

On the other hand, both Chinese and Japanese are closer to whites than to Blacks in their percentage of families and individuals who are below the poverty level. Nationally, 8.6% of white families and 29.8% of Black families are poor, compared to 10% Chinese and 6% Japanese, while in California 7.4% of whites and 20.9% of Blacks are below poverty level, compared to 6.3% Japanese and 9.9% Chinese.

There are more female-headed Japanese families (28% in California) than Chinese (15%), and more of these families are in poverty (24%) than the Chinese (19%). In this category of family, too, the Japanese and Chinese have fewer poor than the population as a whole (32%) or than Blacks or Chicanos.

The elderly, those 65 years and older, are generally more poor than the rest of the population of the United States. More Japanese (16%) than Chinese (13%) are elderly, and more Japanese elderly in California are poor (24.9%) than Chinese (21.0%) or than the white average for the U.S.

(23.3%). Blacks have a small average of poor aged (9.9%), probably because fewer Blacks live to be over 65 years of age and because the Black population is also much younger than the population as a whole.

Thus, although the Japanese do not have so high an incidence of "poverty" among families as do the Chinese, both Chinese and Japanese seem to have less poor than the population as a whole. The Japanese appear to have more aged poor than the Chinese, whites or Blacks and more female-headed families that are poor than Chinese. However, this definition of poverty is totally arbitrary; it would be more significant to deal with the incomes below \$7,000 or thereabouts. While the Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans may not be destitute, they probably have more poor than whites.

Housing

In terms of housing, as well, Japanese are not so well off as is generally assumed. They are among the most urban of the racial minorities, except for Chinese; 89% of the Japanese, 97% of the Chinese and 86% of the Filipinos live in the cities, compared to a national average of 73% and a Black average of 81.3%.

There has been a general trend of people living in large cities to move to the suburbs; 31% of the total U.S. population lives in central cities of more than 50,000 and 37% lives in suburbs around these cities. But Japanese and other Asians have remained concentrated in the inner cities with Blacks and other racial nationalities and minorities. Nearly half of both the Japanese and Pilipino populations (48%) and over two-thirds of the Chinese (68%) live in the central cities, while 38% of the Japanese, 37% of the Pilipinos and 25% of the Chinese live in the suburbs. Blacks also are concentrated in the central cities, but to a lesser extent than the Chinese (58.1%), and with fewer living in the suburbs than any of the Asian national minorities (16%). With the movement of jobs and political and economic power to the suburbs, the Japanese and other Asians who remain concentrated in the inner cities must face an increasing breakdown of social services, employment opportunities, income levels and housing.

Statistics are not easily available, but it appears from studies on health services done by the Asian American Studies Center at U.C.L.A. and from discussions with people at the center and with Prof. Harry Kitano, who has done most of the studies on Japanese Americans, that both the Japanese and Chinese poor are concentrated in ghettos in the downtown areas of big cities—Chinatowns and Little Tokyos. There are more Chinese poor than Japanese, so they are more highly visible.

For instance, in Los Angeles there are 4,691 Chinese in Chinatown, which is a small area with a high population density of 12,420 people per mile. This is about twice the density for Los Angeles, but not that unusual; it is quite close to the density of Berkeley, 12,000. (Los Angeles City Community Analysis Bureau, "The State of the City: A Cluster Analysis for Los Angeles," June, 1974). It is estimated that between 5200 and 8300 Japanese Americans live in the Little Tokyo-Boyle Heights area of Los Angeles, but are much less crowded than the Chinese.

More families in Los Angeles Chinatown are below the poverty level (17%) than the Los Angeles population (10%) with a median income of under \$8,000, compared to the Los Angeles median of above \$11,000. Comparable figures

are not available for Little Tokyo in Los Angeles.

One particular factor indicates poverty in the Los Angeles Little Tokyo, however. A study by the Oriental American Summer Project of 1968 noted that less than one percent of the Little Tokyo population was under the age of 60 years and 21 percent were 80 and older. This means that virtually all the Little Tokyo population is composed of Issei, or first generation immigrants, who came to the U.S. before 1925. This large elderly population would seem to indicate a poor population with very low incomes.

One thing to remember about the differences between Little Tokyo and Chinatown is that little Tokyo's development was interrupted by evacuation and the camps during World War II, when the Japanese were expropriated; they lost their stores, homes, businesses and savings. Only a few people returned to Little Tokyos after the war, the Isei who could not afford to go anywhere else. This means that many Japanese who might never have left Little Tokyos were forced to go elsewhere to earn a living; many of them still congregate in small areas of Los Angeles, indicating that if not for the concentration camp experience, they would probably have remained in Little Tokyo, which would then have retained a similarity to Chinatown.

The pattern for Little Tokyo may be changing, with an increasing influx of young, male Japanese immigrants, but there has not been an analysis to date that could measure this.

But for both Japanese and Chinese, only a small percentage of their total Los Angeles population lives in these inner city ghettos. The Chinese population of Los Angeles is much smaller than the Japanese. Only 9.4% of all Chinese in the U.S. live in LA County (40,798), while 17.9% of all Japanese in the U.S. (104,994) live in Los Angeles. Of these, only 11.4 percent of the Chinese live in Chinatown while only 5 to 8 percent of the Japanese live in Little Tokyo. The rest of the Chinese seem to be scattered randomly throughout the Los Angeles County. Chinese who are not poor do not appear to be living in segregated housing areas, although more systematic study of their housing patterns is necessary.

In contrast, the Japanese are clustered in highly visible groups outside of Little Tokyo—Gardena, Del Rey, West Los Angeles around Sawtelle, Crenshaw and J-Flats near Silver Lake. In virtually all these areas, they live in racially-mixed neighborhoods, frequently serving as border areas on the Black and Chicano community. The Gardena and Del Rey areas, for instance, are in their majority white (55%), one quarter Chicano (26%) and nearly one-fifth Japanese (17%); they are mainly single-unit family dwellings that were built in the 1940s and '50s, typical of Los Angeles working-class neighborhoods.

These areas are not for upwardly mobile white populations, but are usually between the Black or Chicano ghettos and whites. Gardena is between predominantly Black cities and predominantly white cities; J-Flats is in the Chicano community; Crenshaw is part of the Black community and is one-third Black, one-third Japanese American and one-third white, Chinese and Chicano. West Los Angeles is the only area that, although it has a mixed white-Chicano-Japanese population, is not bordering on a ghetto area.

This clustering of the Japanese Americans is not solely due to housing discrimination, although that has played a certain role until fairly recently. For example, in the Bay Area, certain parts of Berkeley and the entire city of

Albany did not allow Japanese Americans to move in until the early 1960s, and in Los Angeles Japanese Americans were not allowed to move north of Wilshire Boulevard until the early 1960s.

Even when allowed by real estate agencies and landlords to move into areas, however the Japanese seem to congregate, due to fear of non-acceptance by whites reflecting the concentration camp experience during World War II. Most Japanese who were in the camps will not talk about their experiences, but still feel that they cannot trust whites. Being forced out of Little Tokyo by the evacuation, they cluster in other areas. They also probably group together because of continuing white hostility to their presence in other areas and the traditional Japanese American desire to avoid confrontations. Another reason may be that many of their small businesses cater to the Japanese community and cannot be easily moved.

This pattern suggests that Chinese who are not poor tend to be randomly distributed throughout Los Angeles, whereas even Japanese who are not poor tend to be still concentrated in small, highly visible groups on the edge of the Black and Chicano communities. This pattern may only be true for Los Angeles. Obviously, further research is needed to determine what the housing patterns for Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans in other areas of the country are like, as well as to amplify the Los Angeles pattern.

Children's Education

In Los Angeles, Japanese American children go to their neighborhood schools, so they are grouped in the areas in which they live. They generally go to mixed schools, where a large number of students are Black or Chicano. They do not go to private schools or to all-white schools. More data are needed in this area to see if this analysis holds, since these generalizations are based on interviews with Prof. Harry Kitano and the staff of the Asian American Studies Center at U.C.L.A.

Home ownership

More Japanese and Chinese own their homes than Blacks. In California more Japanese (56.7%) than Chinese (47.7%) own their own homes, but both are closer to the percentage of white home owners (54.9%) than to Blacks who own their own homes (39.1%). Although more Japanese than Chinese own their own homes, Chinese homes are assessed as being worth more than Japanese (\$27,700 compared to \$25,400 for Japanese). Both are worth more than whites (\$23,100) and Blacks (\$18,400). In this area, too, their differences with each other are less than their differences with Blacks.

Politics

Another area that seems to reveal a pattern of systematic exclusion is that of political participation in the system. Outside of Hawaii, Japanese Americans, as well as Chinese Americans, seem to have been excluded from political power. They are concentrated in Los Angeles, where they are 1.5% of the population and the San Francisco-Bay Area, where they are 1.4% of the population. But they have had no representatives elected to the city council or to the state legislature from these areas, let

alone to the U.S. House of Representatives or the U.S. Senate. If they have been assimilated into mainstream American society, it would seem logical that at some time Japanese Americans in this area would have been elected to office. With few exceptions, this has also been true on local and state levels in areas where fewer Japanese Americans live, indicating systematic exclusion.

The Chinese have a similar pattern of exclusion. Although they are 3.5% of the population of the San Francisco-Bay Area and .5% of the population of Los Angeles, they have had only one representative, who was elected to the Berkeley City Council, and no representatives elected to the state legislature or U.S. House of Representatives or Senate from those areas. I do not know if they have had representatives elected to the state legislature from smaller areas of the country.

However, there appears to be a similarity between the Chinese American and Japanese American representation on the local, state and national levels. They have both been effectively excluded from the decision-making processes of the government.

Japanese Community

Japanese Americans, as well as the Chinese Americans, have organized to fight against what they perceive as oppression of their community. For instance, Japanese Americans have organized to fight against the redevelopment of Little Tokyo in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The Citizens Against Nihonmachi Eviction (CANE) in San Francisco was formed several years ago to protest the removal of old Issei immigrants from the Japan Trade Center area. The redevelopment project there has displaced these elderly poor, forcing them to move into more crowded and dilapidated housing, and replaced them with businesses and restaurants catering to tourists and wealthy Japanese businessmen. The project is threatening to engulf more of the Little Tokyo that remains.

Faced with a similar move in Los Angeles, the Japanese Americans in Little Tokyo organized the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Association, which has sponsored speakers at hearings and developed plans and other activities to try to make the project more responsive to their needs. They are trying to obtain low-cost housing, guarantees for the small businesses and restaurants run by Japanese and a cultural community center.

One important point to note is that from 1968 to the present, the various Asian American nationalities have overcome their mutual hostility and suspicion enough to unite in various struggles. This does not mean, of course, that a new Asian American nationality is being formed; the differences among the nationalities are still present and significant. There has been, however, a pan-Asian dynamic to many of these struggles, and Japanese Americans have been not only accepted as being oppressed in the same way as Chinese and Pilipinos, but have often played a central, if not leadership, role in the important Asian American struggles.

Japanese Americans were the main organizers of the Asian American contingents of the major anti-war marches on both the East and West Coast, and Japanese Americans usually constituted the majority of the demonstrators in these contingents. The highly successful Asian

Moratorium march in Los Angeles was led by Japanese Americans (I believe it was in November, 1970 and had well over 1,000 marchers, but have not been able to check the Asian American newspapers of the time). Japanese Americans were also leaders in the May, 1970 upsurge at the University of California at Davis, and I believe at San Jose State, where they were instrumental in calling effective strikes and protest rallies.

Japanese Americans on the West Coast (at least) have been in the leadership of many Asian American student struggles to obtain and retain Asian American Studies as part of the curriculum. They were the leaders of the Asian American group in the Third World Liberation Front struggles for Ethnic Studies programs at San Francisco State and the University of California at Berkeley in the winter of 1968-1969. These long strikes initiated nationwide struggles for Ethnic Studies on many campuses. Most recently, the Japanese Americans led the partially successful struggle this spring at U.C.L.A. to preserve the autonomy of the Ethnic Studies Centers.

Japanese Americans have, in addition, played leading roles in protests of discriminatory hiring practices. For instance, in the spring of 1974 in New York City, they helped to organize the demonstration at City Hall of 1,000 Asians demanding preferential hiring of Asians on construction projects financed by the city.

Thus, Japanese Americans have not only perceived themselves as oppressed in a similar way as the Chinese and Filipinos, but they have acted against that oppression and have been accepted as leaders in the struggles against that oppression.

Hawaii

The situation of the Japanese Americans is complicated, as I mentioned before, by their position of dominance in Hawaii. Even the Chinese could not be considered an oppressed national minority in Hawaii, although the Filipinos are still clearly oppressed. The Japanese are the largest racial minority in Hawaii, 28.3% of the Hawaiian population; the Chinese are 12% and the Filipinos around 11%. Asians as a whole are a majority in Hawaii.

Both Chinese and Japanese earn substantially more than the U.S. average, but it must be remembered that salaries and cost of living in Hawaii are at least 25% higher than on the mainland. There are fewer Japanese men in Hawaii who earn less than \$4,000 a year (26%) than on the mainland (29% in California). And many less Chinese men earn less than \$4,000 a year in Hawaii (27%) compared to California (40%).

One-third of the Japanese American men earn over \$10,000 a year in both Hawaii and California. The Chinese, however, jump from 25% in California to 36% in Hawaii earning that much money. Chinese families in Hawaii have an even higher median income (\$14,936) than Japanese (\$13,542), both of them substantially higher than in California (\$12,393 for Japanese and \$10,916 for Chinese).

The Filipinos, in contrast, earn less in Hawaii (median family income, \$9,289) than they do nationally (\$9,318).

The same differentiation is reflected in occupations. The Japanese and Chinese men are randomly distributed, corresponding to the distribution of the United States male population as a whole. They have a higher concentration in the skilled occupations than on the mainland, reflecting

the lack of discrimination against Asians in Hawaiian trade unions, and a good proportion who are professional and technical workers, the Chinese more (21.7%) than the Japanese (14%). The Filipino men, however, are clustered in the skilled and semi-skilled blue collar jobs (43%) with only 4.6% being able to become professionals and technicians.

It is not necessary here to give detailed comparisons among the Asian women, but the same pattern of higher incomes and jobs for Chinese and Japanese and of lower-paying, unskilled jobs for Filipinos holds true for them as well.

The Japanese Americans, as well as Chinese Americans, have become assimilated into Hawaiian society as indicated by their higher incomes and general random distribution, similar to whites, in socioeconomic terms. The Japanese in particular have real political power within the state apparatus. They comprise over half the membership of the state House of Representatives with a large number of heads of state departments, and they have elected a governor in 1974, a U.S. senator and two U.S. House Representatives. They have dominated Hawaiian politics since Hawaii became a state and have even been able to join exclusive island clubs that had formerly been "for whites only."

Consequently, the Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans in Hawaii must be considered separately from those on the mainland.

Conclusions

As has been indicated by this sketchy analysis, more research needs to be done on the Japanese Americans in order to determine with certainty whether they are still an oppressed national minority. The Japanese Americans, although not in all cases, are slightly less oppressed than the Chinese Americans.

But the pattern of the discrimination against them is very similar: both are not acculturated into American society; both have a similar pattern of immigration; both have lower unemployment levels than whites; both earn less than whites but more than Blacks; both have higher concentrations in the professions than whites but, on the other end of the scale, have substantial numbers of unskilled workers; both have a higher percentage of better educated than whites but at the same time have a high percentage of people without an advanced education; both have poor concentrated in ghettos, although the Japanese appear to be more segregated in housing than the Chinese; both seem to have a roughly analogous level of poverty, as defined by the Census Bureau, to whites; both have been effectively excluded from political power; and both have organized against what they perceive as their oppression.

It seems to me that the differences between the Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans are smaller than the differences of both of them with whites or with Blacks. To a large extent, our analysis of the Chinese Americans should not differ drastically from our analysis of the Japanese Americans. The document makes a clear differentiation between the two: Chinese Americans are an oppressed national minority and Japanese Americans are not. This differentiation is at best premature. All indications are that no differentiation exists to warrant such a distinction.

The factor that probably makes the most difference

between the Chinese and the Japanese is that the Japanese come from the only imperialist nation that is non-white. This means that the American government's treatment of the Japanese Americans has been influenced by its foreign policy towards Japan; since World War II the government has wanted to maintain good relations with Japan and therefore mediated treatment of Japanese Americans. Corollary to this is that the importance of Japanese multi-national corporations has probably also helped a very small, but economically weighty, section of the Japanese Americans. These are contributing factors to the complexity of the position of the Japanese Americans.

But another factor tends to outweigh these. As any Asian can tell you, most Americans of whatever nationality are unable to distinguish between the various Asian nationalities in terms of physical features, names, cultures, or in any way. This has resulted from the unique brand of racism, so intrinsic to the structure of American capitalism, that has been developed in this country over the last two hundred years.

Due to this peculiarly virulent racism, the Japanese have been lumped together with the Chinese, the Pilipinos and the Koreans and treated accordingly. They face much of the same discrimination and segregation as the Chinese and Pilipinos simply because "all Asians look alike." The nature of American racism has probably been a major reason why the Japanese have been limited and unable to assimilate so far, in spite of their origins in an imperialist nation.

The difference that this racism makes can be seen clearly in a comparison of the Irish with the Japanese, as was mentioned briefly before. The Irish do not even come from an imperialist nation; they come from a colony of England, Ireland. But they are white. So after a short stay near the bottom when they first arrived, they have become assimilated into American society, earning the same as other whites, participating in politics, and not suffering from any deep-going and systematic discrimination in such things as occupation, housing or education.

This contrasts sharply with the Japanese Americans, who have never been assimilated historically. They have always earned less than whites and in the past at least have been systematically excluded from certain jobs, housing and political life because of their easily identifiable race.

The question of whether the Japanese Americans are an

oppressed national minority, while not a major one for our party, is also not inconsequential. It has significance especially in California for our election campaigns, our propaganda, and our interventions into struggles on campuses and in the Asian American communities.

Despite the evidence I have been able to accumulate so far, I have not been absolutely convinced that Japanese Americans constitute an oppressed national minority. Before such a conclusion can be reached, more research and discussion is necessary. This is said in all honesty, not from a hesitancy to take a position.

But while this question is still to be thoroughly proved, all the facts so far seem to lean towards the likelihood that the status of Japanese Americans is that of an oppressed national minority. The facts certainly indicate that it would be a mistake to take the categorical position at this time that they are *not* still oppressed.

Obviously, we need more information. While it would be best if we could clarify our position now, the party has functioned effectively for quite awhile without taking a position. Until we have enough evidence one way or another, it seems to me that it would be better to take no position at all rather than an incorrect one. Especially since this draft resolution is not just a conjunctural document but a long-range analysis for an entire period, I think it would be prudent to delete the reference to Japanese Americans from the document, not to take a position publicly on whether they are an oppressed national minority, and to continue this discussion at some point in the future.

(List of 1970 U.S. Bureau of Census Reports used in this contribution: *General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary*, June, 1972; *Special Reports: Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos in the United States*, July, 1973; *General Population Characteristics: California*, October, 1971; *General Housing Characteristics: United States Summary*, December 1971; *General Housing Characteristics: California*, September, 1971; *Detailed Characteristics: California*, Volumes I and II, February 1972. Another important source of data was Urban Associates, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, *A Study of Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics of Ethnic Minorities Based on the 1970 Census*. Volume II: *Asian Americans*, July, 1974.)

IN DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY

By Barry Sheppard

July 31, 1975

Elsewhere in this bulletin Comrade Debby Leonard takes "some comrades in the SWP" to task for an "increasing adaptation" to the "defense of bourgeois democracy." The case in point concerns Scott Nelson, an "imperial wizard" of the Texas Fiery Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and the Klan candidate for mayor of Houston.

Nelson was fired by the gas company he works for, ostensibly because he mailed some of his racist campaign literature to top company officials. Although he is not a member of the union that represents workers at this gas company, the union was compelled to file a grievance on his behalf. The union—Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 4-227—is the same local that Comrade Leonard is a member of, although she works at a different location than Nelson. Comrade Leonard approached the Houston branch organizer to propose a campaign in the union local to oppose the union arbitrating on behalf of the Klan leader. After consultation with the National Office, the Houston branch decided against Comrade Leonard's proposal.

The basic issue here is the same as the question of whether we should call on the capitalist government to ban racist or fascist organizations or individuals, or restrict their democratic rights such as by denying them the right to speak. In this case, it is not the capitalist government, but the capitalist bosses of an individual enterprise who have fired the Klansman for his views. It happens that we also have a candidate for mayor, and our candidate must have a clear position for or against the firing of the Klan candidate. Our position must be that we are against it.

This flows from our general position of opposition to the capitalists restricting anyone's democratic rights because of their political views. Historical experience proves conclusively that for every restriction against racists and the right-wing, the capitalists utilize any precedent that they have any right to restrict anyone's rights to come down ten times harder on the rights of Blacks, Chicanos, the labor and socialist movements. (See article on freedom of the press by Trotsky, the June 6 issue of the ISR.) In this instance, if we support the idea that the boss has the right to fire the Klan leader for his views, we concede to the boss that he has the right to fire people for their views. This "right" will inevitably be used not only against us, but against union militants, Blacks and Chicanos who the boss claims are "racists in reverse," etc.

If we were to support the right of the boss to fire the Klansman, that would put us in the position of seeming to be opposed to democratic rights, and the Klan in the position of the victim of an undemocratic act. That's not very good tactics—it plays right into the hands of the Klan, who are attempting to portray us as the threat to democracy as contrasted to them. In the current mayorial elections, our candidate would be in the position of supporting the firing of the Klan candidate, right at the very time we are conducting a campaign against the undemocratic practices of the Houston police, right in the middle of our PRDF suit in which we charge among other things that the FBI has put pressure on various bosses to

have Trotskyist workers fired for their views, right at the time we are in the midst of a campaign against the Klan for violating the democratic rights of our election campaign. The tactics Comrade Leonard proposes are wrong in principle and harmful at any time, but it must be said she sure has picked the moment to propose that we support some bosses' right to fire someone for their views!

The SWP is well known in Houston as a fighter against the Klan. Comrade Leonard was a central figure in the first round of that fight a few years ago and we are in a new round now. But the tactics she proposes would cut right across our campaign against the Klan, and aid the city authorities in their attempt to portray us as "extremists" in a squabble with the "extremists" of the Klan, rather than fighters for democratic rights against the Klans' attacks on democracy. This would aid the city authorities in getting off the hook.

This is the issue within the union. Any campaign against the union arbitrating for Nelson against his firing could only be seen as support to the bosses' right to fire him for his views.

The racist views of Nelson have to be exposed and refuted in the union. To the extent the situation in the union makes it possible, we should take our campaign against the Klan into the union, exposing the Klan's attacks on democratic rights. Should the Klan or any other racists carry out any attacks or intimidation against Blacks or Chicanos, we will help organize Blacks and others in the union to defend themselves. But we don't ask the boss to fire anyone for their views and we don't support the boss when he does this.

Comrades can read the article by Malik Miah in the current ISR for more background on the issues involved. I want to turn to Comrade Leonard's points concerning bourgeois democracy and workers democracy. She says "demands for continual extension of 'bourgeois' democracy are substituted [by the party] for defense of 'workers' or 'trade union' democracy." To buttress her point, she quotes from Lenin in his polemic against Kautsky. In this quote, Lenin defends the early Soviet regime against Kautsky's charges that it was undemocratic. Lenin argues that "all the oppressed classes . . . recognize the Soviet government, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as being a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic."

What is Leonard's point with this quotation? That a regime of workers democracy will be a "million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic"? We agree, and one of the reasons we fight so hard for democratic rights is to convince the American workers that this is true, in light of the fact that Stalinism has given them the opposite impression. But what does this quote have to do with the situation in Houston? Is there a regime of workers democracy in Houston that has fired the Klansman? Is it really a soviet, and not a gas company? When the boss fired the Klansman, was that an instance of the practice of workers democracy?

Curiously, it appears to be the thesis of Comrade

Leonard that the answer to the last question is "yes." She sees bourgeois democracy and workers democracy only as counterposed opposites, and fails to also see their connections. It seems that in her view, bourgeois democracy and workers democracy are like the players in a two-handed poker game—what one wins the other invariably loses. We can get to workers democracy little by little, by whittling away at the prerogative of bourgeois democracy. Applied to the case in point, it is a *gain* for the workers democracy if the bourgeois democratic rights of the Klansman are cut down.

There are many things wrong with this schema. First, there are other players in the game. Bourgeois democracy is not the only form of bourgeois rule, and at a certain point as the crisis of capitalism deepens, the ruling class will turn to the right and ultimately to the fascists. The rules of the game then shift. The workers will have to defend themselves from the fascists' attacks on their democratic rights and democracy in general. The workers will be fighting in defense of democracy, including bourgeois democratic rights, and this will be part and parcel of the struggle to establish a workers regime.

This absolute counterposition of bourgeois democracy and workers democracy is also wrong in that it fails to see that the fight for the democratic rights of the workers has been a fight against the *limitations* of bourgeois democracy. Not only the SWP, but historically the workers movement has not fought to *limit* bourgeois democracy but to *extend* it, to fight *against* its limitations. The Marxist criticism of bourgeois democracy is that it is not democratic enough, and Marxists through the decades have been in the forefront of the fight to extend the right to vote to workers, to women, to Blacks; to extend the rights of free speech and association; to extend the right to form political parties and unions; to extend the right to strike—all bourgeois democratic rights.

On this latter point Leonard makes a grotesque error. She says, "The conflict between bourgeois democracy and workers democracy is apparent in the contradiction between the reactionary character of the union bureaucracy's adaptation to bourgeois democracy and the revolt of rank-and-file workers which forces them into illegal positions, such as public employee strikes. These strikes are illegal under bourgeois democracy, but are a living expression of workers democracy."

The right to strike is a bourgeois democratic right. Bourgeois democracy, however, has always and every-

where *limited* this right, in *contradiction* to its professed democracy and the workers have had to wage tremendous struggle to secure it. It is the *workers* who have fought to extend this right, while the *bourgeoisie* has sought to restrict it. That is, the workers have fought for a bourgeois democratic right against the bourgeoisie. Again, this is a fight to extend bourgeois democracy, not to limit it.

Leonard also charges that it is our "preoccupation with 'bourgeois democratic' demands which is at the heart of the SWP leadership's position on 'preferential layoffs.'" Their analysis is that it is necessary to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution by extending its gains to women and minorities." While we should "support" the "extension of bourgeois democratic rights to women and minorities," this is "not the base for the workers movement and should not be the base for the revolutionary movement. When the limitations imposed by bourgeois democracy result in a conflict with the demands and interests of workers as a class, we must support workers democracy. Democracy is a class question."

The fight against discrimination in layoffs is part of the fight to extend democratic rights—bourgeois democratic rights if you will—to women and oppressed nationalities. But this conflicts with "workers democracy," Comrade Leonard believes, and since "democracy is a class question," we come down on the side of "workers democracy." If ever super-radical verbiage was utilized to cover an outright reactionary position, this is it. Contrary to Leonard's reactionary view, the fight to extend democratic rights to women and oppressed minorities is in the interests of the working class as a whole and against the interests of the capitalist class in this sphere of layoffs and in every other sphere bar none. Any party which does not champion this position as part of the "base" of its program *cannot* be revolutionary.

Democracy is a class question. The workers want more of it and the capitalists try to restrict the amount they can have. We don't give the bosses or their government any handles to restrict democratic rights by calling on them to take away *anyone's* rights, and we don't cover up reactionary white male job-trust attitudes with "revolutionary" disdain for the democratic rights of women and the oppressed nationalities. Clarity on these issues is essential if we are right about the character of the coming period and the kind of party we have to build to give leadership in the battles that lie ahead.

1976 National Campaign Report

by Andrea Morell

August 1, 1975

Introduction

The party convention offers the first opportunity since the launching of the 1976 national election campaign for an exchange of ideas and experiences among comrades and campaign supporters from around the country.

I am submitting this article to the discussion bulletin on behalf of the national campaign committee to help lay the basis for the discussion of the campaign at the convention. There will be both a campaign workshop and a disclosure suit workshop during the convention.

This article reviews some of the high points and lessons of the first seven months of campaigning. It also draws the main outlines for the fall socialist election campaign activities. Comrades will have many additional observations and suggestions about our electoral work to contribute at the convention and in the workshops.

It is clear that the early launching of the national campaign was the right thing to do. As soon as Gerald Ford was appointed last fall, a flock of Democratic presidential hopefuls stepped forward and began touring the country seeking financial and other support. Having a socialist presidential ticket in the field along with the Democratic hopefuls seemed natural. Few questioned the fact that we launched the campaign nearly two years before the election.

Since January, the Camejo-Reid campaign has established significant credibility among a layer of reporters throughout the country and in various milieus and groups.

By announcing and campaigning early, we have gotten a big jump on our opponents. Baraka appears to be having problems convincing other Maoist organizations to go along with his proposal for a "people's" ticket. The Communist party did an abrupt about-face at their convention and did not announce national candidates as they had earlier promised publicly to do. They now say they will announce a ticket in early 1976. The People's party, which ran Dr. Spock in 1972, may announce "provisional" presidential and vice-presidential candidates at their convention this August.

Our campaign, therefore, is the only serious alternative to the Democratic and Republican parties and will have a clear field for at least the next six months.

Bill of Rights for Working People

One of the most successful activities of the first months of campaigning has been the campaign to distribute the election platform, the Bill of Rights for Working People. We have distributed 374,000 copies to date, 30,910 of them in Spanish. This compares with the distribution of 350,000 copies of the platform during the course of the entire Jenness-Pulley campaign in 1972 and 108,000 copies of the platform in the 1968 Halstead-Boutelle campaign.

By now, almost all of us have participated in this distribution campaign and have seen first hand the positive response the Bill of Rights receives. This is true among working people, the unemployed, college and high school students, members of oppressed national minorities,

and women.

Moreover, people are continuing to write to the national campaign office asking for bundles of the Bill of Rights to distribute. On July 29 a request for seventy-five copies was received from a Florida high school student, to cite only the most recent example.

The Bill of Rights is also being taken serious by many representatives of the media. Numerous articles about the campaign have cited the specific provisions of the Bill of Rights in a straightforward way.

It is safe to say that this election platform is one of the most popular pieces of socialist literature circulated in this country in decades. It presents our transitional program in a popular way that makes sense to people. We want to continue this distribution campaign in the coming months and identify the Camejo-Reid ticket and the Socialist Workers party as closely as possible with the Bill of Rights for Working People.

Media Coverage

Another highlight of the Camejo-Reid campaign has been the media coverage—the most extensive and serious ever received by an SWP presidential campaign. The launching of the campaign in December received wide coverage and we were successful in tying in the campaign with the well-publicized fight of the YSA to keep the FBI from surveilling its convention proceedings.

Particularly noteworthy has been coverage of the campaign in the *New York Times*. Several articles have appeared in the *Times* which reflected our success in tying in the campaign with the party's lawsuit against the government to halt illegal surveillance and harassment of party members, sympathizers, and campaign supporters. In addition, Peter Camejo and Syd Stapleton, PRDF national secretary, appeared on the "Today" show for ten minutes when the first batch of FBI files on the SWP was made public.

An article based on a day of street campaigning with Peter Camejo appeared in the respected Long Island daily *Newsday*. It was reprinted by more than a dozen newspapers throughout the country with a combined circulation exceeding 3 million.

Also highly significant is the coverage we are receiving in the national Black press. There have been three articles in *Muhammad Speaks*, for instance. A recent article in the *Afro-American* was based on a national campaign committee news release announcing Willie Mae Reid's attendance at the opening of the Joanne Little trial and Reid's statement in support of Little.

During her summer visit to Washington, D.C. and Detroit Willie Mae Reid appeared on two television programs, each of which allowed her more than twice as much time on the air as they had originally planned.

Appendix #1 to this article contains a round-up of national campaign media statistics through July 25.

Summer campaigning

The candidates' summer campaigning included a diverse range of activities from street campaigning to campus meetings to campaigning among striking workers. The media interest remained high over the summer and both candidates had several interviews with newspapers and appeared on major television interview programs in the cities they visited.

The summer banquets, rallies, barbecues, and picnics were well attended, especially by new campaign supporters. They constituted fifty percent of those in attendance at Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. The Cleveland banquet this summer was the largest local socialist rally in that city in recent years. The success of these events was reflected in substantial collections taken at all of them.

One high point of summer campaigning was the participation of Willie Mae Reid in the National Education Association (NEA) convention in Los Angeles in July. The socialist vice-presidential candidate not only addressed the 400-member Texas delegation but she and other campaign supporters spent several days campaigning among the teachers. They talked to teachers about the issues that directly and immediately affect them, as well as about the broader social and economic issues facing the entire working class.

Dozens of names of interested teachers were obtained for the campaign mailing list. The teachers were sent a letter thanking them for their interest along with a complimentary copy of the Pathfinder pamphlet "Which Way for Teachers?" This was the most concentrated campaigning among any group of unionists done by a socialist candidate in recent years. We will want to seek opportunities to repeat this kind of campaigning with national and local candidates through the course of the campaign.

Another highlight of summer campaigning was the launching of the Camejo-Reid campaign in Chicago, building on the gains made by the Reid mayoral race.

An audacious approach was taken to the Communist party's convention rally where about 2,000 copies of the Bill of Rights and about the same number of a leaflet containing "Ten Questions for Communist Party Leaders" were distributed. The New York campaign committee followed up this intervention by reproducing the "Ten Questions" leaflet and handing it out at a public meeting in New York where Gus Hall reported on the Communist party's Chicago convention.

In general, it is clear that the opportunities for party-building work through the vehicle of the campaign have expanded in several ways since the 1972 presidential campaign. First, greater numbers of people are attracted to the campaign. Although campus meetings have not yet been much larger than in 1972, rallies and banquets have uniformly been larger. More people are writing to the national campaign office expressing interest in and support for the Camejo-Reid campaign. Second, there are more people who want to actively help win support for the socialist candidates and be identified as supporters of the campaign. Third, there are qualitatively greater media openings with all that implies for reaching millions of people. Fourth, there is an expansion of campaign opportunities into new social layers. This is perhaps the most dramatic change.

It all adds up to the validation, through the day-to-day experience of the campaign, of the basis for the party's turn.

National and local election campaigns are one of the party's most valuable vehicles in making this turn. Through the campaigns we reach out and come into contact with the broadest and most diverse layers of the population.

The political themes and activities of the election campaign should not be viewed as separate from other campaigns our movement is involved in. Instead, the campaign is a vehicle for projecting them broadly. For example, in the fall socialist candidates and spokespersons will help build support for the ERA, the conference of the National Student Coalition Against Racism, Joanne Little's defense, local struggles against cutbacks and layoffs, the party's lawsuit against government suppression of democratic rights, the Young Socialist Alliance national convention, etc.

Through our choice of candidates and chairpersons, themes, and arenas of campaigning we can project the kind of party that is needed by the workers and that the SWP intends to become: a mass revolutionary socialist workers party.

Relating the campaign to the party's turn

We have taken the first steps in relating the campaign to the turn the party is making. One way has been the presentation of the platform, a Bill of Rights for Working People.

Another is through the kinds of tour activities arranged for the candidates and national chairpersons this past spring and summer. Tour itineraries have been somewhat different from those in the past. In the past few national campaigns a tour was arranged something like this: a candidate or spokesperson would arrive in town; a news conference would be held; campus meetings and maybe a high school appearance would be scheduled; radio and television interviews set up; and the week would wind up with a rally or banquet. A variety of other activities were, of course, included such as some campaigning, particularly in 1972, at army bases and prisons. But the schedule described above was fairly typical.

The tours in the 1976 campaign have emphasized campaigning at unemployment lines, shopping centers, plant gates, in the Black community, and among unionists or groups of people comrades work with on the job in addition to the campus, and press engagements. The response, as has been reported in the *Militant*, has been positive and proves the validity of doing this type of campaigning. Although campus meetings continue to be our most important area for winning volunteers, they have also signed up through street campaigning.

Social evenings in private homes where a group of unionists, Black campaign supporters, or others, can meet a candidate or campaign spokesperson have been experimented with successfully. One such meeting was arranged in San Francisco for Ed Heisler (Appendix #2).

We have learned that plant gate campaigning requires a considerable amount of advance planning and effort to be worthwhile. Without it, going to plant gates may turn out to be quite unproductive. This is an area of campaigning we want to do more of and want to discuss at the workshop

at the convention. Comrades and campaign supporters will find very useful the report by John Isenhower on plant gate campaigning in the Reid mayoral campaign (Appendix #3).

Another feature of the campaign to take note of is the interest in Peter Camejo's candidacy among various Spanish-speaking communities around the country. As a candidate of Latin-American descent, who speaks Spanish fluently, Camejo's campaign has attracted particular interest among Chicanos, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and others. His candidacy offers openings among layers in both rural and urban Spanish-speaking communities and we want to be particularly alert to these opportunities. Campaign committees will want to be sure to have on hand an adequate supply of the Spanish-language edition of the Bill of Rights for Working People.

Campaign Committees and Involvement of Volunteers

One of the most significant changes in our campaign work that is just beginning to take shape concerns involvement of non-party or non-YSA-member supporters in campaign committees and campaign activities. Through the national campaign committee's new "volunteer card," and through recent ads for the Camejo-Reid campaign in the *Militant*, we are beginning to revolve our approach to supporters around a new axis. That is, the axis of concrete participation in, as contrasted with general endorsement of, the campaign.

We want to open up socialist campaign committees to include all the people who want to help win support for the socialist candidates. This will strengthen the campaign. It will mean more campaign workers' ideas and energies to take advantage of opportunities. The ideas and skills of people who are not members of the YSA or SWP are useful and needed. And most importantly it can lead to more campaign supporters joining the Socialist Workers party or the Young Socialist Alliance.

This implies that the character of socialist campaign committees will change. They will be less and less like internal fractions taking on an area of work. Instead, they will become committees where all the supporters of the socialist candidates in a given area meet, discuss, and organize their work. Care should be taken to conduct campaign meetings in such a way so as to make everyone feel comfortable. We'll want to avoid jargon and in-group discussions, and find ways to make all campaign supporters and prospective YSA and party members aware that they are valued participants in the campaign.

It will seem natural to people who are interested in our campaigns to be asked to help work on them. Undoubtedly they expect it, since that is the norm in election campaigns in this country. When a person supports a candidate, they often volunteer to help staff the office, put out mailings, distribute literature on Saturdays or after work, etc. They go to work for *their* candidate.

To encourage such involvement the national campaign committee has printed 50,000 copies of a new "volunteer card," for the use of campaign committees and supporters. They can be placed on each chair at public meetings and at an appropriate time in the program a campaign representative can ask interested persons to fill them out and they can be collected. They can be used on campaign tables on campus or elsewhere, and in a variety of other ways.

The cards are also self-mailing, to facilitate their use by campaign traveling teams in particular. The cards convey to campaign supporters that their involvement is needed and that the campaign is an active one. Once volunteers sign the cards, committees will want to get in touch with them immediately to involve them in the campaign.

By encouraging people to "join the socialist campaign" we will begin to overcome the problem of projecting to potential supporters at rallies, campus meetings, and the like a confusing array of organizations they will need to join in order to support the candidates of their choice. On some occasions in the past, we have projected from a rally platform joining the SWP and/or joining the YSA—occasionally other organizations are mentioned too. This is confusing.

What should be projected to those in attendance at a rally or meeting is that they join the socialist campaign and fill out a "volunteer card." Once they become active in the campaign, they will naturally find out more about the SWP and the YSA. Many will ask to join.

At the same time, in campaign literature coupons, we will continue to ask directly if people want to join the SWP. The SWP is the party which nominates the candidates and on whose program they run, so it does not seem like an entirely unrelated question, but a natural one, to ask them to join. In some literature we will continue to ask if people want to join the YSA and explain that its members are taking the lead in organizing youth support for the socialist candidates.

Naturally, campaign volunteers should be invited in a friendly way to classes on socialism and to join in antiracist, ERA, or other activity comrades may be undertaking.

Youth Support

The YSA had its initial experience in carrying out youth support work for the Camejo-Reid campaign this past spring.

Nationally, the YSA fielded fifteen traveling teams to help win support for the campaign. The teams visited 167 campuses, distributing 56,000 copies of the Bill of Rights for Working People, and 16,500 copies of "Youth and the '76 Elections."

The teams won 108 new members to the YSA and helped establish ten new YSA locals; both figures are greater than for previous teams. Teams spent considerable time in New Orleans, San Antonio, San Jose, Baltimore, and in the Newark area, helping to lay the groundwork for new party branches and YSA center locals.

In addition, team members spoke at campus meetings about the campaign, obtained radio, TV, and newspaper interviews for candidates and campaign spokespeople, and helped publicize meetings for Camejo, Reid, and the national campaign chairpeople.

The YSA decided to experiment with the teams by assigning them to function as an entourage and accompany the candidates and national spokespeople when on tour in their area. While this was generally successful for campaigning in the region, it often proved to be unnecessary in cities where there are branches. This fall, the YSA will encourage the center locals to limit the teams to campaigning with the candidates in regional areas.

The YSA helped win support for the campaign this past spring through its national speaking tours, through campaign coverage in the *Young Socialist*, and through the campus activities of YSA locals and at-large members.

The YSA took stock of its youth support work for the Camejo-Reid campaign at its recent plenum, and decided to place greater emphasis on working to involve new Camejo-Reid supporters as volunteers for the campaign, and to improve organization of recruitment activities linked to youth support work.

This fall the YSA will have big opportunities to establish the Camejo-Reid campaign as a strong alternative for radicalizing youth in the high schools and on college campuses.

With the first primaries only five months away, the capitalist candidates will begin to try to establish support among student activists for the heavy campaigning in the months to come. The YSA has a head start in establishing a campus base for the Socialist Workers campaign.

In addition, at this stage of the campaign the Camejo-Reid ticket is the *only* alternative for radical youth. The Communist party and other left-wing groups have not yet launched presidential campaigns. The Democratic party has not been able to rally significant youth support for any of its liberal contenders, who will begin to organize on campus in the fall.

In this context, the YSA wants to open the fall with an aggressive approach to the campaign on the campuses and high schools.

This will be the best time to politically confront the other campaigns through debates, panel discussions, and in the campus press, while the capitalist politicians are beginning to look for a foothold to gain a campus audience.

Campus fractions will want to begin heavy campaigning with literature tables, campus meetings, passing out the Bill of Rights for Working People, rallies, and other activities during school registration and continuing through the fall.

YSA locals can institute early morning high school campaigning as a regular part of youth support activity. This can be organized like plant gate campaigning, with a sound system, advance leafleting, and *Young Socialist* sales. A special effort should be made to have local campaign spokespeople speak in high school classes and assemblies.

The YSA will organize national speaking tours this fall to help win support for the campaign. These can be a complement to the national campaign tours. The YSA speakers can speak at regional campuses where the campaign speaker was not able to speak, and at high school meetings, rallies, and other politically important places that the candidates were not able to make.

The *Young Socialist* will begin to follow the campaigns of our Democratic, Republican, and left-wing opponents this fall, exposing their real stands on the issues and contrasting the stands of the socialist campaign. The *Young Socialist* will continue to be a forum for the campaign, where the candidates can answer some of the questions most frequently asked by student audiences.

Fall tours

This fall Peter Camejo, Willie Mae Reid, and Ed Heisler will tour the country. The YSA will also tour leaders who will urge young people to support the socialist alternative.

Camejo and Reid will each be accompanied by a comrade who will report for the *Militant*, as well as act as general "aide-de-camp" to the candidates. These comrades will also want to discuss tour schedules with the campaign directors upon arriving in each area and may have suggestions on how best to maximize the effectiveness of the tours.

Tour schedules will be available prior to the convention. Because the tours are the heart of national campaign activity, members of the national campaign committee will want to meet with campaign directors at the convention to discuss them.

The fall schedules will differ from those this past spring in allowing less time for the campaign speaker in each area. Because of this, the itineraries in each area will need to be carefully planned. This means planning fewer meetings for the national campaign speaker, not the same number crowded into fewer days. More opportunities will need to be covered by local candidates.

As a norm, each candidate or campaign spokesperson will campaign four days per week. On the average there will be two rest days per week and one full day for travel. On travel days, no other activity can be arranged with the possible exception of a meeting with the campaign director to discuss tour plans.

An essential reason for shorter tour stops is to allow greater time for the speakers to revise their speeches, do necessary reading, and, of course, get enough rest. The length of the campaign—two years—makes this essential both to maintain the good health of the candidates and spokespersons, and to keep them well-prepared and up-to-date.

Statewide campaigns

Early launching this fall of campaigns for state and congressional offices will mean a significant strengthening of our electoral work. These campaigns will build on the accomplishments of the 1974 campaigns, as well as the many 1975 municipal campaigns. We can anticipate that the heightened interest in socialist proposals for solutions to the social crisis that we see in the presidential campaign will hold true for the statewide campaigns as well.

Local campaigns will allow for regularized ongoing campaign activity, which has not always been done in the absence of national tours in areas where there are no local candidates. This traditional problem was mitigated to some extent this past spring—in the few areas that did not have local candidates—through their participation in the national campaign to distribute the Bill of Rights for Working People.

Through the statewide campaigns each campaign committee will be able to regularly carry out campaigning at unemployment lines, experiment with street campaigning, learn the techniques of successful plant gate campaigning, and establish the name of the SWP in broader circles of the Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican communities.

Literally thousands of people can be reached nationally through consistent literature distribution. Committees can organize leafleting on busy streetcorners, on campuses, at shopping plazas, in front of a library or other suitable public building. These could sometimes be combined with a literature table and sales of the *Militant*, *Young Socialist*, and other socialist literature. A housing project

could be leafleted door-to-door.

More regular campus speaking engagements can be held and youth support work for national and statewide candidates can be combined. With increased activity we can expect greater numbers of volunteers and new members of the YSA and SWP.

Ballot perspectives

In 1972 the Socialist Workers party candidates were on the ballot in twenty-three states and the District of Columbia, more than twice as many as the Communist party and surpassing every other 'radical' or 'left-wing' party or candidate. Our 1976 perspective is to break our own record by putting Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid on the ballot in around 30 states and the District of Columbia.

Listed below are the states where we were on the ballot in 1972. With the exceptions of Mississippi, we are aiming to gain ballot status in all those states again. Listed to the right are the new states we want to attempt.

Arizona	New Jersey	<u>New States</u>
Colorado	New Mexico	Alabama
D. C.	New York	Connecticut
Idaho	North Dakota	Delaware
Indiana	Pennsylvania	Illinois
Iowa	Rhode Island	Missouri
Kentucky	South Dakota	Maine
Louisiana	Texas	Ohio
Massachusetts	Vermont	Tennessee
Michigan	Washington	
Minnesota	Wisconsin	
Mississippi *		
New Hampshire		

These represent the states where we feel confident of our ability to conduct a successful drive for ballot status. In some of them a legal challenge to prohibitive requirements will be required. Such challenges in the past have won us the well-deserved reputation as fighters for the electoral rights of independent parties and candidates.

We may want to increase the number of states where we attempt to get on the ballot. This will depend primarily on the outcome of some legal challenges already in the courts. The proposal as it stands now is tentative and will be discussed fully at the party convention.

Although we are several months from beginning the actual petitioning in most states, we want to be organized early. Collecting signatures for nominating petitions is a huge job and advance preparation is essential.

With the help of the Committee for Democratic Election Laws, (CoDEL), we will want to have discussions with other parties and independent candidates about joining in challenges to undemocratic ballot restrictions. This fall, as we begin carrying out our plans for achieving ballot status, CoDEL chapters will be initiated where needed.

Our experience has shown that there is wide interest in and support for socialist efforts to win a place on the ballot. Our determination to do this wherever possible is a fundamental part of establishing the seriousness of our party and our election campaigns. The best recent example of this is the impact that our successful ballot drive had on the Willie Mae Reid campaign for mayor of Chicago. The

fact that Reid was the first independent candidate to appear on the mayoral ballot in four decades opened the door to media coverage and public support that we could not have gotten otherwise.

Winning ballot status helps undermine the widespread myth that serious electoral political activity is the exclusive domain of the Democratic and Republican parties and candidates.

It also helps refute the government's claim that SWP surveillance is justified because we are a 'subversive' organization, a threat to 'national security.' Ballot status helps to establish us in the minds of the American people as a legal party.

Over the past two years confidence in the two party system has suffered a sharp decline as shown by the recent poll where thirty-two percent of those polled cited 'independent' as their political affiliation. The present political climate is ripe for the most ambitious ballot perspectives in the history of the Socialist Workers party.

Disclosure suits

In September 1974, when the 1974 Socialist Workers campaign committees filed suit against the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, public opinion was definitely behind the campaign 'reform' law as the answer to corruption in politics. Now, a year later, the climate is beginning to change and we are discovering a wider acceptance of our view of the Act as a thinly disguised attack on the rights of labor, small parties and independent candidates to participate in the electoral process.

The continuing revelations of FBI, CIA, and police spying and harassment directed at Socialist Workers candidates and campaign supporters, as well as recent right-wing attacks, have convinced many prominent individuals to support our suit against the disclosure laws. A very positive development is the challenge by former Senator Eugene McCarthy and Senator James Buckley to every major provision to the Act, charging discrimination against small parties and independent candidates.

The authority of McCarthy and Buckley legitimizes the concept that perhaps the law is not a panacea, as its supporters claim.

The Committee for Democratic Election Laws, through which support for our challenges to the federal and state disclosure laws is being co-ordinated, supports the McCarthy-Buckley suit. CoDEL may submit an *amicus* brief in support of one or more of their arguments. To the extent that our suit is connected in the minds of the public with the McCarthy-Buckley challenge, our ability to win support will be greatly enhanced.

Through explaining the issues in the antidisclosure suits, we have helped expose Common Cause, the so-called "citizens' lobby." Far from being a lobby on behalf of the public, Common Cause works consciously to maintain the political monopoly of the Democratic and Republican parties.

The changing political climate means that we will want to take every opportunity to express ourselves on this question in campaign speeches, media interviews, debates with Common Cause or other supporters of the laws. Aggressive endorsement campaigns for our challenge will be an ongoing part of CoDEL's activities during 1975 and 1976.

The fight against undemocratic election laws is a key campaign issue and will undoubtedly remain so throughout the 1976 elections.

New materials

A variety of new national campaign materials will be available at the convention. First, there will be the new volunteer sign-up card.

There will be four stickers on the issues of unemployment, cutbacks in education, the Equal Rights Amendment, and school desegregation.

A new edition of Fred Halstead's article, "Why Can't Everyone Have a Job?" has been prepared as a campaign give-away. This is a valuable and increasingly timely propaganda piece by one of the 1976 campaign national chairpersons. Committees are urged to continue distribution of it this fall at unemployment lines, in anticutback struggles, jobs demonstrations, and other appropriate places.

"The Fight for Women's Rights" is the title of a new eight-page newsprint brochure. It places special emphasis on the need for ratification of the ERA in 1976. Struggles to ratify the ERA will take place in several states. This is a national issue and our party and campaign committees will want to be prominently identified with it.

A two-color button which reads "ERA. in '76! Vote Socialist Workers" will also be ready.

T-shirts, with a choice of four different slogans and a variety of colors, will be for sale at the convention.

There are additional materials in the works which will be ready for use in the fall tours.

Appendix #5 is a round-up of campaign materials that have been distributed during the past seven months.

Finances

Financing the national campaign is a big challenge.

While the budgets for the 1972 and 1976 campaigns are in the same general range, their income sources differ significantly. Income from local campaign committees is a much higher proportion of the budget for the 1976 national campaign committee. This is so for three basic reasons. First, local campaign committees generate more funds than they did in 1972, so, although the percentage of collections that is sent to the national campaign committee is the same—40 percent—the amount of money is greater. The 1972 national campaign committee received a total of \$10,000 in collection percentages from committees throughout the campaign. The 1976 committee has already received payments exceeding \$8,500.

The second reason is that the reactionary campaign "reform" laws limit individual contributions to \$1,000. Therefore, large donations such as were received by the 1972 committee, including two matching fund donations of \$10,000 each, simply are not available to the 1976 committee.

Third, given the overall tightness of finances in our movement, some contributors may be encouraged to give money to other projects, or to the party itself, rather than to the campaign. This was the case in the recent Party Building Fund, for example.

Thus, if we are to conduct a campaign on the scale of the 1972 effort, and take advantage of openings before us, we must plan on the bulk of the funds being generated

through consistent campaign activity carried out by local campaign committees.

There are certain sources of funds that can be organized nationally and these will be aggressively pursued. So far they have included the sale of buttons and T-shirts; sponsoring a special fund-raising reception; direct mailings; and seeking sizable individual contributions. The national campaign committee has also received miscellaneous contributions accompanying coupons and/or letters of support totalling \$1,000.

This report does not imply an overall revamping of the financial policies between local and national campaign committees, although modifications will be introduced from time to time as experience is gained. There is no proposal to raise the percentage of collections that accrue to the national campaign committee, for example. What is important is that comrades gain a more complete understanding of the relationship between local and national campaign finances and organize local campaign committee finances with the needs of the national campaign as a top political priority.

Since most areas are about to launch ambitious statewide campaigns, financial demands on campaign committees will be escalated. To meet them successfully will require increased professionalism in campaign financial functioning and the consistent application to campaign finances of the approaches we have developed to party finances.

Campaign financial functioning has improved a great deal since the 1972 and 1973 campaigns. The 1974 statewide campaigns were a turning point. They were the largest local campaigns financially we have ever run and the first to become totally self-financing. A weak side generally, though there were exceptions, was their heavy dependence for income on contributions from those with other heavy financial responsibilities to our movement.

Since then, progress has been registered in diversifying the forms of income to campaign committees. Important new sources of funds that have been developed include: 1) Fund mailings and the compiling of fund raising lists of new supporters, 2) Organizing programs which include collections at more informal campaign events such as picnics and receptions, 3) Incorporating brief fund appeals into campaign engagements such as campus and union meetings, 4) Conducting button sales at events in which the campaign participates, such as the June 28 anti-layoffs demonstration in New York City or the NEA convention in Los Angeles, using the issue buttons produced by the national campaign, 5) Including fund appeals on nearly all literature.

Parallel to these new forms of fund raising has been the improvements in the organization of rallies and banquets. In general more new supporters are attending and contributing at these events than in 1972 and 1974. For instance, at recent summer rallies in Detroit, Washington, D.C., and Boston approximately one-third to one-half of those attending were new supporters and \$1,200, \$1,800 and \$1,400 respectively was raised. Since January, local committees have held twenty-five rallies, banquets, and picnics with collections totalling over \$45,000.

Committees have had good results in raising honoraria to cover the tour fee costs. Milwaukee and Cleveland raised speakers fees well over the required amount and were able to use their share of the surplus for local campaigning. Of

the \$5,716 paid in tour fees, 90 percent was raised through honoraria. Ten percent was taken out of committees' funds.

Campaign committee financial functioning can still be improved. All committees need to function on budgets and make regular monthly reports to check performance and make requisite adjustments. Campaign directors need to be well acquainted with the committee's financial needs and progress. Committees that owe money to the national campaign committee need to work out debt payment plans and to budget in regular literature payments. Our campaign committees raise and spend thousands of dollars. These funds are part of our overall resources politically and must be handled with the same care and meticulousness that generally characterizes branch financial functioning.

Work on government reports, while very important and time-consuming, must not be allowed to consume so much of the financial director's time that he or she is not able to play the full role of financially directing the campaign. In some campaigns, financial committees may be needed.

Committees can expect to continue to spend large amounts on the distribution of the Bill of Rights in the fall. This will require planning the means with which the cost will be covered. Already committees have distributed 374,000 Bill of Rights which cost \$7,480. Of the \$9,190 in spring literature orders, \$4,000 remains outstanding. Because the national campaign must finance the printing of hundreds of thousands more Bill of Rights and brochures when the cost of newsprint has doubled in a year, committees will need to project moving up the payment of literature and other debts. Retirement of the debts local committees have built up to the national campaign committee will be a focus of discussion in the campaign and financial workshops, as well as in informal discussions with campaign directors and financial directors.

Finally, the St. Louis national campaign kick-off rally was the largest election campaign collection in the party's experience—with \$17,000 in contributions received to date.

Number of articles on campaign launching	230
States with most articles:	
Missouri	38
Illinois	22
Number of articles from tours	101
States with most articles:	
Texas	26
Georgia	14
Number of other articles	25
National coverage	
National Observer	
Boston Christian Science Monitor	
New York Times	
Stars and Stripes	
Muhammad Speaks	
Washington Post	
Readership reached by campaign articles	Approximately 41 million
Venezuelan coverage:	
12 feature articles	
Covered in El Nacional (the major Venezuelan daily, on front page), in Antorcha and El Informador	
Other international coverage	
El Nacional - Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	
The News - Mexico City, Mexico	
Winnipeg Free Press - Winnipeg, Canada	
Television coverage	
National - Today Show - 10 minutes	
Local - 1 hour 56 minutes	
Radio coverage	
Local-20 hours 42 minutes	

(Radio and TV coverage does not include summer tours)

Appendix #1

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN MEDIA STATISTICS as of July 25, 1975

Total number of articles received from clipping service	356
Number of states where the campaign received coverage	42
States with most articles:	
Missouri	41
Texas	39

Number of cities where the campaign received coverage	179
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Appendix #2

Meeting with Trade Unionists in San Francisco by Ed Heisler, National Campaign Chairperson

A campaign supporter who works on the railroad organized an informal social gathering with six other railroad clerks who were interested in finding out more about the Socialist Workers party and the election campaign. It was our campaign supporter's idea. He passed out some leaflets on the job inviting other clerks to the get-together. He had also passed out copies of the Bill of Rights for Working People at work and personally invited those who agreed with many of the points in our

platform to the social.

Six clerks showed up, including the president of the local, the chairperson of the grievance committee, and four other young clerks. They took literature, bought *Militants*, and asked many questions during the four-hour discussion about socialism, our proposals for the labor movement, and about what kind of party the Socialist Workers party is.

The SWP candidate for mayor of San Francisco, Roland Sheppard, attended the gathering and, as a result, was invited to a future meeting of the railroad clerks' union to speak about his campaign.

Organizing these kinds of gatherings is possible in every area and should be given priority consideration. Planned in conjunction with Camejo's tour, they will enable us to establish direct contact and relations with many trade union members and other workers who are new to socialist ideas. The national campaign committee would appreciate being informed of any discussions and plans that are being developed along these lines.

Of course, people from almost any milieu that campaign activists come into contact with, such as in the course of antiracist work, for example, might be receptive to the idea of attending a similar gathering.

Appendix #3

Taking the Willie Mae Reid for Mayor Campaign to Plant Gates

by John Isenhower, Chicago Branch

In Chicago, we began our initial discussions on factory gate campaigning by asking the following questions:

1. What is the best way to get out the Bill of Rights for Working People in our area?
2. Which factories, workplaces, and industries have had some ferment recently? (Strikes, rallies, controversial union elections, etc.)
3. What do we know about those specific situations? What do we know about problems like unemployment, racism, and sexism? What is the number of workers and what are the shift changes? Is a permit required from the police or city officials?
4. Do any campaign supporters work there?
5. Have consistent *Militant* sales and/or campaign literature distributions been carried out there?
6. How many street meetings can we realistically have, given the number of campaign activists, the amount of time and money?

After we gathered initial information, we decided on U.S. Steel's South Works and Western Electric in suburban Hawthorne.

U.S. Steel was chosen as the first site. There had been significant activity and discussion there around the election for district director of the union—Ed Sadlowski had defeated the I.W. Abel-supported incumbent. Campaign activists had been selling the *Militant* there one day a week at shift changes and also at a nearby shopping area. There were also some campaign supporters in the plant.

Preparations

We drafted a *brief* statement concerning the problems facing steelworkers which was reviewed by campaign activists closest to the situation for accuracy and consciousness. We mimeographed the statement with an announcement on the back of when and at which gate Reid would be campaigning.

The statement included a summary of the situation in the steel industry; the profits of U.S. Steel; pointed to the government and the steel bosses as the cause of steelworkers' problems; and put forward a program to make the steel owners pay the cost for those problems. We included five demands from the Bill of Rights for Working People to fit the situation. The statement closed with a paragraph urging a socialist vote in the municipal elections on April 1 and soliciting comments and suggestions on the Bill of Rights.

A team of four leafleted in the morning prior to Reid's appearance, passing out our statement and the Bill of Rights. We wanted the workers to have a chance to read and discuss our program during breaks and the lunch period.

At the afternoon shift change, we had ten people campaigning. Some passed out the Bill of Rights; some sold the *Militant* one took pictures for the *Militant*, and another took notes for an article.

Speakers included Willie Mae Reid and other campaign activists who could attract people's attention. We used a portable sound system. The talks were short and to the point.

Results

Over nine hundred copies of the Bill of Rights for Working People were distributed and thirty *Militants* sold. Three people signed the campaign mailing list. Many workers had read and discussed the Bill of Rights and felt it contained good ideas. We were able to popularize and legitimize the campaign to a significant number of workers. One steelworker bought a subscription to the *Militant* from some campaign supporters who were canvassing for subscriptions in the Black community a few days after the U.S. Steel campaigning. He had received the Bill of Rights that day, discussed it with some friends, and wanted more information on the Reid campaign.

Avoiding Problems

Although we remembered most of the details necessary for making the U.S. Steel campaigning efficient—everything from bringing a sound system to bringing string to keep literature from blowing off the table—we forgot to have a meeting with all the campaigners before we went out to U.S. Steel. It is fairly easy to make a division of labor on the spot, but larger questions need to be dealt with in a serious and formal manner in a meeting for all involved. These questions included what kind of expectations we had; the tone of our presentations, and possible problems or confusion caused by other political groups who might be present.

At South Works, the problem of the right-wing National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) became central to our expectations and the tone of our presentations. NCLC

had done a real job of turning off workers to radicals. They try to camouflage their right-wing and racist ideas in long-winded harangues, and unintelligible leaflets full of socialist-sounding terminology. To most people they sound like they come from another planet.

In general, we should take a friendly, educational tone when campaigning at plant gates. Where shrill left-wing groups or rightists like NCLC have been involved, double the emphasis on friendly persuasion.

This approach can be best explained and discussed in a preparatory meeting where campaigners can become familiar with the situation at the workplace so they are sensitive to the reaction they can expect.

Goals

Our goals for this kind of campaigning should include:

1. To get out the maximum number of Bills of Rights for Working People.

2. To get names of new people interested in or supporting the campaign.

3. To draw workers into campaign activity.

4. To sell as much literature as possible.

We should expect a generally positive reception to our ideas if our tone is correct. Consistent follow-up work—calling up interested workers to discuss the campaign, solicit volunteer work, and attend upcoming campaign events—could yield a modest, but important core of campaign builders.

Many workers will accept our literature, a few will stop to buy a paper or to listen for a minute or two. We should not, however, expect people to hang around and listen for long periods because of fatigue and because we are just beginning to introduce our campaign.

We should note any substantial shifts in attitude during subsequent campaigning at each workplace. These changes should be viewed as one way of measuring receptivity to our ideas and the potential for more intensive work.

April 1975

Appendix #4

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
April 2, 1975

To Campaign Directors and Supporters

Dear Comrades:

Several campaign committees have raised the idea of publishing local versions of the Bill of Rights for Working People. There are some considerations in respect to this that I would like to raise.

Our Bill of Rights for Working People strives to be a popular and serious way of presenting what we've usually called a platform in the past. It attempts to present key transitional and democratic demands in a defensive way, *i.e.*, as a means of protecting the working class and its allies from the ravages of capitalism. It also includes some explanatory information and concludes by asserting that these rights can only be guaranteed by a workers

government that will lay the basis for socialism. These are themes that we want to include in our campaign speeches and literature nationally and locally.

However, publishing a separate Bill of Rights for the working people of a specific city or state is not a good idea. Our Bill of Rights for Working People is a very *specific* way of presenting our program and the themes indicated above. It relates to the fact that the U.S. Constitution has a Bill of Rights which recognizes certain democratic rights. These are rights working people fought to obtain and they continue to fight to defend and extend them. They are well known and accepted by American workers. Consequently, we thought it would attract interest and appear very reasonable to people to present our key economic and social demands in the form of extending the Bill of Rights. It also helps put us in the tradition of American revolutionary history.

Of course, this manner of presentation runs the risk of appearing gimmicky. So far, this danger seems to have been averted by the serious treatment given to the Bill of Rights in the news media (it has been referred to and quoted in numerous articles) and the excellent response received from mass distributions.

However, if we were to start publishing a series of local Bills of Rights, it would make our proposal for extending the national Bill of Rights appear less serious and to be discounted simply as gimmickry. As far as we know, few, if any cities or states have Bills of Rights to which we could seriously claim to be proposing amendments.

Furthermore, it would be confusing to people coming around our campaign tables to pick up two Bills of Rights—one national and one local.

What type of local literature is the most useful? Local candidates, through their literature and speeches, should identify with and be supporters of the party's national proposal for a Bill of Rights for Working People. Local brochures can list these proposed rights and give local examples to explain why these are important and necessary. Utilizing ideas and formulations from the Bill of Rights for Working People and applying them to the local situation can be effective.

But it is a mistake to think that the local platform has to cover everything that's in the national platform! A local platform, particularly for municipal races, shouldn't be a reprinting of the national platform with the name of the city or state mentioned in a few places, along with a few statistics about the city or state. Instead it should center in more specifically on the problems of the local situation and what we would do about them.

The Bill of Rights for Working People and other national literature should be seen as complementary to local literature and used along with it. Our campaign to distribute the Bill of Rights as widely as possible is very successful and we're nearly out of our initial run of 200,000.

Comradely,

s/Doug Jenness
National Campaign
Manager

Appendix #5

National Campaign Materials Distributed as of July 30, 1975

Bill of Rights for Working People - English	343,900
Bill of Rights for Working People - Spanish	30,910
Youth and the '76 Elections	47,548
Socialist Candidates in the News	1,925
The Socialist Workers Candidates for '76	12,707
Camejo for President Poster	7,400
Reid for Vice-president poster	7,140
Jobs for All poster	2,983
Join the Fight Against Racism poster	1,011
Camejo photo button	12,000
Reid photo button	11,800
Jobs for All button	3,000
Education is a Right - Stop the cutbacks button	2,440
Vote SWP button	3,850
Capitalism Fouls Things Up button	231

For Rejection of Comrade Alvin's Proposed Amendment to the National Committee Draft Political Resolution

by Linda Jenness

July 25, 1975

Through the pre-convention discussion on defending the affirmative-action gains of women and the oppressed nationalities, our party has taken a step forward. We have further thought out, developed, and strengthened our position on this question.

The arguments raised against the party's position by Comrades Milton Alvin and Debby Leonard were taken up in contributions to the bulletin by Tom Kerry, Joe Hansen, Frank Lovell, Baxter Smith, and Linda Jenness. In addition, they were thoroughly discussed in the branches.

In light of the new openings for the party in the working-class movement, we have studied and restudied several questions in particular: the centrality of the fight against racist and sexist oppression in unifying the working class and developing class consciousness; the contradictory character of the seniority system; the social basis of opportunism; the character of the labor bureaucracy; and the nature of the revolutionary party itself.

We also reviewed some of the history of the union movement, particularly in relation to the civil rights

struggle, and we took a look at the development of demands for preferential treatment for women and Blacks and of affirmative-action plans.

Our comrades come out of this discussion with a more thorough understanding of the issues involved and therefore better equipped to argue and fight for our position in the mass movement.

The amendment to the draft political resolution submitted by Comrade Alvin in SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 33, No. 11 represents an attempt on his part to reach a *compromise* in the debate.

It is clear, however, that the membership of our party sees no need to compromise on this crucial question. Quite the opposite. The party is ready to move forward, stronger than ever, in an all-out defense of every gain made by Blacks and women. That position is reflected in the line of the draft political resolution. We have strengthened it through this discussion and are not interested in softening it or compromising on it in any way whatsoever.

Comrade Alvin's proposed amendment should be rejected.

IN DEFENSE OF OUR CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT BLACK PARTY

By Tony Thomas

July 29, 1975

In an article in Discussion Bulletin No. 7, Comrade David Keil calls for a major change in the party's 12-year-old position of calling for a mass, independent Black political party and challenges the validity of a previous position on Black political action held since the 1939 discussions with Leon Trotsky.

Comrade Keil proposes that we amend the National Committee Draft Resolution, *The Current Stage of the Black Liberation Struggle and its Tasks*, "to make it clear that the only Black party we would support would be a Black workers' party, i.e. a party based on organizations of Black workers."

The purpose of this article will be to explain our perspective on the Black party question, set the record straight on how our position developed, as well as to defend the party's fundamental analysis of the Black struggle as it has been presented in resolutions over the past thirty-five years.

I. The party's perspective on the Black political party

In the last preconvention discussion, I wrote an article in the July 1973 discussion bulletin answering the Internationalist Tendency. A section of that article states our fundamental perspective on the Black party question, and I would like to quote it:

"Unique Position of Afro-Americans

"In regard to oppressed nationalities in other countries we do not support independent political parties based on that nationality such as the Parti Québécois (Québec Party) in Quebec. The call for a Black political party flows from the specifics of Blacks' position in the U.S. as a highly oppressed section of the working class. An independent Black political party would be the result of a breach with the capitalist political parties of U.S. imperialism and its composition and orientation would be overwhelmingly proletarian. Whether or not this would be the conscious direction of the initiators of such a party, the class character of a Black party development would be proletarian. In that sense we put forward a Black political party as an example of the type of independent political action and mass political organization that could advance the Black struggle and as a means of attacking the subservience of Black and white capitalist politicians to the imperialist political parties.

"Like the demand for a labor party, the party does not see our position in favor of a Black political party as an historical absolute. Our call for a Black party proceeds from a concrete level of the development of the Black struggle, just as our call for a labor party proceeded from a specific stage in the development of the working-class movement, the explosion of industrial trade unions during the CIO upsurge.

"Our demand for a labor party—rather than directly raising the historical absolute of a revolutionary Marxist party of a mass character—poses the question of independent political action for the working class in terms that

take the next steps forward from the current levels of organization of the working class. Similarly, the demand for a Black political party proceeds from the current dual character of the Black struggle combining nationalist and class struggles.

"Despite the lack of evidence that the Internationalist Tendency claims, our call for a Black political party has proceeded from a large amount of discussions and attempts at forming such a party in the last ten years of Black radicalization. We had the experience of the Freedom Now parties, the Black Panther Party in Lowndes County, the Black Panther Party in Oakland, and a number of other attempts at actually forming an independent Black party. National Black power conferences and Pan-Africanist conferences attended by thousands of Blacks in 1968 and 1970 passed proposals favoring an independent Black party. At the Gary Black Political Convention held in 1972, the pressure for a Black party was so strong that even long-time Democratic Party supporters like Jesse Jackson had to pay lip-service to this idea.

"While it is no reason to drop our current propaganda demand for a labor party, there has been much less evidence of any type of sentiment for such a party in the labor movement in the past 25 years than there has been for a Black party in the Black liberation movement in the last five years. While the formation of a Black political party is not inevitable and while sentiment for such a party may have its ups and downs, it remains a correct means of propagandizing our concept of independent political action by working people and the necessity of a mass organization representing the interests of Afro-Americans.

"Of course, just as we do not counterpose a labor party to the construction of the mass revolutionary Marxist workers party needed to make the revolution, we don't counterpose a Black political party to the multinational revolutionary vanguard. We believe it, like the labor party, may be one of the variants that the masses will take on the road toward a mass Trotskyist party.

"In counterposing a labor party to a Black party, the Internationalist Tendency is guilty of counterposing the real concrete struggles taking place at this time by Blacks with implications for political independence to their hope of a future radicalization on the part of the class as a whole. The real way to prepare for the radicalization of the class as a whole is to spur the motion of those sections of it willing to struggle right now. This is why we have always pointed out (even before our call for an independent Black political party) that independent Black political action can play an important role, by both example and by breaking up the Democratic Party, in spurring the formation of a labor party."

II. How our position on the Black party developed.

Another aid to understanding the meaning of our position is to look at how our position on Black indepen-

dent political action developed.

One of the key problems facing the American working-class and its allies is the absence of a mass independent working-class political party and the fact that the masses of workers and oppressed nationalities, including many otherwise militant forces, support the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties.

During the 1930s, after discussions with Leon Trotsky (cf. Comrade Breitman's contributions in Bulletin No. 5), the party began to advocate the formation of a labor party based on the trade unions. This proposal was meant to help bridge the gap between the need and sentiment of many unionists at the time for independent political action and the fact that our party was still a small propaganda group.

Trotsky pointed out in the 1938 discussions that our aim was not to build a reformist labor party. In fact, Trotsky explained that the strategic aim toward which our tactic of fighting for a labor party is a step, is not a labor party based only on the trade unions, but "an independent party of the toiling masses who will take power in the state," that is a mass revolutionary-socialist party.

Much of the concreteness and power of this demand flowed out of the specific character of the radicalization of the 1930s that was limited to the formation of the mass industrial unions and the growth of other unions including the AFL. The demand for a labor party takes off from this *limitation* of the class struggle to the trade-union level and poses that it move forward to the political level. This is a model example of the application of the transitional program to a specific problem of the class struggle.

Black candidates

Later, after discussions on the Black struggle with Trotsky in 1939, the party extended its position to giving critical support to Black candidates running against both the Republican and Democratic parties.

This came in the context of discussions with Trotsky on the idea of setting up an independent Black organization that could run candidates in elections as well as engage in activities in other arenas of the mass struggle.

The aim of this proposal was to find a way to help lead the demand for Black political representation (at the time there were almost no Black elected officials anywhere, and Blacks in the South and in some border states did not have the right to vote) along independent political channels.

We will return to Comrade Keil's misunderstanding of this discussion later.

The projection of launching an "independent negro organization" as projected in the discussion with Trotsky and the 1939 resolution on the Black struggle was never realized. In the 1940s and 1950s the party's Black work centered on existing organizations like the NAACP, local community groups, unions and ad hoc formations.

However, the party maintained the practice of supporting independent Black candidates when they were backed by a real base in the Black community and were independent of the Republican and Democratic parties. This tactic was used numerous times across the country in the 1940s and 1950s. This agitation was not linked to the idea of forming an independent Black organization or party but was generally linked to agitation for the labor party.

Between 1940 and 1960, an immense migration of Blacks

out of the rural South took place making the main concentration of Afro-Americans no longer in the cotton-belt but in the urban centers, North and South. This led to new explosions of Black militancy, starting with the civil rights movement in the 1950s, leading to the explosion of Black nationalism and radicalism in the 1960s and 1970s.

Unlike actions against racism taken by Blacks during the radicalization of the 1930s and 1940s, these actions took place while the labor movement was largely indifferent if not hostile to the Black struggle or, for that matter, any other expression of radicalism. Sentiment for a labor party that had been fairly extensive in the late 1930s and the 1940s, had become all but obliterated.

Furthermore, the increasing nationalist character of the Black struggle evidenced itself in the desire of Blacks, particularly in Northern and Western ghettos, to achieve Black control over the Black community.

Support for a Black party

Out of this ferment came the call for an independent Black party. Initially only a few figures raised this idea. Later, after the development of Black power and Black nationalist consciousness, the idea of support to a Black party became widespread within the Black movement, especially among young activists.

Not only did people talk of the idea of a Black party, but several serious attempts were made to launch one in the 1960s.

One was the Freedom Now Party which had its strongest base in Michigan. It fell apart after the 1964 elections. After a promising beginning, its leaders became demoralized because they had had an unrealistic perspective of how many votes they could get on their first try.

A more lasting effort was the Lowndes County Freedom Party in Alabama. This party was launched by local Black leaders along with SNCC after SNCC became disillusioned with working in the Democratic party, as they had in Mississippi's Freedom Democratic Party. SNCC's perspective was to build parties like the LCFP throughout the South and the rest of the country. This perspective was reflected by the election of Stokely Carmichael as head of SNCC in 1966. He had been the main SNCC worker in Lowndes County. This development had a lot to do with the emergence of the Black power slogan.

In 1966, 1967 and 1968, the Lowndes County Freedom Party was able to develop a mass base in the Black communities in the rural Alabama county. It gained support from farmers, workers, and a few Black non-farmer middle class elements. It sparked national attention within the Black movement.

However, because SNCC became disoriented and moved in an ultraleft direction, it never carried through its plans to extend the Lowndes County experience to the national level, or even consistently to other counties in Alabama. Eventually, the Lowndes party became absorbed by the National Democratic Party of Alabama, a Black Democratic party faction that has since been included in the regular Democratic organization of that state.

In 1966 and 1967, the Black Panther Party was formed in the Bay Area by Black students Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, later to be joined by Black writer Eldridge Cleaver. The Panthers were inspired by the example of the Lowndes group and aimed to build a large-scale Black party. Initially their newspaper recommended some of our

pamphlets such as the *Case for a Black Party*, Breitman's book on Malcolm X, and the YSA's pamphlet on the Lowndes County Freedom Party.

Later, as is well known, the Panthers moved in an ultraleft direction and were crushed by government repression, which was facilitated by their own ultraleftism.

However, this was not before they gained thousands of members, mainly Black students in high schools and colleges, but also non-college youth.

These organizations did not represent the full scope of sentiment for a Black party. National Black power conferences attended by thousands endorsed the idea in both 1968 and 1970. Black student groups that grew up in the student rebellions of that time, as well as a number of community organizations were also influenced by this idea.

Black union caucus groups like the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement were also sympathetic to this idea.

It was clear in the 1960s and the early 1970s: *only the lack of an authoritative, adequate leadership trained in struggle prevented a break by a section of the Black movement from the Democratic party.*

This explains one of the reasons for the ferocity of government repression against the Panthers and others, as well as the stepped up attempts to buy off Black activists and put up Black candidates in the capitalist parties.

Contrary to Comrade Keil's fears that a Black party would likely be a bourgeois party, at no time did the ruling class or its political agents within the Black communities ever see the idea of a Black party as anything but a serious threat.

This ruling-class idea was mirrored by the Communist party and the social democrats who attacked it as a "divisive" obstacle to their plans of supporting liberals in the capitalist parties.

SWP

In contrast to the reformists, the SWP welcomed the sentiment towards a Black party. We saw it as a means of concretizing our call for independent working-class political action in regard to the new developments in the Black movement. The Party's 1963 convention resolution *Freedom Now* raised the demand for a mass, independent Black political party.

That resolution points to the fact that the demand for an independent Black party takes "the desire of the Negro masses to determine their own destiny—to have their own organizations, their own leaders, their own strategy, tactics and programs" into "the vital field of politics by breaking with the parties of their oppressors and organizing to challenge their political monopoly."

It also points out that the base "for such a party already exists." It is the "66 millions of Negroes who are concentrated in the big cities of the country, North and South." It points out that united in their own party Blacks could have a deep impact on American politics, including helping to force labor to move toward independent political action.

The section on the Black party concludes that this policy is not contradictory to the policy of supporting a labor party, but it extends "this policy in the light of current developments . . ."

Following the passage of the *Freedom Now* resolution the party's popularization of this demand led to collaboration with and support to the Michigan Freedom Now party and similar nuclei around the country. Although most of these groups went out of existence without making a serious dent in the dominance of the capitalist parties, the SWP was able to recruit Blacks out of this experience as well as deepen its understanding of and its respect in the Black movement.

A part of this experience was working with Malcolm X, whose ideas ran in the direction of independent Black political action.

When the Lowndes County Freedom party developed in 1966, our party tried to win support for it, raising funds, sending *Militant* and *Young Socialist* reporters down there and building meetings for John Hulett and other leaders of that party. A pamphlet on Lowndes County featuring interviews with Hulett and Carmichael, and articles by Comrade John Benson, was published by the YSA.

During this period the party continued giving critical support to independent Black candidates running against the Democrats and the Republicans, including the 1965 Stokes' campaign that Comrade Keil alludes to in his article.

The Case for an Independent Black Political Party

By the time of the 1967 party convention, sentiment for a Black party had reached a higher pitch. Malcolm X's ideas had become broadly diffused, the ghetto rebellions and other community struggles had led to heightened desire for independent political action among Blacks. At the same time, increased ultraleftism among the more radical Black organizations along with stepped up ruling class attempts to run Black politicians for responsible posts had exacerbated the existing crisis of Black leadership.

The Case for an Independent Black Political Party, adopted at the 1967 convention, provides a more specific outline than the *Freedom Now* resolution of the idea of an independent Black political party. It draws upon the lessons of the Freedom Now parties, the Lowndes party and our experiences with the ultraleftism being expressed by sections of the Black movement as well points out the dangers of the cooptive attempts to elect Black Democratic mayors. It specifically mentions the coopting of sentiment for Black representation represented by the election of Stokes in Cleveland and Hatcher in Gary, Indiana.

The main focus of this resolution is to point to the need for a Black political party oriented to *the masses* of the Black people as the only solution. Rather than calling for a Black party based on an algebraic or classless social base—as Comrade David Keil believes it does—the resolution calls for "a political party based on the ghetto" and points out that Blacks will "cut loose" from the Democrats "because Black people are the most exploited, oppressed and aroused part of the population . . ."

It clearly points out that the SWP considers a Black party as something independent of the capitalist parties. It puts forward a Black party as a means of opposing "Big business and the racist system it preserved for its own profits," and "the candidates and programs of the two parties under their thumb."

It calls for a Black party, not only organizationally independent of the Republican and Democratic parties as

Comrade David Keil alleges, but for "a Black party independent of capitalist control . . ."

The resolution cites labor parties as they exist in other countries, and the steps that could have led to the development of a labor party in the 1930s and 1940s, as an example of the type of alternative to the capitalist parties that a Black political party on a mass scale would constitute.

The resolution points out that it is the "segregation and urbanization" that have brought Black people "together physically, especially in the politically decisive big cities where in many cases they will soon be a majority of the inhabitants," that lays the basis for such a party.

The resolution points out that such a party would be forced to confront the issue of capitalism versus socialism fairly early in its development, as well as alliances with or potential fusion with an independent labor party or with the revolutionary socialist party.

This resolution, like the *Freedom Now* resolution, was written as a popular pamphlet. Its purpose was to persuade Black militants, especially the many nationalists who were already advocates of "Black power" of the need for independent Black political action and provide an alternative to both Democratic-party style opportunism and "pick-up-the-gun" ultraleftism, the two main alternatives we faced in the Black movement at the time.

Since "The Case for a Black Party"

Since the resolution was adopted, our call for a Black party based on the masses of the Black community has been useful in countering class collaborationist and ultraleft ideas on political action in the Black community.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s when the flood of Black Democratic candidates were disorienting the movement, we continued to use this demand and proposal as a means of counterposing the need of Black people to break from the two capitalist parties.

III. Dual character of the Black struggle and its thrust for political power.

One of the bases for our overall theory of the Black struggle and our support for the idea of a Black political party is our understanding of the dual class and national character of that struggle and the extent that both aspects of the struggle combine to give the Black movement a thrust toward political power.

The National Committee draft resolution on the Black struggle outlines the dual proletarian and national character of that struggle, a position that the party has held since the 1940s:

"The Black struggle has a dual character, flowing from the class and national aspects of Black oppression. On the one hand, Blacks are fighting against the oppression they face as a people, as a nationality. On the other, they are fighting against their exploitation as workers. These two aspects of their struggle are deeply intertwined. The oppression that Blacks face as a people is conditioned by their largely proletarian status, and the exploitation of Blacks as workers becomes superexploitation as a result of their oppression as Blacks."

Racism has segregated Blacks not only in regard to jobs but in regard to housing, education, health care and other areas of social life. Blacks are by and large not only confined to the working class, but are kept on the lowest

rungs of that class through national oppression. This is key to understanding the Black struggle.

Leon Trotsky taught us how this combination gave the Black liberation movement special explosiveness. He showed how demands for Black control and for the establishment of a separate state were deeply linked to the struggle for workers power.

As early as 1933 Trotsky pointed out that he believed that Blacks, through the struggle for "self-determination will proceed to the proletarian dictatorship in a couple of gigantic strides, ahead of the great bloc of white workers."

The centrality of this factor to the overall class struggle in the United States is one of the foundations for our position on the combined character of the American revolution. We believe that revolution will combine the struggle for power of the Blacks and other oppressed nationalities with the struggle for power of the working-class as such.

The Current State of the Black Liberation Struggle and its Tasks states: "The size, social weight, and nationalist consciousness of the Black population indicate that the coming American revolution, as part of carrying through the democratic tasks of equalizing opportunities in all aspects of social life, will also be a revolution for the self-determination of Black people; that is, the Black people will have the right to decide for themselves what state form they need to guarantee their complete liberation from racial oppression. At this stage it is not clear what their decision will be—whether a federation of councils exercising community control of the Black community, a separate state, integration in a common state with whites, or some other solution."

Thus when the civil rights and Black nationalist activists began to pose this need through proposals for an independent Black party, demands for Black power and control over the community, the Socialist Workers Party possessed the basic theoretical tools to recognize the importance of these developments. As we have seen, the party welcomed them as an elementary sign of motion by the most dynamic section of the working-class toward a break with capitalist politics and a step toward posing the need for taking control of the government out of the hands of the capitalist class.

Comrade Keil's fundamental difference

Comrade Keil's contribution contains a formulation that is not in accord with our theory of the dual character of the Black struggle.

Rather than a working-class movement directly related to the question of power, he sees the Black movement as part of a category "of movements and struggles which are not explicitly working-class or anti-capitalist, such as defense campaigns, movements to withdraw imperialist troops, the feminist movement and the Black nationalist movement."

Comrade Keil continues: "These movements, while not explicitly working-class, are *objectively* anti-capitalist because they are directed against the needs of capitalism and make demands against the capitalists or their state. They do not present themselves as governmental alternatives but rather take the form of mass-action movements usually focused on a single issue. Whereas electoral campaigns and candidates must take a position on all major issues faced by the state, that is a class position,

these independent movements raise progressive demands on specific questions and the struggle for them.”

In other words, the Black struggle is a series of usually single-issue struggles of an indeterminate class character, rather than the expression of the problems of the most oppressed sector of the working class.

This wrong formulation provides a clue as to why Comrade Keil may think that independent Black political action has no class content, and must be qualified.

Related to this is his incorrect view of the social composition of the Black community and how it would effect the class character of a Black political party.

IV. Social composition of the Black community and the Black party question

Comrade Cannon explained in his 1948 report on our electoral perspectives that social composition, control and program are the three main criteria which we use to determine the class character of a political party.

We believe that only Trotskyist parties have a working-class program, so that social composition and control become the crucial questions in discussing whether or not a Black party would be a workers party.

Following our basic analysis, our call for a Black party is rooted in the fact that a mass party based on the Black community would be working-class in composition, whatever the social composition of those who would start such a party or lead it in its initial stages.

Comrade Keil states that in the *Freedom Now* resolution, and all subsequent resolutions proposed by the party leadership until the current draft resolution on Black liberation, “we did not specify that such a party would necessarily be a workers party or that we would only support a Black party if it were also a working-class party.”

He continues, “In my opinion, it was an error for us to call for the formation of a party of unspecified class character. This was an error of principle which contradicted our general line of class independence.”

Comrade Keil says that statements by myself in *In Defense of Black Nationalism*, by Comrade Horowitz in his polemic with Comrade Ernest Germain on the national question, and the draft Black struggle resolution, represent an improvement insofar as they say “that the party’s call for an independent Black party is based on assumption that such a party would necessarily be a working-class party.”

In his opinion, this improvement is insufficient and the error of calling for a classless party still persists.

Comrade Keil claims that any “party open to the ‘Black bourgeoisie,’ would be impossible to support in the elections, even critically, without violating our socialist principles. The formulation in the draft resolution therefore leaves us open to extremely serious errors of principle in the future.” (Emphasis is in the original.)

Out of his misunderstanding of the social composition of the Black community, Comrade Keil conjures up a Black middle class and small bourgeoisie which “in my opinion,” he writes, “has the money, influence and wile to effectively control any Black party it decides to join or initiate—except a party soundly based on organizations of Black workers, i.e., a party structured so as to *exclude* this small bourgeoisie.” (Emphasis is in the original.)

The comrade states that what is required is “a Black party arising out of the struggle of Black workers, out of such groups as the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement of the late 1960s or such groups as the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, or out of working-class Black community group.” Such a party would “clearly be a labor party even if it were not socialist and even if it did not have the support of the entire trade union movement.” We could “support such a party. . . , join it, and build it,” only if it met these criteria.

Realities of the Black community

A brief look at the real social composition of the Black community will suffice to take Comrade Keil’s charges about a Black “small bourgeoisie” from the plane of abstraction into the real world. Once that is done, his claims that this force is economically and socially powerful enough to gain control of any Black party that does not organizationally exclude them is shown to be clearly unrealistic.

The 1973 *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, published by the census bureau, follows the standard government procedure of listing only whites and “Negroes and others” rather than specific nationalities or minorities.

This system presents an unbalanced picture which tends to downgrade the real social status of whites, while slightly upgrading the figures used for Blacks. Chicanos, most Puerto Ricans and others from Latin America are listed as “whites.” Japanese Americans and others who are socially and economically better off than Blacks are listed in the same category as Blacks.

Keeping this in mind, the “self-employed” segment of “Negroes and others” is listed as 1.1 percent of the “Negroes and others” work-force in 1972.

A report from the same source on “minority” businesses in 1969 helps to give a picture of what proportion of this figure is actually Black. In 1969, the study says that Blacks owned 2.2 percent of the privately owned firms in the U.S. while the “others” had .8 percent.

Even more telling was the 1969 statistic for the volume of these businesses measured by their total receipts. Blacks had .5 percent of the total business volume while the “others” got .2 percent.

In other words, though Blacks are more than twenty times the number of the “others,” the businesses owned by the “others” had one-fourth to one-third of the volume of Black-owned businesses.

So rather than being a very powerful class, actual Black capitalists and petty bourgeois (all Blacks who are self-employed in any capacity) make up about .7 percent of the Black work force. The small-scale character of most Black businesses can be seen in the statistic that although Blacks are 11 percent of the population, they received roughly .5 percent of the volume of business.

Under the category of professional workers, the 1973 abstract found that 9.5 percent of “Negroes and others” in the work force were in professional jobs in 1972, as opposed to 14.6 percent for whites.

The study points out that over one-half of that 9.5 percent were non-college teachers or health workers.

Andrew Brimmer, a Black economist who was formerly on the Federal Reserve Board, has analyzed these figures. He points out that most of the “health workers” listed

under the professional category are not doctors or other medical professionals as are many of the whites in this category, but non-technical hospital workers. Brimmer has also pointed out that much of the remaining one-half of Black "professionals" not in the teacher and health worker category are in low-paid working-class positions like social work and civil service jobs.

The 1973 abstract states that the non-farm managers in the "Negro and others" category, made up only 2.6 percent of "Negroes and others" in the work force.

The rest of Blacks are concentrated in service employment, low-paying white collar jobs, and in industrial jobs and laboring.

The middle class sectors of the Black community grew between the late 1950s and the time of the current economic decline, but the Black petty-bourgeoisie and capitalist class remain a miniscule force in the Black community. It is still less than or around 5 percent of the Black population. There is no sign that it is so powerful that it can control any Black party based on the Black community.

Black capitalists are even more insignificant than the Black middle class. The weakness of the Black capitalist class can be seen in the fact that the *largest* Black-owned business has yearly gross receipts of \$45 million. There are no Blacks among the "60 families" that make up the top echelons of the ruling class. Whatever Black capitalists and richer petty bourgeoisie exist, tend to be assimilationist-minded. They look to the dominant parties and institutions of the ruling class, not to the formation of their own party.

Aren't Quebec, China, Syria and Egypt different from the Black community?

In his article, David Keil likens the possible development of a Black political party to bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalist parties that have arisen in a number of colonial and semicolonial countries and oppressed nations.

He states, "In discussing this question it is not decisive that the Black population is overwhelmingly proletarian. This is very reassuring-sounding, but the same is true of the non-Black population as well in the U.S., when we think about it. The Quebecois nationality, like the American Black nationality, is overwhelmingly proletarian, but it would have been an error for the Canadian Trotskyists to call for the formation of a Quebecois party on this basis, since such a call would have been met by the formation of the PQ—a bourgeois party despite the favorable composition of the Quebecois population."

Later on he states that a Black party could be something like "Nasser's party in Egypt," the Iraqi Baath party, and "the parties in Mozambique and Angola now collaborating with Portuguese imperialism."

Comrade Keil makes a basic error in this section. First of all, the most distinctive difference between the Black community and the oppressed nations he mentions is the lack of a national bourgeoisie or large petty bourgeoisie and the overwhelming proletarian composition of the Black community.

Quebec's population has a large proletarian component that is the principle victim of national oppression. Here is where the similarity between Quebec and the Afro-American nationality ends.

Quebec, as I explained in my article in bulletin No. 10 of this year, is a nation. In addition to the national traits that the Black community possesses, it has a long-standing national territory and elements of a national economy. While there is a significant English-speaking minority—largely concentrated in Montreal and in the Eastern Townships region between Montreal and the U.S. border—the overwhelming majority of that nation's population is French-speaking Quebecois.

Unlike the Black community, there is not a complete segregation of all but a tiny percentage of the Quebecois population into the working class. On the contrary, since the British conquest in 1759, the British and later the Canadian imperialist masters have tried to maintain sections of the Quebec landholding, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois classes and integrate them into the Canadian ruling class itself.

There exists a Quebecois component in the Canadian ruling class. There also exist a very small number of Quebecois capitalists who are not directly integrated into the pan-Canadian ruling class and could be characterized as the embryo of an independent Quebecois national bourgeoisie.

In addition to the bourgeois elements there is a large-scale Quebecois petty bourgeoisie. It is strongly entrenched in the Quebec national state apparatus with most of the positions in the Quebec "national" government from the top down. It dominates in the petty bourgeois professions, education, journalism, as well as in small-scale retail stores, restaurants and similar concerns.

The social weight of this layer is unlike anything that can be conceived of in the Black community of this country. Basing itself on this social layer, (and the perspective of winning the allegiance of the Quebecois capitalists and the support of imperialism which has yet to happen) the Parti Quebecois has come forward as an explicitly bourgeois nationalist party.

Comrade Keil's other examples of China, Egypt, Iraq, Mozambique and Angola are even further afield.

In none of these countries is the working-class the predominant sector of the population or anywhere near the largest social class (this is true even today in China more than twenty years after capitalist rule has been abolished).

In Egypt, China, Iraq, Mozambique and Angola the peasants are the majority class. In each of these countries (except in Angola and Mozambique, perhaps) there is a relatively large urban petty bourgeoisie, as well as rather significant bourgeois national forces (this was true for China before the revolution), who have gained much of their power out of links with the landholders' exploitation of the peasants and from their economic and political relationships with imperialism.

In each of these countries, the working class was smaller as a social class than the rural petty bourgeoisie and sometimes smaller than the urban petty bourgeoisie.

Nasser's movement, for example, originated as a clique among the top-level military officers and had direct links with leading circles of the Egyptian capitalists and the urban petty bourgeoisie. It also developed links with the rural petty bourgeoisie. At no time has the Nasserite movement had the firm support or even much enthusiasm from the major proletarian concentrations of that country. Similar analyses could be made of Comrade Keil's other examples.

The point is that they overlook the specific peculiarities of the situation of Afro-Americans, and how closely the proletarian character of the Black community is linked with the national oppression Black people face.

Analogy with countries like China or Iraq leaves out of account how the imperialists dominated (in the case of China) or continue to dominate these countries, as opposed to how the ruling class dominates the Black people in the U.S. American capitalism rules through the two-party structure. The Democrats and Republicans are the instruments of their rule.

The imperialist rule of China was not carried out by the political parties that ruled in the imperialist centers. There were no branches of the Democratic Party or the British Conservative Party set up in Peking or Shanghai like the Democrats have penetrated into the Black community.

The whole context of the political struggle is therefore different in the colonies than in the imperialist center itself. Specifically, in the Black community there is very little room—if any at all—for a Black bourgeois party like the Kuomintang to play an effective role in the U.S.

In any case, the capitalist class, the reformist-minded leaderships within the Black community and other upholders of the system still utilize the two-party structure as their main form of rule. The key task remains breaking Black people from support to the real existing capitalist parties.

Black labor party?

Comrade Keil is completely correct, in one sense, when he says that the SWP's position for a Black political party is not a call for the labor party or for a Black labor party.

Our support to the labor party is based on a specific orientation toward and assessment of the American trade-union movement. While the Black party idea is indirectly related to this orientation, it does not fundamentally flow from it.

The Black party orientation flows from an orientation and assessment of the Black community.

It is an orientation to help push forward trends that could give that movement an independent working-class political expression in a period when the ruling class has carried out a constant campaign to corral the Black movement into the Democratic party.

Comrade Keil's proposal that we shift our position toward calling for a Black labor party or a Black workers party based on Black "workers organizations" does not meet this need.

Most of the activity of the Black liberation movement does not take place inside the trade unions and most Black workers are not members of the union movement. While a fundamental part of our strategy is to fight to make the unions instruments of all of the struggles of the oppressed, including the Black struggle, this has not yet even begun to occur.

The few existing Black workers organizations, while important, are limited organizations and are not yet seen as the center of the Black movement.

On the other hand, massive actions have taken place outside of the framework of the trade unions and Black workers organizations. This ranges from the initial struggles for civil rights in the 1950s, to the massive civil rights struggles of the mid-1960s, to the ghetto explosions

and community struggles that followed them.

Comrade Keil would have counseled the party during the height of the Black upsurge in the 1960s to tell Black community activists, ghetto rebels, nationalists and civil rights strugglers, "appeal to the Black workers organizations to start a party! Anything else would be dominated by the Black capitalists! Until you get the Black workers organizations to move, any form of independent Black political action against the Democrats and Republicans will be no different, classwise, than supporting the Democrats!"

Instead of making this false counterposition, the SWP supported and popularized proposals by activists like Malcolm X that Black people should break from the Republicans and Democrats now. Comrade Keil's position would stand in the way of breaking Blacks from the capitalist parties, not help develop independent working class politics.

This does not mean that we think that the trade unions will be unimportant to the Black struggle, or that Black trade unionists and union organizations will not be important to the process of building a mass Black political party, or a labor party. However, if we had adopted Comrade Keil's formulations we would have been prevented from having any orientation whatsoever to the Freedom Now party, the Lowndes County Freedom Party, or the Black Panther party, except to denounce them for not being based on Black workers organizations.

Such a policy would have been an obstacle, not an aid, to the process of building independent working-class political action in this country.

V. Critical support for Black candidates; Stokes and Seale

Comrade Keil's position becomes concrete in his attacks on the critical support tactic that the party used in regard to the mayoral campaigns of Carl Stokes in Cleveland in 1965 and of Bobby Seale in Oakland, California.

Both candidates ended up as Democrats.

Stokes was a Democratic party state senator who decided to run as an independent against the Democrats and Republicans in the 1965 election for mayor of Cleveland. He decided that he could not win by running as a Democrat, but that he could better his tactical position for the future by running as an independent based on the mobilization of the Black community. In fact, Stokes lost that election by less than five hundred votes.

The campaign came at the time of heightened civil rights activities by Blacks across the country and in Cleveland.

One of the themes of these struggles was the fight against segregation in the city's schools around which there had recently been a massive school boycott by the city's Black population.

Still another campaign was being waged at the time by Cleveland CORE, one of the more militant and broadly based chapters of that organization, around the question of jobs. Socialist Workers party and YSA members were active in Cleveland CORE and other civil rights organizations as part of that campaign.

Stokes' campaign was seized upon by the activists in these movements and by the city's Black community as their campaign, even though it was *opposed* by all of the Black city councilmen, including a number who had

previously been associated with Stokes at the time.

The Socialist Workers party decided to give critical support to Stokes' campaign. We characterized the campaign as "an important step forward in building an independent Black political force in the ghetto in opposition to the Republican and Democratic parties."

At the same time we voiced criticisms raised by CORE and other civil rights groups that Stokes' program was inadequate in regard to questions like police brutality and the Indochina War. We also supported criticisms raised by civil rights activists that the campaign should be controlled by a committee controlled "by representative militants from such groups as Freedom Fighters (a militant civil rights group critical of Stokes but in support of the campaign), CORE, NAACP and other groups who understand the issues which can mobilize the Black community and who have the respect of the ghetto people."

Militant coverage noted how the rank and file of the Black community became mobilized around this campaign. Stokes himself admits in his autobiography that he was completely surprised how he was able to get on the ballot so quickly by this type of mobilization and later how quick the response had been in raising funds to pay for a recount of the close vote.

The clear thrust of our critical support tactic was to use support to criticize Stokes' reluctance to move toward consistent independent Black political action based on the organizations of the Black community, rather than a one-shot candidacy. This was combined with criticism of Stokes' program.

Comrade Keil claims that by carrying out this tactic "we lent support to the Stokes apparatus, a capitalist political agency whether it was in or out of the Democratic Party, and hence helped make it easier for Stokes to win in 1966 (in a state senatorial race) and 1967—despite our opposition to Stokes in 1966 and 1967."

What Keil does not understand is that there was a key difference between the Stokes campaign in 1965 and all of his other campaigns before and after. That was that this campaign was not only formally outside of the Democratic party but he was running against that party on the basis of the mobilization of the Black community and its organizations.

This independent aspect of the campaign and its force—which surprised Stokes himself who thought that he would run simply a token campaign to increase his own prestige—was in contradiction to the fact that Stokes was in the Democratic party. It was a result of the then ongoing upsurge of the Black struggle.

Rather than supporting Stokes' apparatus we supported the construction of an apparatus based on the Black community—something that began to be generated in the course of the campaign, something Stokes points out he had to put down after the 1965 election.

Comrade Keil's real difference becomes clear when he states that the campaign "to all evidence was not based on organizations of Black workers but was supported by such groups as CORE . . ." The point being that CORE was a militant civil rights organization at the time which had not yet endorsed any capitalist candidates as such (although later in the year they did support one liberal Democrat in New York, Bill Ryan).

They were then carrying on a militant campaign on jobs

in Cleveland, a campaign our members actively supported.

As we have seen we proposed basing this campaign organizationally on CORE and groups like it.

In this situation if we had used Comrade Keil's sectarian methodology we would have been hindering rather than helping the extension of Black independent political action, making it more difficult to oppose Democratic capitalist politicians.

1967 campaign

One of the proofs of the impact that the 1965 Stokes campaign had was the reaction of the capitalist class to it. They saw it as a threat of Black independent political action outside of and opposed to the capitalist class—even when carried out by a liberal Democrat like Stokes.

They made immediate attempts to buy Stokes out so that there would be no repetition of this.

Stokes relates in his autobiography how his campaign scared the Democrats, who thought that they could lose the support of the Black community in future campaigns.

Immediately after the campaign Stokes and leaders of Cleveland CORE were invited to the White House to meet with Johnson. CORE was given a huge grant by the Ford Foundation to register voters—a process that had a lot to do with transforming that chapter's previously militant character, a process that spread several years later throughout the national organization.

Finally the capitalist class itself moved in. Stokes had previously been what he describes as a "jail-house lawyer," living by picking up whatever cases he could find from poor, mostly Black clients by hanging around the courts and the jails. His firm, like those of most Black lawyers, had been boycotted by the capitalist firms and whites in general.

Suddenly Stokes received a call from Cyrus Eaton, a big capitalist Stokes describes as owning much of Northern Ohio. Stokes' firm was asked to defend one of Eaton's banks in a major suit—quite a switch from defending framed-up ghetto residents. From that point on Stokes' new business associates introduced him into the board rooms and private clubs of the ruling class.

Finally the Democratic party leadership on a national level moved in to assure Stokes the nomination in 1967 and to campaign for him. His second campaign was not based on the same apparatus as in 1965. It included big political figures from the local and national Democratic party and the Cleveland business community as well as Black and white politicians who had denounced his 1965 campaign.

Comrade Keil fails to understand the difference between a campaign based on the Black community and its organizations of struggle run against the Democrats, and a campaign run from the board rooms of the ruling class and the White House on the Democratic ticket!

Is the Black Panther Party the same thing as the Democratic party?

In 1973, Bobby Seale ran as a candidate for mayor of Oakland, California. In the initial period of his campaign he ran as an independent and Black Panther candidate. The party welcomed this campaign and counterposed it to the support the Panthers had given to Democratic candidates like Congressman Ronald V. Dellums.

Later in his campaign, Bobby Seale switched. He announced that he was running as a Democrat and went after the endorsement of the official Democratic Party which he was able to gain in the final stages of the campaign. This switch was made easier by the "non-partisan" nature of the campaign, which enables candidates to run without clearly designating their party labels.

As soon as Seale switched, the SWP dropped its support to the Seale campaign, opposing it as a capitalist campaign.

However, Comrade Keil believes that the initial endorsement was incorrect. He does not charge that Seale was running as a Democrat all along, and not initially as a Black Panther—a question of fact. He seems to believe that Seale's running as a Democratic party candidate flowed logically from his running as a candidate of the Black Panther Party and that the two are the same.

He writes, "The role that might be played by an ostensibly 'Black party' is shown by the Bobby Seale campaign in Oakland." Comrade Keil implies that it was through running a Black party campaign that Seale built up his support as, and announced himself as, a Democrat.

Later on, Comrade Keil says, "Seale with our help, had gathered support, which he used to further his campaign as a Democrat."

This is the exact opposite of what happened. Initially Seale announced that he would be running his campaign to "unify Black people around my mayoralty campaign simultaneously with our survival programs. The survival program is really a means of organizing Black people in the Black community."

He projected it as an openly anticapitalist campaign, as well as one based on the Black community. He said, "the main thing to do, of course, is to get the racist flunkies and lackeys of the capitalist ruling class out of the system," through his campaign.

He projected the campaign initially as a Black Panther party campaign. As the campaign proceeded Seale became less clear about the independent character of the campaign and finally he announced that he was running as a "perfectly respectable Democrat."

The party always made clear that it supported Seale's campaign as an independent campaign. We campaigned against that campaign becoming a Democratic party campaign and urged that it be used to build toward a mass Black political party.

The *Militant* reported that during the campaign SWP candidates Rick Congress and James Lewis explained during the initial weeks of the campaign "that the SWP's call for a vote for Seale and [Elaine] Brown [another Panther candidate] was offered on the proviso that the campaign retain its independence from the Democrats and the Republicans."

Once Seale began to campaign as a Democrat, the SWP opposed him. Lewis told a campaign meeting, "By running as candidates of one of the parties of the ruling class Seale and Brown are seriously misleading the Black community about the possibility of achieving any improvement in the conditions of Black people through reliance on capitalist politics."

The facts are that we never "helped" Democratic party politics in Seale's campaign or anywhere else. Throughout the campaign we campaigned against Seale's supporting Democrats. We pointed the way towards independent political action. When Seale did make the turn this meant

that our comrades in Oakland were in a good position to clearly counterpose his course to independent Black political action.

However, the important thing is to recognize that he did make a turn. His initial campaign was *against* the Democrats and seen by most people as a Black Panther Party campaign.

If we were to apply Comrade Keil's methodology, we would be able to extend critical support only to our own candidates since those are the only candidates we will be completely sure will not make an about-face in an election.

VI. The party's policy on Black representation in the 1939-1963 period.

Comrade Keil believes that our "error" of calling for a Black party "stems" from a position the party maintained for twenty-four years before the *Freedom Now* resolution, of giving critical support to independent Black candidates in order to support the struggle for Black political representation.

Comrade Keil believes that this is another example of the "dangerous" "idea of supporting candidates other than those put up by working-class organizations." He states that the Black organization Trotsky proposed would meet his specifications of a working-class organization that would "exclude" non-working-class Blacks.

A reading of Leon Trotsky's pamphlet *On Black Nationalism and Self-Determination* shows that to the question of whether non-working-class Blacks including petty bourgeois and "bourgeois" elements who wanted to join it to fight for Black rights would be excluded from the proposed Black organization, the answer was "no." According to Keil this would make it a non-working-class organization.

Black representation

Apparently Comrade Keil suffers from a lack of understanding of what the SWP meant by independent Black representation. He claims that this position was "a concession to the idea of voting for candidates simply because they are Black" and thus leads to a position of supporting Black Democrats.

The facts are that during this period, Blacks were almost completely excluded from holding office through the Democratic and Republican parties on a local, state and national level. In numerous Black communities in local elections, for school boards, city councils and similar bodies, Black candidates ran with the support of the Black community in order to achieve some sort of Black representation.

The party's support to this was not some idle exercise in support of an abstract democratic right, but identification with an important part of the national struggle of Afro-Americans, their struggle for political power. The policies of the capitalist parties were so bad at this time that even in the late 1940s and early 1950s it forced Afro-Americans to break with these parties and launch their own campaigns in order to gain some sort of representation.

The party was completely correct in supporting such candidates, and if it had taken Comrade Keil's advice, the party would have been obstructed in its attempts to help lead this movement in the direction of independent working-class politics.

The most well-known example of use of this tactic was the Atkinson campaign in Los Angeles in 1959.

A brief look at our tactics in that campaign and our attitude toward the Grey campaign, another Black representation struggle at the same time and place, will help give a better feel for the question than Comrade Keil's misunderstandings.

Atkinson was a Black Democrat who ran for a city council position in Los Angeles in 1959. Atkinson's campaign was an *expression* of the desire of the Black community of that area for Black political representation. However, the party opposed his campaign even though it was not run by the entrenched Democratic party machine in the "non-partisan" election.

We opposed it because the campaign was only organizationally independent of the Democratic machine, not of the Democratic party. Atkinson's campaign was controlled by the Democratic Minority Conference, a Black, Chicano and Asian-based faction of the Democratic party.

Comrade Theodore Edwards, at that time organizer in Los Angeles, pointed out that we should oppose that campaign because Atkinson was "a leader in a movement dedicated to channelize the Negro struggle into the Democratic Party."

In his article on that question, Comrade Edwards gave another example of a campaign for Black representation, the Grey campaign that we supported.

Grey was also a Democrat. However he was "merely a registered Democrat and not even a member of any Democratic Club," as Edwards wrote. His campaign originated in the Compton NAACP branch, in which several Black comrades were very active.

Edwards wrote, "They (the comrades) participated in the original committee that discussed program and the type of campaign. In a programmatic struggle, they established

their opposition to capitalist party politics and got a sympathetic hearing and support in the committee."

Conclusion

The question of whether or not or how we can raise the proposal of a Black political party is a tactical question, so long as the object is independent working-class political action. Comrades can differ with this tactical position and still be in agreement with our general analysis and perspective for the Black struggle.

However, Comrade Keil's approach is based on a lack of understanding of our party's tactics and strategy on the general subject of independent political action and critical support. He also shows that he has a different analysis of the social and political realities of the Black community than the party has had over the years.

The coming radicalization of the working-class does not only mean the radicalization of trade unionists or the radicalization of the workers around shop issues. It means the beginning of a response to a heightened attack on all segments of the workers' political, economic and social conditions.

We have analyzed in the political resolution and the Black struggle resolution how the heaviest attacks are coming down on Afro-Americans both on the economic level and in the new racist attacks. We can expect an important rise of struggles by Blacks against both aspects of their oppression and a deepening of nationalist consciousness and expression.

With such expectations a revival of the type of sentiment that existed for a Black political party in the 1960s is not at all ruled out. Our party must retain its current position of calling for a mass independent Black political party as a means of furthering Black working class political action in the current social and economic crisis.

A WORD ABOUT PUERTO RICANS IN THE U.S.

by Pedro Torres, Lower Manhattan Branch, New York Local

July 31, 1975

The party takes no official position on the development of a new Puerto Rican nationality in the U.S., however, Doug Jenness, in his article *Puerto Ricans in the U.S.* in the *International Socialist Review* (ISR)—Dec., 1974, Vol. 35, No. 11—writes . . . "if present trends continue, the next couple of decades will see Puerto Ricans born in the U.S.—whose principle language is English—playing an increasingly important role in the Puerto Rican community."

I agree with this statement by Jenness, as well as another one from the same article . . . "at this point in the evolution of the Puerto Rican national minority, neither massive return to Puerto Rico nor assimilation into U.S. society appears likely." These two statements reflect well the state of the Puerto Rican national minority at this time—that state is transitional. Puerto Ricans at this time range from completely island to completely U.S. oriented. The party then should not take a position, as most of the

Puerto Rican left groups do, but the party should keep abreast with the rate of this transition. The purpose of this contribution is to assist in keeping in touch with this transition.

Puerto Ricans, as we know them today, did not always exist. The formation of the Puerto Rican people took centuries of mixing of Spanish, African, and Indian cultures. The distinctiveness of this mixture and the nationality following from it is most clearly reflected in the distinctive Spanish spoken by Puerto Ricans. This dialect, frequently the basis of ridicule from other Spanish speakers, is called Puerto Rican.

Mass migration from Puerto Rico started in 1945. This migration laid the basis for a change in the Puerto Rican nationality. Today, there are over two million Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. Forty percent of these Puerto Ricans were born in the U.S. and there is no way of

knowing how many of these came as very young children.

The radicalization of the Puerto Rican community in the late 1960's was in reality the radicalization of the children of the first mass migration. These youth radicalized around the struggle for community control in Ocean Hill Brownsville and open admissions in the City University of New York. In other words, they radicalized around their national oppression within the U.S. and formed the first radical nationalist Puerto Rican party in the U.S., the Young Lords Party (YLP). At the same time, Movimiento Pro-Independencia (MPI), an island-based organization, was trying to raise funds to build their movement in Puerto Rico. Although MPI did receive financial support from the radicalizing youth, it did not have a community base in any way similar to that of YLP. This was due mainly to MPI's disinterest in the concrete manifestation of oppression of Puerto Ricans here, for example, the need of bilingual programs, housing, garbage collection, health, etc.

Until 1972, both groups agreed that there was only one Puerto Rican nation.

In 1972, YLP changed their position on the national question saying that Puerto Ricans here were a distinct nationality from Puerto Ricans on the island. This change was based primarily on two factors: 1) Their negative experience when YLP opened a branch in Ponce, Puerto Rico. They were socially and politically isolated from the community. They were told they couldn't speak Spanish. Their women members were maltreated, and finally, they were told to go back to N.Y. 2) Their trip to China where they were told by a government bureaucrat that nationalism was bad and that Puerto Ricans in the U.S. were a distinct nationality. These two things combined to change, at a 1972 conference in New Haven, Conn. their position on the national question.

During this same year they changed certain positions and their name from Young Lords Party to Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRRWO). During this same year MPI became Partido Socialista Puertorriqueño (PSP) holding its original idea on the national question.

Although PRRWO is a Maoist sect, they do represent a force among the Puerto Rican youth. In addition, PRRWO is not alone in this position. Two other groups—Resistencia Puertorriqueña and El Comité—also have the same position. Although all three groups are small separately—together, and on this question they are together, they represent a pretty sizeable force.

PSP, with its position that Puerto Ricans are and will be one nation until the moment of independence, is the largest of all Puerto Rican left groups. It also suffers from an extremely high drop out rate. After examining PSP membership over the past three years one thing became clear: They initially attract Puerto Ricans based both here and the island, but they are only able to integrate those Puerto Ricans who are closely associated with the island. In other words, Puerto Ricans born in the U.S. or Puerto

Ricans who spent most of their lives here tend to join PSP out of nationalist feelings but leave after a short period of time. These Puerto Rican youths tend to drop out of PSP and join either one of the Puerto Rican groups or multinational groups such as YSA or YWLL.

Another example of a starting nucleus for the new nationality is the development of variations in cultural forms. Music, for example, in the U.S. is far from typical Puerto Rican music. The music of Puerto Ricans here is mixture of soul, latin and some variation of rock, while music in the island is mixture of latin and caribbean music. The literature of this new type of Puerto Rican "Rican"; "New Rican"—is based on different themes and refers to different places from the literature of the island. The works of Piri Thomas are the best example of this type of literature. His themes are always his oppression as a Black Puerto Rican in the U.S. His places of reference are the Puerto Rican ghettos in N.Y.C.

Puerto Ricans, here, even speak a different variety of Spanish—so called Spanglish. Usually involving the Spanishizing of English words, giving Spanish endings to English words. Many new words form also new phrases, just like their ancestors did when the Puerto Rican nation was forming, back in the late 1700's and early 1800's. They differentiated themselves from Spain's purest form of speaking Spanish. This was done unconsciously. Professionals aware of this difference took the initiative in writing their words in this manner in order to avocate this difference. Magazines are published directed at this new breed of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. They are written in English with the so-called Spanglish thrown in. And they talk primarily about the situation of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. Two examples of these magazines are *Latin N.Y.* and *The Rican*. Finally, Puerto Ricans here tend to refer to themselves and others like themselves as "Rican" rather than Puerto Rican. The experiences of Puerto Ricans from the U.S. returning to Puerto Rico give further proof of the rapidly developing differences. First, Puerto Ricans from the U.S. are called names with an implied prejudice. The most common one is a New Rican; someone who is neither Puerto Rican or American. In Puerto Rico, there are communities of Puerto Ricans returning from the U.S. to the island. These communities are distinct from the rest of the island not only in language—English and Spanish are both spoken there—but also in their general layout. These communities tend to look more like housing developments on Long Island than Puerto Rico. The people living in these communities tend to have a different life style than other Puerto Ricans, staying up late and going out more frequently for entertainment. It has been necessary to set up bilingual programs in the schools of these communities to accommodate the children returning from the U.S.

It is based on these types of experiences that many young Puerto Ricans have adopted the term New Rican or Rican to define their ethnic background. Reflecting both their inability to assimilate into general American society and to return to Puerto Rico.

IN DEFENSE OF ENDING DISCRIMINATORY LAYOFFS

by Dianne Feeley, Brooklyn Branch, New York Local

August 1, 1975

The right of seniority, like protective legislation, is a gain of the trade union movement. And like protective legislation, seniority has become too limited a concept. For example, protective legislation, which applies primarily to women, provides a certain minimum standard of safety for certain categories of women workers. However, it also functions to "protect" women from certain job classifications—which happen to be the higher-paying jobs. Since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 women have been filing charges of discrimination on the basis that protective legislation is an excuse bosses, and sometimes unions, use to segregate women into the lower-paying jobs. Obviously the Socialist Workers Party doesn't call for throwing out protective legislation just because it sometimes functions to discriminate. Instead we call for *extending* protective legislation, on the basis that every worker needs safe working conditions. And in that process, reactionaries will not be able to utilize protective legislation as a tool in their arsenal.

I believe the same concept underlies the SWP's call for no discrimination in layoffs. What seniority has represented, in its most positive aspects, is the union's power to force bosses to adhere to the union's established procedure. Assuming that the union doesn't have the power to completely halt the layoffs, the union holds the weapon of seniority as a means of preventing the bosses from arbitrarily firing workers. If the union did not have that power of course the boss would simply choose to fire the union militants, and get rid of the union once and for all. Historically seniority is a concept by which the union defends itself against the bosses' attack.

But we have learned that seniority is only one method of halting the bosses' attempts to discriminate. And what we must do now is educate the ranks of the trade union movement to *extend* the concept of the right of seniority. Calling for measures such as no reduction in the proportion of oppressed minorities and women will not insure jobs for all, any more than the right of seniority does. But it will be a concrete method by which the gains women and oppressed minorities have won over the last ten years can be defended. It will provide a concrete method whereby the employer cannot take back what has just been won. The employer will no longer be able to use layoffs to discriminate.

Winning the trade union movement to this perspective is a key responsibility for the revolutionary party, for how else will the unions be able to become adequate weapons for the class? Why should Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and women support and join unions? Certainly on the basis of history, the trade union movement has not been the most consistent champion of the rights of the oppressed.

Women and oppressed nationalities have been historically utilized as a reserve labor force—to come into the economy when needed, and to leave when the economy is in a downturn. The SWP challenged that basic assumption when it called for the rights of women and Blacks to preferential hiring and advancement. We called for affirmative action as a way of integrating women and

oppressed minorities into the economy. Our program stood in contrast to the official line of most of the trade unions, which, in general, opposed any kind of affirmative action plan. In fact, there were times when Blacks and women, filing charges against the employer for discriminatory practices, found that the union had even filed a legal brief supporting the employer against them! The fact that the vast majority of unions had a policy which allowed the discrimination to continue did not stop the SWP from raising our slogans, nor did it stop Blacks and women from objecting to these discriminatory practices.

The Equal Rights Amendment is another example of where the SWP disagreed with the stated policy of most of the trade unions in the country, including the AFL-CIO. Most initially opposed the amendment. In states like Ohio the union officials worked very hard to defeat the ERA—and they were successful. The women's movement mounted a campaign, and the SWP supported that effort and used our electoral campaigns as a vehicle for our support. I believe we were able to play a role in getting the trade union movement to reverse its position and support the ERA. And when they finally adopted their resolution, we followed it up by getting the unions to testify in behalf of the amendment. In Ohio the ERA was finally passed because the unions came out in its defense.

We have, therefore, taken positions on women and oppressed minorities which have been in opposition to the official trade unions' program. And we have also been successful in securing significant union support in the end.

Comrade Debby Leonard stated, in her proposed CLUW resolution, that no layoffs are good layoffs, that all are equally bad. Herbert Hill, of the NAACP, notes that for every \$100 a white male makes, a Black makes \$58. That means when a Black gets laid off, the Black has less in unemployment insurance and other benefits, and less to fall back on, than the white. The layoff *is* worse for Blacks because chances are the Black will be unemployed longer. Black workers are fired two to four times faster than the white co-worker, and are more apt to live below poverty level. The statistics are similar for women: they make less, are fired at a higher rate, and are more apt to live in poverty than white males.

In other words, layoffs currently affect women and minorities much harder than they do white males. In that very real sense, not all layoffs are equally bad. They are clearly greater disasters for those who have been historically part of the reserve labor force. To equate all layoffs is to forget about how racism and sexism function.

There have been other times in 20th century America in which Blacks and women have been expected to leave the labor force when they were not "needed." And unions did not necessarily support their right to be an integral part of the economy. For instance, during World War I women were hired in a variety of jobs, including welding and working on the street cars. After the war, a local AFL union petitioned the War Labor Board to get the women street car conductors fired. In Cleveland, Ohio the male unions went out on strike, to demand that all the women be dismissed. The employer "gave in" to this demand.

A similar situation developed after World War II. Towards the end of the war, several conferences, including one by the Women's Division of the UAW, were held to discuss converting the war economy into a peacetime economy. Resolutions passed at the UAW December 1944 Conference included implementing equal pay, ending discriminatory clauses in union contracts (such as greater benefits or wages for male workers, or rigid job categories), and eliminating separate seniority lists for men and women.

At least since the end of world War II women have been battling against seniority because they have found it a weapon used against them, rather than used to protect them. In many cases, seniority is not plant-wide, but only in terms of job classification. That is, if a worker moves from one job category to another, the worker loses all seniority. This particularly hinders women, freezing them into the traditional categories of "women's work," and penalizing them if they manage to move out of these jobs.

Seven million women joined the work force during World War II, bringing the total number of women workers to 19.3 million. Because women were needed, the federal government—for the first time—passed a bill subsidizing child care centers.

But perhaps the most important change in the work force in the U.S. during the war was the entry of women into industries and occupations traditionally reserved for males. This shift meant that women were able to significantly increase their wages. It also forced employers to install labor-saving and safety devices within the factories, and, in the case of the large shipyards and factories, to set up 24-hour child care centers. Women, who are rarely given on-the-job-training, found such programs open to them. This was particularly true for Black women, who, before the war, were primarily domestics, agricultural workers, or service workers. By 1945 Black women were factory workers, craftswomen, and forewomen.

The UAW conducted a survey of their membership in 1945 and found that 85 percent of the women intended to continue working after the war. The president of the UAW said that the study would "shatter the preconceived ideas of certain industrialists and 'experts' who think the majority of women workers will want to leave the labor market." A similar survey of United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America revealed that more than 80 percent of the women planned to continue working. One-fifth of these women were the only contributing wage earners in their families, and a full one-half were the main source of income for relatives living somewhere else.

By August 1944 the UAW revealed that a disproportionate number of women workers were being laid off. In aircraft parts plants women were 42.2 percent of the working population, but constituted 60.2 percent of the layoffs. In the trucking and agricultural implements industry, where women were 13.1 percent of the work force, they were 51.6 percent of the layoffs. In all, women were 25.6 percent of the work force, but 61 percent of the layoffs.

These women did have seniority, but when the same plants were reconverted, and began rehiring, women's seniority rights were in most cases completely disregarded. For instance, at the Commerce Pattern Foundry and Machine Shop 50 percent of the workers were laid off at the end of the war, but by April 1946 the men had been reinstated and the women simply ignored. In some cases

the unions fought for the women workers, but in many other cases they did not. Florence Butcher filed a union grievance against the Tecumseh Products Company in Ohio, stating that after the war "certain female classifications were changed to male classifications" in order to exclude women. The union refused to take up her case.

One local union president wrote to the national UAW in 1945 that of the male employees who had been manufacturing anti-aircraft shells, 50 percent had been transferred to other jobs in the plant. He explained:

"There are jobs in this plant at the present time, but they are not suitable for female workers. The work is too heavy. The girls may find work in this area, but naturally it will have to be at lower wages as most plants seem to be asking for male workers."

With this backward attitude on the part of many unions, women were driven off the job market and into the home. This was the period of the "feminine mystique." Women were to re-enter the work force, but when they returned they were given the less skilled, less well paying jobs.

Unions like the UAW did call for a full employment economy and a massive public works program, but in general there was a great deal of backwardness toward Blacks and women within the trade unions. And so the pattern of employment became segregated once again.

I'd like to point to one other example of attitudes toward women workers—this time when the Soviet Union was faced with the disruption of its economy in the aftermath of the Civil War. In 1921 the Bolsheviks noticed that women were being laid off in greater proportion than the men. The government issued a policy statement, providing the basis for dismissal. It is, I believe, an attempt to deal with the particular problems of women workers. I think this can give us insight into the current situation. The Bolsheviks did not issue a proclamation in which it laid out its program for guaranteeing jobs for all, but addressed the problem at hand, within the context of rebuilding the economy. They stated that there were certain categories of women who could not be fired. These included women on maternity leave and pregnant or nursing women. Single women with children under a year old were given preferential treatment—men were to be dismissed before them. In all other cases, where men and women were of equal skill, they were to be dismissed on an equal basis.

However, a woman who was dismissed could not be put out of her apartment for non-payment of rent. Her children still had the right to be cared for in the factory day care center, and she received free medical care if she became pregnant.

This indicates an historic sensitivity to the problems of the working women by revolutionary socialists. I think it is within the context of that tradition that the party is demanding that layoffs cannot snatch away the gains the oppressed nationalities and women have won. At this point enough pressure has been put on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that they are, according to the July 31, 1975 *N.Y. Times*, considering issuing guidelines which would deal with the pattern of discrimination. Our party can, as it has in the case of the ERA, play an important role in educating the trade union movement, and in championing the rights of the oppressed. Certainly the issue is a concrete application of our proposed political resolution.

ONCE AGAIN ON DISCRIMINATORY LAYOFFS

by John Teitelbaum, Pittsburgh Branch

July 31, 1975

The American union movement has supported, at least in words, the goal of full employment or jobs for all for many years. During the 1930s there was a powerful left wing in the labor movement which spearheaded the development of the CIO. This left wing took the goal of full employment as a serious and realizable goal and as a necessary part of the main task of organizing the unorganized. Organizations of the unemployed were formed which were a key component of many strike victories. Nor was this just a one way alliance. The union militants and the locals they controlled helped to organize demonstrations in favor of full employment and public works programs.

Despite these efforts however, unemployment remained high throughout the thirties. Within the depression periodic recessions occurred. The bosses attempted to use these layoffs to fire older less productive and younger militant workers.

The union movement was unable to stop the layoffs or to force the government to create full employment. That should not surprise us—the bosses ran both the industries and the government. But the workers were able to wring a partial concession. The employers were not able to fire just anyone they chose but had to lay off on the basis of seniority. This seniority system was a victory for the labor movement—it gave the workers the only job security they had. It was of particular value to the older workers who would have had difficulty obtaining reemployment even in the best of circumstances.

The seniority system is not full employment. It was a method of laying off workers. It was better than the old way, in which the employers would fire anyone they chose. Our party supported the seniority system. We still support the seniority system. But we didn't support the layoffs or the unemployment—we, and the CIO generally, advocated and fought for full employment.

Since the development of the seniority system a new factor has entered the picture which creates the need for revision in the old seniority system. That new factor is the affirmative action program. A weakness of the seniority system was that it reinforced the last hired first fired pattern afflicting minorities and women. During each period of economic recovery those workers who had previously been laid off were rehired on the basis of their seniority. During a downturn the least senior workers were cast adrift first. In each case minorities and women were given short shrift. The seniority method of determining who shall be employed and who shall be unemployed was stacked against minorities both in the upturn and in the downturn.

During the 1971-72 upturn the oppressed national minorities won some important concessions on this score. Many employers were required to hire Blacks, women and

other oppressed groups in disproportionate numbers to correct the historic disproportion which was created of this racist and sexist society. The unions, by and large, opposed affirmative hiring. One of the reasons used is that is contradicts seniority. And, it is true—affirmative hiring contradicts the old seniority system. Suppose after a downturn in which the whole number of workers get laid off, there is a slight recovery. It's not an inconceivable occurrence. Who gets rehired? If the most senior workers get rehired first, affirmative action goes by the boards. If the oppressed minorities and women are rehired first under affirmative action then the seniority principle is violated. You can't have it both ways. Now in this case everyone in the present discussion seems to agree that we ought to violate the seniority method and support the affirmative action programs. Now I would hope that the comrades would agree that we should support affirmative hiring even when jobs were very difficult to find—like in a depression. After all it would be a real mockery if the party supported affirmative action only when jobs were relatively plentiful, and then reneged during a period of mass unemployment. I don't think women or Blacks would be too impressed.

If we can agree on the affirmative action programs and preferential hiring then we're really in a good position to develop a policy toward layoffs. Yes, that's right. A policy toward layoffs. Some comrades find this concept particularly difficult to grasp. Isn't it unprincipled to sign a contract which admits the possibility of layoffs? But that's what the seniority clause is. We don't agree to the layoffs in principle because we sign a contract with a seniority clause, do we? Nevertheless seniority is a method of laying off workers. For that matter we don't agree with any of the legal implications of the collective bargaining contract. The contract implies that the employer owns the means of production and the employees will respect that. We aim to change all that, you know. And if we are able to occupy a factory with masses of workers, and the working majority were able to take the state power that is rightfully theirs, that collective bargaining agreement along with other relics of capitalism will be swept into the dustbin of history. On the other hand if the capitalists are able to mobilize to smash the unions they will not be deterred by the niceties of bourgeois law. And likewise the collective bargaining agreement will go by the boards. The contract represents a temporary relationship of forces, reflecting the concessions the workers are able to wrest from the bosses this time around. Sometimes the union leadership negotiates contracts short of what the workers are actually able to win. We call these sellout agreements. But collective bargaining agreements are always compromises—always. They always stop short of social-

ism.

What you are able to win depends on many things. We have a general phrase "relationship of forces" which includes the combativity of the workers, their leadership, the situation in the international union, the political situation in the local area, and nationally, and many other factors. So sometimes we are able to win a demand like no layoffs and sometimes not. And when we are not we need a layoffs policy.

Suppose in the 1930s when some unions were still fighting for the seniority system, there was a strike where this very issue was at stake. And there was this militant elected to the negotiating committee who had the following position. We are against layoffs. The seniority system is a method of laying off workers. Therefore we cannot be for seniority. It's a good syllogism—airtight. I don't think that would impress the workers who were desperately fighting for this small bit of job security, however. They might well reply, suppose we are as yet unable to stop all layoffs. Shouldn't we at least try to stop the layoffs from being used to victimize those workers who are more militant? To reply that your alternative to the firing of the older and more militant workers is jobs for all would not be taken too well, I think. Somebody might actually mistake you for a company man or woman.

What's involved in this discussion I think is this. The old seniority clause discriminates against women and minorities. As workers are being laid off according to the old seniority system, the gains won by the women and the minorities are being wiped out. If we favored preferential treatment during the boom, why should we change our attitude when the going gets tough?

We don't propose to abandon the old seniority system and return to the old method where the boss gets to pick and choose. Instead we propose a modification of the old seniority system. We simply want to see seniority changed so that the proportion of Blacks and women remains the same after the layoffs as under the affirmative action program.

We are now and always for jobs for all. But we cannot remain indifferent to the racist and sexist character of the layoffs. Comrades should read and reread Herbert Hill's speech to the NAACP convention. It is much to the point.

A few years ago a similar issue came up in the campus movement over the question of open enrollment for Blacks. There were big strikes like that at San Francisco State, where this was a major demand. Sometimes this demand was attacked in the following way. The schools have only a limited capacity. If we start admitting Blacks on an open basis that means that more qualified whites would be rejected. We should instead, help to get bond issues passed to increase total enrollment. We replied—and I mean we militant students—I wasn't in the Trotskyist movement then—yes, we are for building more schools so that everyone can get an education. But meanwhile we refuse to accept the present inequities. We refuse to accept a student body being 3 percent Black when the surrounding community of San Francisco is over 20 percent. We will not wait for new schools to be built to change that inequity.

This principle comes up again and again. There are scarcities created by capitalism. These scarcities are then used by the capitalists to divide the workers along racial and sexual lines. We oppose not only the scarcities but also the unequal and discriminatory way in which these scarce

jobs are parcelled out. Blacks and women should not wait for jobs for all to fight discriminatory layoffs. No matter how scarce jobs, education, housing or anything else is, we demand the oppressed get their rightful share.

A second important question is whether or not we are in fact giving too much weight in our propaganda to the discriminatory firing issue and too little to jobs for all. Since the question is one of balance it is more difficult to reach a definitive judgment. But jobs for all is the first point in the bill of rights. We have a separate piece of literature "Why Can't Everyone Have a Job"; we have a national button and a national campaign poster, and we give full coverage in our press to struggles like the sanitation workers' strike where this issue is raised. Comrade Alvin, as was pointed out in the contribution by Comrade Jenness, et al., found it necessary to actually distort articles taken from the *Militant*. Either he was sloppy—and he's a fairly experienced comrade or he was trying to bolster what he sensed might be a weak argument. In my opinion our emphasis on the importance of the jobs for all slogan has remained unchanged since the Transitional Program.

However, the party would be derelict if it did not take the attack being launched against the affirmative action programs head on. This issue is coming up in a whole number of major industrial unions and along with the attacks being launched against desegregation is central to the racist offensive being carried out in this country today.

A third question has been raised concerning a tactical question. It has been argued that the party should raise the notion either of jobs for all, or of a more general opposition to all layoffs, in every resolution in which we call for the modification of seniority in favor of the oppressed nationalities and women. I think that in the context in which this question is posed in the unions today, this would be a definite mistake. Consider the UE district council resolution included as an appendix; it is, I think, a fair example. The union bureaucrats are posing a direct challenge to affirmative action through the reaffirmation of sacred seniority. It is our responsibility to take this job trust mentality head on. What is the effect of including jobs for all in the resolution through which we attempt to do this? Isn't that what "the employer be assessed the price of correction for past inequities" means in essence? By raising this jobs for all in the context of this resolution we allow the union leadership to *sidestep its own responsibility* for maintaining "inequities." After all what the situation requires is not just one in a long string of platonic resolutions calling for full employment. Our resolution must focus in on the central dispute between sacred seniority and affirmative action. We should not dilute our resolution with assertions about full employment or opposition to layoffs generally. That can only help the bureaucrats to sidestep the main point. However, in explaining and motivating such resolutions we certainly could raise jobs for all and a good deal more. We could well speak of the reduction of the work week with no cut in pay and the need for stepped up public works and social services, just to begin with. But not in the resolution itself—there we must concentrate our fire directly at sacred seniority.

Debby Leonard points out that it is no simple task to argue for such a policy in the unions today. That's true. A white male job trust mentality pervades the unions as a

result of years of misleadership. One of our tasks in the unions is to fight against that mentality.

APPENDIX

The following is a resolution that will be presented for adoption. It is excerpted from a leaflet distributed by a UE local at a local plant.

Attack on Seniority

In the last two years there have been serious challenges regarding the seniority of workers in the United States. The courts are now going to determine whether the seniority system should stand as it presently applies.

The following is a resolution that will be presented for adoption to the UE National Convention in September. This resolution was unanimously adopted at the UE District Council meeting on June 28, 1975, at Derry, Pa.

"From its inception, 40 years ago, the UE has stood for equal rights, regardless of craft, age, sex, nationality, race, creed or political belief, and we have fought continuously against discrimination in all its forms, often at a high price collectively and individually. Civil rights legislation and at least its partial implementation has, for the past few years, begun to reverse the tide of discrimination. Old

stereotypes, unfair practices and out-and-out racism, bigotry and hypocrisy have begun to fall before the determination of individuals and organizations resolved to right the wrongs of the past. However, in our zeal to achieve equality we must resist the temptation to go overboard and create injustice in the name of justice. We speak particularly with regard to seniority, and the efforts of those who would violate seniority in misguided attempts to correct past wrongs. Seniority is the cornerstone of trade unionism. Job security—promotion—and nearly all contract benefits rest on that foundation. We must protect that basic right at all costs. Certainly, we recognize that because some people today are not as well off—and in many cases are in dire straits because of past discrimination, but doing an injustice to others will not rectify this situation. The employers were chiefly responsible for the discrimination and inequality which over the years provided them the weapons of exploitation and resultant inflated profits. They as the culprits should pay the price of retribution.

We, therefore, Resolve that the UE guard vigilantly against incursions on the basic principle of seniority, that we continue to enforce the principle of First in, Last out.

And be it Further Resolved that the fight against discrimination continue and that the employer be assessed the price of correction for past and present inequities.

A FORGOTTEN MINORITY

by Almeda Kirsch, Cleveland Branch

July 25, 1975

The Political Resolution is a thorough, painstaking, precise document. It investigates every nook and cranny of our society, examines and analyses the economic forces, the political currents and cross currents, and leaves virtually no stone unturned.

However, as thoroughgoing as the resolution is, it has left one heavy stone unturned. To turn over this stone is to find a group of human beings that has all the attributes of another oppressed minority. These human beings are the elderly, aged, old, senior citizens, retirees, those over 65, whatever they might one day choose to be called. This group suffers the same kind of bigotry, economic deprivation and job discrimination that is suffered by other oppressed minorities. Just as the oppressed nationalities, women, small farmers, students, middle classes and GI's are considered by the resolution as allies of the proletariat, so should the elderly senior citizens.

This is a sizable group and one that is getting larger. Thanks to science and technology the peoples of the world are growing older and surviving longer. Statistics tell us that there were 19 percent more elderly people in 1970 than there were in 1940, producing a total of 23 million over 65. This group, as do women, crosses all class lines and comes from all areas of society. Just as women are uniquely something more than a minority, comprising 51 percent of the population, so the aged minority is unique in that it is a potential group that the whole, barring sickness and accident, can look forward to entering.

The oppression of the elderly has many similarities in common with the oppression of Blacks and other nationalities. As a group it has no clearly defined identity. There is no preparation in our society for the elderly state. Books, radio and television pay little attention to older citizens. When age is dealt with it is either ridiculous, evil, a failure, unhappy or just a big joke. Nearly always something to be shunned.

As a group the elderly have also been left out of the history books, along with women, leaving no past to identify with. Medical science contributes its share by continuing to look for the fountain of youth, ways to slow down the biological clock and somehow get around getting older.

The aged also suffer their own special discrimination in housing. Housing for the old, especially public housing, is fought against in many communities. On the other hand, there is shameful and shocking profiteering in the nursing home business as well as the so-called sun cities of the

west and the low cost housing communities of Florida and other parts of the country. Housing, which is very often paid for with the whole social security check after a down payment of life savings, has been found to be flimsy, small, inadequately furnished and segregated in isolated places, where tenants can be stuffed away, out of sight and invisible. Old age ghettos are developing all over the country with the exploitation that goes along with it.

Lack of employment also oppresses those over 65. Even though many retirees would prefer to be working, employers in many instances require retirement at 65 or even earlier. This is an oppression that equals the last hired and first fired of the Blacks or the sexist, "woman's place is in the home." There are laws that prevent age bias in hiring, but there are none that protect those over 65.

Employers discriminate against the older workers in much the same way as they discriminate against women and ethnic minorities—they are pigeonholed and stereotyped. Reasons for not hiring include being unproductive, not strong or fast enough, absent too much, more prone to accidents, inflexible, can't get along with younger workers—all generalizations that ignore individuals and are not borne out by statistics.

A by-product of this bias and mandatory retirement is to place a heavier and heavier tax burden on the younger generations. Already this is beginning to create a division in the working class. Fear has been expressed that the increased voting power of the elderly will be used to exploit youth in the form of higher social security taxes. One sociologist has recommended a maximum voting age. This division of generations becomes one more weapon in the hands of the bosses.

Like students, those retired have no direct specific relationship to production. They are not exploited or super-exploited, but unlike students they are simply cast aside. This is a real pariah status, and a very real oppression.

More and more the elderly are behaving as other minorities have, and are making themselves heard. A White House spokesman estimates that 6 million senior citizens have joined activist organizations. There have been marches on Washington; in Michigan traffic has been stopped. In Cleveland an elderly activist group only recently won concessions from Pick-N-Pay and Kroger's food stores in the form of discounts.

This is an oppressed minority that our party has yet to discuss politically. It is time to do it, and it is time to include the elderly pariahs of our society among the allies of the proletariat.