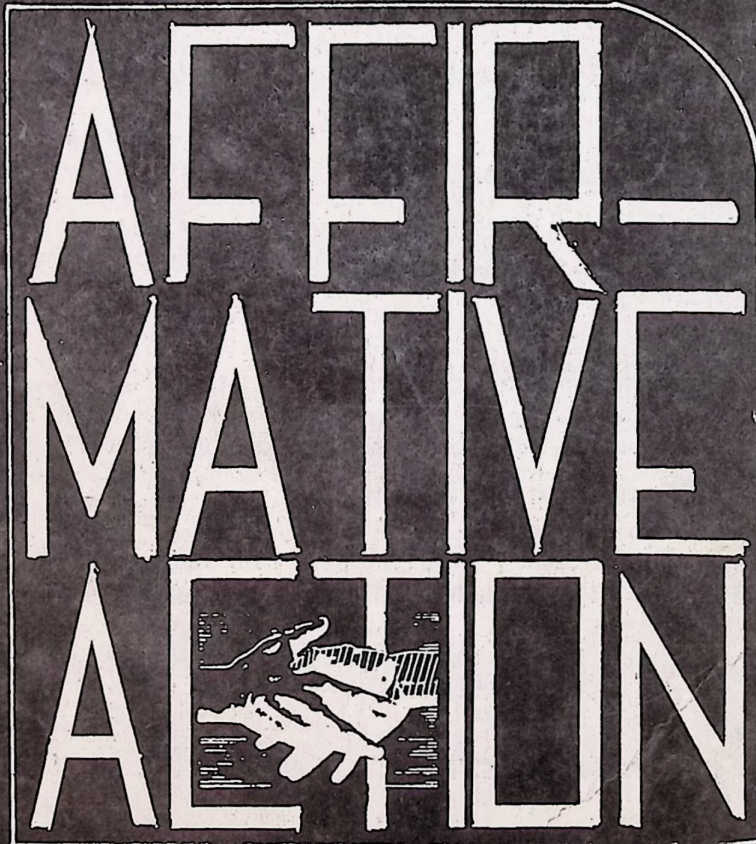


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The 23rd National Convention of the Communist Party

Recently James Watt was forced to resign his cabinet position as Secretary of the Interior. Mr. Watt represented the racist onslaught of the Reagan Administration and his resignation resulted from the determined resistance and fight-back of masses of U.S. people.

The Reagan Administration demagogically talks about our country getting "well" while in the name of deregulation direct assaults are being made on the trade unions, from PATCO and the Airline Pilot Association to the United Steel Workers at Phelps-Dodge and the United Farm Workers Union.

The racist reactionary offensive of the Reagan Administration has meant cutbacks in all social programs, high rates of unemployment and still higher rates for Afro-American workers, especially Afro-American youth. While cutting funds for social programs Reagan has allocated hundreds of billions for the military-industrial complex.

While profits soar our cities are crumbling and our people are getting everything but "well."

Members of the Communist Party, as workers, tenants, parents and students are activists and leaders in their unions and other organizations. These activists and leaders have come into the Communist Party because their lives and their experiences have led them to the conclusion

reached by Karl Marx that the task now is to change the world.

The Communist Party will hold its 23rd National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio from November 10 through 13, 1983. It will bring together "a congealed crystallized experience that is the essence of a hundred thousand battles and the wisdom of the geniuses of history compressed and extended in the science of Marxism-Leninism, the science of social change." As Chairman of the Communist Party, Henry Winston will open the convention and Gus Hall, General Secretary, will deliver the main report. The convention will set the policies and thrust of the Party for the next four years. Determining these policies will be workers — Black, white and brown.

As a central question the struggle for Afro-American equality will be discussed in every report and workshop. Communists, utilizing their experiences, will assess their work and ideological positions on the road toward freedom, equality, peace and socialism. As part of pre-convention discussion, members of the Communist Party gathered in New York City on September 10-11th for a conference on Afro-American equality where the Main Draft Document of the convention was discussed. We are proud to present some of the reports and discussions presented at that conference. The Communists share their ideas with you as they look forward to their 23rd Convention.



The Struggle for Equality

The following section on Afro-American Equality is excerpted from the Basic Draft Document in prepara-

tion for the 23rd National Convention of the Communist Party, USA.

Racism was born and lives in the service of the ruling robber class. It intensifies the exploitation of working people and deepens social deprivation. It undermines democracy, scorns humanism and mocks justice. It violates the human dignity of men and women. It corrodes the humanity and moral fiber of the nation. The eradication of all vestiges of racism from society and the relations between people is a historic necessity for social and political progress.

Racism is a cruel weapon and brutal practice of state monopoly capital in its drive for maximum-plus, corporate profits. As with toxic chemicals, the Reagan Administration is working to make racism into an officially sanctioned pollutant. It oozes from every crevice, every corner of capitalism. It is present in every plant layoff, every unemployment line, in every college first day, in every hospital emergency ward, in eviction notices and emergency shelters. The Reagan Administration and the Supreme Court have become instruments to wipe out gains and undo the existing legal restrictions and affirmative action programs.

On the other hand, there are some developments that go in the opposite direction and demonstrate that despite the official and legal racist actions, the racist poison is losing some of its potency. It is necessary to understand and draw some of the positive lessons from the wide electoral experiences, such as the Harold Washington victory in Chicago, the Wilson Goode primary success in the Philadelphia mayoralty race, the campaign of Tom Bradley in California, the Robert Clark Congressional race in Mississippi, the Kathy Hall campaign in Indiana and the Richard Hatcher re-election in Gary.

The main lesson is that in a new way it is now possible to build people's coalitions and win, even under the most difficult circumstances and virulent racist attacks. The experiences in organizing the unemployed also demonstrate a higher level of understanding of the need for Black-white unity by all of the unemployed. It is important to see these positive developments in order to build on

them.

The aim of the Reagan Administration is to wipe out the hard won gains of many years of struggle for equality. There are some new difficult questions in the struggle for equality that are related to the effects of the economic crisis, especially the effects of the longer-range structural crisis.

Corporations are using the layoffs to foster racism and divisions in the ranks of workers. They are using it to wipe out the gains, including the gains of the affirmative action programs. There is also a concentrated drive to wipe out the gains of Afro-Americans on the electoral front, including the election of 21 Representatives in Congress and some 225 Mayors in recent elections. There is a centrally directed drive of frameup and harassment of Afro-American public officials. The drive to wipe out the gains in the field of education and in the teaching professions continues. Busing to achieve school integration is being systematically dismantled and tied up in the courts. There is an effort to wipe out the affirmative action gains in city police and fire departments which goes hand in hand with the increase in police brutality.

The economic gridlock crisis has further emphasized the fact that there is a special kind of link, a bond between the class struggle against exploitation and the struggle against racism. They both have the same economic roots, the system of capitalist exploitation.

No one in the United States can take a second breath without encountering the iron heel of monopoly capital. The class struggle is the expression of this central, all-dominating contradiction in our lives. The resolution of this contradiction is involved in all struggles for social progress. The sharpening of the class contradictions creates the objective propellants and subjective factors that stimulate the development of class consciousness.

These higher levels of consciousness are all involved in the struggle against racism. There is a dialectical interchange and unity of cause and effect between the struggle against racism and the rise of class consciousness. Class consciousness has built-in limitations unless it takes up the

struggle against racism. This is the essence of Karl Marx's profound thought that "labor in the white skin cannot be free as long as labor in the Black skin is branded."

The other side of this truth is that the struggle against racism has a built-in limitation if it is not related to the class struggle against capitalism, a struggle that gives rise to class consciousness. Because racism is an instrument for creating class disunity we must therefore stress the centrality of the struggle for equality in the development of class unity. Because the Afro-American workers are an inseparable part of the U.S. working class as well as the dominant numbers of the Black community they are central in the molding of unity and coalition relationships between the working class as a whole and the Afro-American community.

Some 50 million of our people are victims of racial and national oppression. The sharpest edge of racism is that which is directed against the Afro-American community. The other manifestations of racial and national oppression are fed by the racism against Afro-Americans. Therefore, in the struggle against racism and national oppression and all forms of discrimination, ethnic prejudices and chauvinism, the struggle against the racism directed against Black Americans is decisive to the unity of all of the racially and nationally oppressed and their unity with the working class.

The fundamental framework within which all developments, processes, movements and struggles take place is the class struggle. The class struggle does not replace the special features of the struggle for equality. We not only recognize the special class, national and racist nature of oppression, but we give it a top priority by explaining its relationship to the class struggle and to capitalist exploitation. The development of working class consciousness is decisive for plowing under all ideological currents designed to support every type of exploitation and oppression.

Our position leads us to have confidence in winning victories against racism. In the struggle for equality, the main source of power comes from concepts of unity and coalition, unity of the racially and nationally oppressed peoples, Black-white unity, coalitions of the working class with the Afro-American, Chicano and Puerto Rican communities. Above all, working people and all anti-monopoly forces need unity now more than

ever. Therefore, we must reject and fight against anything that denies, ignores, divides, distorts, detracts or diverts from this path of struggle.

A critical part of this struggle is the struggle against racist influences and ideas in the ranks of white workers. The struggle against racism is, therefore, crucial for the development of working class consciousness. For the United States, racism along with anti-Communism are the most formidable obstacles to the development of full class consciousness which is socialist consciousness. Racism is to the working class what scabbing is to the trade union. There are white workers whose class consciousness is weakened to the degree that they are influenced by racism or chauvinism. They must be won to full consciousness. There cannot be an anti-monopoly coalition that does not take on the racist ideology, the racist practice of monopoly capital. Thus, the struggle against racism and for equality is inextricably linked with the most basic processes of the class struggle, the struggle for social progress and the struggle for socialism.

THE CHALLENGE

How to more effectively raise the struggle for equality and against racism to new levels. How to more effectively fight against the racist policies of the Reagan Administration. How to more effectively convince white Americans that besides being just, from every viewpoint, the struggle against and the rejection of racism is also in their self-interest.

OUR SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A) Not to be satisfied with general statements, but to get to the concrete tasks of organizing actions, struggles and movements against the specific effects and practices of racism.

B) To take up the concretes of organizing and fighting for programs of affirmative action.

C) To more effectively and consistently work to counteract the effects of racist and chauvinist influences in the progressive and left movements, as well as the Party.

D) To more effectively integrate the struggle against racism into all mass struggles in all areas of life.

E) Establish Commissions on Afro-American Equality in every district of the Party.

New Levels of Struggle — New Levels of Unity

By Charlene Mitchell

This conference takes place just nine weeks before the 23rd National Convention of our Party. We come to this conference with experiences of past and present struggles that are the real test of our policies. This is the meaning of pre-convention discussion and application. In other words, if it's gonna work it should already begin to hum.

It is in this sense that we discuss the Draft Document. I think we can say with a sense of pride that the basic line of the Document is sound and our conference should help to flesh out the section dealing with Afro-American equality.

This Conference comes at a most opportune time because the expressions of the mass upsurge have rarely been so evident— from Solidarity Day, September 19, 1981, to the March for Peace and Justice, June 12, 1982, the August 27 March on Washington and the Labor Day Parades in 150 cities. All these major mass actions had a common theme — Reagan Must Go

In a real sense, the all-peoples' front against reagan continues to grow and the number of coalitions, either temporary or longer-lasting, is increasing. The multi-racial and multi-national working class composition has been qualitatively strengthened and the leadership initiatives of the Black liberation movement have reached new levels of struggle and unity. This Black leadership initiative was clearly expressed on August 27.

Leading to the Annual Congressional Black Caucus Legislative weekend, the Black Leadership Forum proposed a march commemorating the 20th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington.

The idea to build a national coalition that would "be an expansion of the historic coalition of the civil rights movement because we understand the the issues of jobs, peace and freedom are inextricably linked, that they are equally important..." was initiated by Coretta Scott King, Rev. Joseph Lowery, Congressman Walter Fauntroy, Benjamin Hooks and Congressman Robert Garcia.

It garnered immediate support from Senator James Abourezk of American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Ms. Bella Abzug,

Women USA; Bishop John H. Adams, Congress of National Black Churches; Bishop James Armstrong, National Council of Churches; Mr. Harry Belafonte; Mr. Clyde Bellecourt, American Indian Movement; Ms. Donna L. Brazile, U.S. Student Association; Hon. John Conyers, Member of Congress; Dr. Richard Deats, Fellowship of Reconciliation; Mr. Murray Finley, ACTWU (AFL-CIO); Ms. Mary Futrell, National Education Association (NEA); Dr. Dorothy Height, National Council of Negro Women; Rev. Jesse Jackson, Operation PUSH; Dr. T.J. Jemison, National Baptist Convention of the USA; Mr. John Jacob, National Urban League; Mr. Cleveland Robinson, District 65UAW; Rabbi Alex Schindler, Union of American Hebrew Congregations; Mr. William Winpisinger, International Association of Machinists (AFL-CIO); Ms. Addie Wyatt, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (AFL-CIO). It also received the organizational endorsement of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Congressional Black Caucus, PUSH, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

A new Coalition of Conscience composed of segments of organized labor, the NEA, religious and peace organizations, women and youth, issued a Call to the Nation.

From the first moment the right wing Social Democrats tried to stop the plans for the March with Bayard Rustin playing the leading role. **Rustin Advice Rejected**

It is interesting how far some "leaders" are out of touch with the sentiments of the majority of the people. Bayard Rustin is a prime example.

"We do not believe that the commitment and financial state of the present coalition can raise any such amount of money either in terms of the central committee or for an adequate local response. We base that judgment on the fact that, after months of discussion, significant funds have neither been collected or committed." (Memo from Rustin and Norman Hill to Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rev. Joseph Lowery, and members of the Black Leadership Forum.)

The right wing Social Democrats did not believe

that small sums could be raised from large numbers of people, unions would give support, office space would be given without charge, or that organizations would donate staff and others would work at movement wages — that “in kind” contributions were possible.

Rustin stated further that “...many people will find it difficult to evaluate objectively the new, more complicated situation we face in the 1980’s. They may, therefore, approve such a March while not recognizing that they cannot arouse in their constituencies either the political and moral response, the financial commitment, or the energy to equal or surpass the dynamic and unique demonstration that the situation in 1963 made possible.” (Ibid)

Imagine the cynical arrogance! The point, however, is that nearly 400,000 people were at the Lincoln Memorial, in spite of Mr. Rustin’s attempt to write off their political and moral response, their financial commitment and energy.

“A March in 1983 will be compared in every detail with the March of 1963. Failure to equal the quarter million mark will, automatically, be considered by the media as a failure of the movement. It will also, in this difficult period, be considered by many Black people a failure attributable to to-

day’s Black leadership. It will, beyond this, reveal a weakness in our coalition and will send the wrong signals to the Administration, to Congress, and to the various state and local governments. Civil rights forces will be seen not as gathering strength, but as withering on the political vine.

“It is our considered judgment that we cannot afford to hold a commemorative March in 1983 without attracting more people than we did in 1963. Otherwise, we will be doing grave damage to our cause and movement and to all of its constituent segments.” (Ibid)

Well, Mr. Rustin, the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

“There is a serious question in our minds as to whether order can be maintained in Washington, D.C., on a hot summer afternoon in a period when Black youth are justifiably distraught and angry; when their rate of unemployment is far greater than that for the average adult even in the Great Depression; when training programs have been curtailed; and when the loss of welfare and other benefits the government once provided has caused many Black youths to lose faith that there is a role for them in American society.” (Ibid)

Fortunately our youth were not aware that struggle should be left for good times. Our youth



— working class youth — have not given in to despair and were present by the tens of thousands in Washington, D.C., on August 27. And no arrests were made in 1983 either.

Peace Is Everyone's Issue

"We believe that the effort to combine, in one demonstration, issues of civil rights, peace, and other important, even valuable, matters on the social agenda, will lead to diffusion and watering down of the basic economic and civil rights issues. Since the issues of peace and environment are perceived in the public and news media as far more urgent than civil rights, inclusion of these issues will detract from what should be our basic emphasis. All the more so, since there exist numerous environmental, peace, and other organizations to which individuals can turn for such expression. In addition the achievement of programmatic unity among ourselves becomes more difficult by the inclusion of peace, thereby making the sources of the event even more problematic." (Ibid)

Is peace not our concern? Do Afro-Americans not care whether they and the world face the possibility of nuclear holocaust, or that the Pentagon gulps down the money that could create jobs and restore social programs? Tens of thousands of Black men, women, youth and children carried signs saying, "Slash the military budget", "Money for jobs, not for war" and "Jobs, Peace and Freedom."

Rev. Lowery, attending the World Assembly for Peace in Prague, said:

"Black Americans are painfully aware of the disproportionate and devastating impact of war and militarism on us. We agonize over the persistent poverty in 'first' world nations, both neglected and threatened by preparation of war. We hear the cry of our brothers and sisters in South Africa who suffer under an oppressive militaristic, racist regime; we hear the cry for liberty and self-determination in Central America, the Middle East and all over the world."

"Our fears and shadows must be overcome by dialogue that is at once more than exercises in philosophical debate, but dialogue born of the moral imperatives of the will to survive and the faith to overcome. It is surely dialogue or disaster. We choose dialogue...we must be possessed by an overwhelming commitment to seek alternatives to war and means of utilizing the world's resources

to wage peace, eradicate poverty, combat racism and resist imperialism. To fulfill this hope we gladly join with our brothers and sisters from more than 130 nations in this Assembly.

"In response, we are morally compelled and spiritually called upon to join with religious and political forces around the world to exercise meaningful initiatives to have thenations of mankind under God to beat their swords into ploughshares and their missiles into missions for peace, their bombs into bread for the hungry. Like the old Negro spiritual we must lay down our swords and shields down by the river side and study war no more. (Ethel Payne, Baltimore Afro-American.

Lowery further stated: "So long as our national priorities are more concerned with girding for war in the name of preserving peace rather than improving the quality of life for the disadvantaged among us, the seeds of discontent will grow and mushroom into protests, leading to greater methods of containment, and ultimately the erosion of all the rights so proudly proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the United States. It will be the end of liberty and justice for all.

"Prague will not produce the final solution, but we had better listen to the dialogue for the sake of humankind." (Ethel Payne, Baltimore Afro-American,

The peace role of the Congressional Black Caucus and the nuclear freeze ballot initiatives have received almost total support from the Black community.

Quality of Life Devastated

Our Draft Basic Document states: "The Reagan-corporate policies have added a new dimension to all the problems faced by the people. They have destroyed much of the social security system. There are more hungry, homeless and sick people than at any time in our history. For millions, these policies have destroyed whatever safety net there was. The drop in the standard of living has broken all records. The Administration policy is to escalate racism, to remove all laws that in any way restrict policies and practices of racism and discrimination.

"The central challenge facing our people today is the reversal of the disastrous course of war and nuclear confrontation and the monopoly-corporate anti-people, anti-labor, racist offensive

that is aggressively pursued by the Reagan Administration. (Page 2, Ibid)

These quotes are accurate descriptions of the situation faced by Afro-Americans today, especially Black workers and Black youth in the first instance.

In this period, as revealing as they may be, the statistics of over 50 percent unemployment among Black youth do not begin to describe the devastated quality of life for millions of Afro-Americans.

It is in the steel, auto, rubber, and other basic industries, where there are large numbers of Black workers, that the structural crisis hits the hardest. It is impossible to look forward to massive re-employment or new employment in these industries.

Class Unity Demands Affirmative Action

Clearly, the new technology will not create mass employment. Indeed, the use of technology in the form of "robotization" will continue to eliminate jobs formerly held by Black workers who were the last hired.

The struggle for affirmative action in this period requires creative thinking. In the present situation the rate of unemployment among white workers actually decreased while for Black workers it remained the same. The rate of unemployment for Black youth has actually risen.

The income of Black families, which had reached 64 percent of the income of white families, dropped to less than 55 percent by 1982. The tremendously disproportionate weight of the crisis presents such problems that without major programs to create jobs, including the winning of the shorter work week and establishing controls over "robotization," the entire working class will be weakened. Furthermore, the attacks against organized labor will be more difficult to counter.

Herein lies the self-interest, the class interest, of all workers. Henry Winston, National Chairman of the Communist Party, was patently clear when he said: "Centrality (of the fight for Afro-American equality) is a call to white workers to understand that a strengthened labor movement and the winning of better conditions for the class cannot come about without their fight for removal of this inequality. The fact of inequality is a concession to the corporations that the labor movement alone can change. The time must come when solutions in the fight for equality reach that stage when for an entire industry or plant it becomes a

part of contract negotiations.

"The Afro-American community is objectively anti-monopoly. And the centrality of 'Black liberation' is a call for unity with the labor movement in the struggle for equal rights." (Speech to Central Committee and National Council of the Communist Party, May 29, 1983 — Pre-Convention Discussion; pages 12-13.)

Our responsibilities as Communists must be to give substance to the slogan of affirmative action as the fight for equality in fact, in every shop, union and neighborhood.

It is clear that the core of the struggle for full equality is the realization of economic equality. Full equality is the central aspect of the struggle for freedom and liberation.

Freedom Is

The Resolution on the Struggle for Afro-American Liberation adopted by the 22nd National Convention of the Communist Party, USA, is still sound.

Some of the specific demands of Black people encompassed by the freedom slogan can be stated programmatically as follows:

- Freedom is the right to have a full voice in deciding the affairs which govern the fate of the nation. It means Black citizens exercising the political power where they are "the many" and having a just share of it where they are "the few".

- Freedom is a job at one's highest skill and the right to continue training and promotion in accordance with one's ability.

- Freedom is a good-sized home furnished as a family needs it to live in a comfortable way.

- Freedom is an open door for one's children to get a first-class education in a top-rate, non-segregated school system.

- Freedom is all those things which make a person's neighborhood a fit place to live in: where there are playgrounds and parks and centers for young people's recreation.

- Freedom is the right to live in a community of one's own choice. It is the absence of segregation, of racially restricted and exclusive housing, jobs, clubs or whatnot. Equally, it demands big scale investments in the general rebuilding of the Black communities. It is a program of displacing slum housing and reconstructing the material foundation of the poor communities of large Black populations.

- Freedom is the security of one's person. It is

the right to live free from arbitrary arrest, free from police terror and violence. It requires justice from the courts.

- Freedom is the right to self respect, to be treated like a human being; the right to dignity and respect shown toward one's color, and race and people; the right to be one's self and still be treated as the equal of any other American. It is the absence of racism.

Afro-Americans are a component people of the U.S. nation. They are an oppressed national minority. Black people are integral to the U.S. nation, but are deprived of their rightful, full and equal status with white peoples in the family of the U.S. nation.

The struggle of Afro-Americans for equality and freedom from racist oppression is objectively a part of the world revolutionary process on three counts:

- First, the Black population, being predomi-

nantly working class, comes under the impact of the universally valid laws governing the origin of class struggle and development of class consciousness. Its basic class composition binds it in international ties to workers in struggle against imperialism the world over.

- Second, as an oppressed people in struggle for equality and freedom, it is objectively aligned with the world anti-imperialist cause of nations and nationalities fighting to be free.

Third, it is a vital component of the coalition of working class and popular anti-monopoly forces whose struggle for economic progress, democracy and peace, against racism and reaction, is destined to prepare the way for displacing the government of state monopoly capitalism by one of popular power.

The struggle for political representation has reached new levels. In 1970 there were 1,472 Black elected officials; in 1981 there were 5,041. Many



major industrial cities now have Black mayors and there are 21 Black members of Congress and 337 Black State Legislators. Although this is nowhere near proportionate representation impressive and important gains have been made.

The victory of Harold Washington in Chicago has raised the level of Afro-American participation in electoral struggles. The United Auto Workers' Washington Report states the opinions of some well respected political observers who opine: "If most Blacks register to vote, and almost all vote democratic, they could finish President Reagan in 84."

It has become a matter of fact that Black people register and vote when there is a Black candidate. Jesse Jackson has emerged as a possible Presidential candidate in the Democratic Party primaries.

Of all the announced and possible candidates of the Democratic Party, including Alan Cranston, Walter Mondale, John Glenn, Gary Hart and others, Jesse Jackson has the best positions on peace and the military budget, jobs and every other issue upon which we would measure a candidate. To set different measures for a Black candidate is to capitulate to racism.

There are many influences in the organizational life of Black people. While there are a host of organizations for the middle strata, the major organizations influence and in turn are influenced by mass developments. The NAACP, PUSH, Urban League, SCLC and the National Council of Negro Women are organizations that millions of Black people respect and follow. We should reaffirm our determination to be part of these mass movements. Our shopmates and neighbors are members of one or another of these organizations. The Communist quality of our work is to learn from masses in action and to influence their direction.

Though these organizations are extremely important, the trade unions, especially considering the rank and file formations, are even more important. The Communist quality in our work makes it possible to break through false divisions and assist in raising the level of consciousness. For Black workers the most representative voice is the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU).

A major element in the growth of anti-imperialism among Afro-Americans is the unique solidarity with the liberation movements of Africa, especially Southern Africa. The African National

Congress (ANC) and the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) elicit a special response in the Black Community. Such anti-imperialist sentiments of Black Americans are expressed in solidarity with Cuba, Grenada and with the liberation movements of Chile and El Salvador.

It is our responsibility to more effectively help build mass movements in support of these anti-imperialist movements.

The racist edge of the policies of the Reagan Administration is sharpened by its refusal to stop racist violence. It even encourages such violence. There is increased repression by the state, police, FBI and the court. Afro-Americans receive longer prison sentences and, while they constitute around 12 percent of the population, they make up almost 50 percent of those on death row.

Such a figure clearly exposes the race and class bias of the judicial system. No rich person has ever been executed in U.S. prisons.

Proponents of Reaganism have found a few adherents who are Afro-American. In their basic content they are anti-Black equality and serve their cause by attacking trade unions. Such proponents of ruling class ideology do not enjoy wide support among Afro-Americans. The overwhelming sentiment is anti-Reaganism, anti-Reaganomics and anti-Reagan. Because the crisis is felt so deeply in the Black community there are high levels of political consciousness among this section of the population. Our Party should be experiencing a tremendous growth.

There are always objective circumstances that may slow the pace of recruiting. However, such stumbling blocks as anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism are not as prevalent in the Black community.

Afro-Americans are not unorganized. They are involved in unions, churches, fraternities and sororities, tenants movements, civil rights organizations, womens organizations, Democratic Party clubs, etc., etc. We must see if we as Communists are involved in these mass organizations. Are we involved in the struggles in such a way as to bring Black people to our Party?

Our white comrades must give more Communist leadership to the struggle for affirmative action and integrated, quality education and housing. Communists must be pacesetters in the fight against racism.

The Black Vote and the 1984 Elections

By Mark Allen

It has been said that the probable candidacy of Rev. Jesse Jackson for the Democratic nomination for President in 1984, represents the "lifting of the ceiling off Black aspirations." A profound characterization.

In and of itself a Jackson candidacy would strike a blow for the democratic advance of Black people and the country as a whole.

A Jackson candidacy would also strike a blow for working class unity, unity among the nationally oppressed women, and all sectors of society traditionally disenfranchised by both the Democratic and Republican parties.

The potential Jackson candidacy is probably the second most discussed aspect of the 1984 elections. The first, of course, is President Reagan, his policies, and the strategy to defeat him.

The defeat of Reagan and Reaganism is the context in which all discussion of the 1984 elections must take place.

One of the most important aspects of the Jackson candidacy is its relationship to the rapidly expanding anti-Reagan front. The Jackson candidacy profoundly challenges not only Reagan but Reaganism and the reactionary and Cold War policies and programs he has instituted, often with bipartisan support.

Indeed, it has been repeatedly and correctly noted that what most distinguishes the announced Democratic Presidential contenders is that they are not Reagan.

In their politics and program they pay only lip service to alternatives to Reagan on the critical questions of war and peace, Black and other nationally oppressed peoples, women, and support for the issues most critical to the working class.

In 1982, for the first time in U.S. history, Black people voted at a higher percentage than white voters. This expressed a deep opposition to Reagan and those who supported his policies and resulted in a massive mobilization of the Black vote. It also represents a potential for an historic shift in voting patterns.

The potential for extending this conscious electoral rejection of Reaganism in 1984 has qualita-

tively expanded as we enter the 1984 election year.

Registering two million new voters

There now appears, with the launching of massive voter registration campaigns nationally, the possibility as projected by Jackson of registering some two million new Black voters. Thus, we are talking about a potential major shift against not only Reagan, but his allies in the Congress, Statehouses, and State Legislatures throughout the country.

As we go into the 1984 elections, Black people will play key roles in at least six Senate races where Republican defeats could shift the balance of power in Senate. In the House, there are at least 86 districts, 57 in the South and 29 in the North, in which Black people make up 20 percent or more of the electorate.

In North Carolina, for example, the Black voting age population is a little more than 900,000, some 500,000 of whom were not registered in 1982. If just 20 percent of this half of a million unregistered Black voters registered in 1984 and voted, 13 electoral votes could be taken away from President Reagan, and the arch reactionary Senator Jesse Helms could be ousted.

Defeat of ultra-rightist

Some 26 ultra-rightist Reagan supporters were defeated in 1982; nine of those were defeated by margins of victory delivered by the Black vote.

In Texas, for example, the Republican governor William Clements was defeated by more than 200,000 votes; the margin of defeat can be directly tied to the increased voter participation of Black and Latino voters, acting in concert to defeat the Reaganite.

The defeat of Clements and the projected massive voter registration campaigns among both Black and Latino voters in Texas in 1984 are two key reasons why right-wing Republican Senator John Tower decided this summer not to run for re-election.

According to the Congressional Black Caucus, an increase of 25 percent in Black voter registration in 24 states could result in the defeat of six incum-

bent GOP senators and determine the selection of 392 Presidential electors.

The potential Jackson candidacy has already begun to generate the kind of excitement necessary to spur massive Black voter registration.

One clear example of the Reagan Administration's understanding of the importance of the Black vote has been the Republican Party's cynical and manipulative attempts to appeal to the Hispanic vote. Reagan speaks before reactionary Cuban exiles in Miami, and a small group of Chicano and Mexicano businesspersons in Los Angeles and proclaims a base of support among Latino voters.

Reagan seeks to split Black and Latino voters

It is a clear attempt to pose the Latino community versus the Black community, to downplay the deep antagonism to Reagan in the Latino community and deny the growing unity between Black and Latino organizations and voters.

The opposition to Reagan in the Black community is the highest ever expressed against a standing President in history. For example, while Richard Nixon was able to maintain support for his Administration among some 30 percent of Black people polled, Reagan has never had the support of more than 10 percent of those polled.

What is taking place in the Black community is

not only a challenge to Reagan and the Republican Party, however.

As Henry Winston, National Chairman of the Communist Party, USA, pointed out recently, the Black community is objectively anti-monopoly, and because of that objective anti-monopoly sentiment and ideology, it represents a base for political independence.

Role of CBC

The role of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) has been an instructive example. The CBC is not only the spokesperson and advocate for Black people in the Congress but for working people in general, for women, for peace and against increased militarism, U.S. military intervention in Central America and U.S. military collusion with South Africa. The CBC plays the most progressive role and is most independent of the Democratic Party leadership. It objectively fights for the interest of the whole people.

Not only did Black people play a crucial role in the defeat of Reaganites in the House and Senate in 1982, but they also played the critical role in the historic election of Mayor Harold Washington in Chicago in 1983. This election not only represented the expansion of Black political power but gave it a new quality, further deepened by the election of U.S. Rep. Charles Hayes, a leading



trade unionist to Washington's seat in the House.

The Washington victory also represented a milestone in tremendous unity developed in Chicago between the Black and Latino communities. Furthermore, Black voters were crucial to the election of Wilson Goode in Philadelphia's Democratic Party mayoralty primary, and Federico Pena's election as mayor of Denver, among other important electoral victories.

These victories and the manifestations of Black political strength they represent have spurred Black political activity as we enter 1984, and gave momentum to the drive for a Jackson candidacy. Thus, the impact of the Black vote and a possible candidacy is not restricted to President Reagan, but on the Democratic challengers as well. According to a recent Newsweek poll, former Vice-president Walter Mondale received the support of 67 percent of Black people polled. But with Jackson in the race that support is reduced to under 30 percent, a clear expression of the shallow base for Mondale in the Black community.

The most important aspect of the Jackson candidacy is not, however, its impact on any single Democratic Party candidate, but on the Democratic Party and its strategy and policies.

A new Southern Strategy

The Democratic Party officialdom and the monopoly interests that it represents have already determined that in order to defeat Reagan they have to adopt a new Southern Strategy. This new Southern Strategy is racist, and represents a decision not to address the most pressing questions of our time: peace, the anti-working class, union busting, racist and anti-women character of the Reagan Administration.

The Southern Strategy has been orchestrated by former President Carter appointees Bert Lance, now head of the Georgia Democratic Party, and Hamilton Jordan. The basic proposition is that, first of all, the South is going to be crucial in 1984.

In March, the South will host eight Presidential primaries, the first primaries of the election year. Therefore, as regards the primaries, the question of momentum and winning the first group of committed delegates will be very important for any Democratic candidate.

(In the 1980 elections, Reagan barely carried the South. In fact the number of unregistered potential Black voters surpassed his margin of victory.)

The Lance-Hamilton strategy is based on their

belief that the South is more conservative, anti-union, and anti-affirmative action, and more supportive of increased militarization of the economy. Therefore, they say, you will alienate the Southern, (white) voter if issues such as affirmative action, women's rights and cuts in military spending are key planks in the Democratic candidates platform.

Therefore, they say, a Democratic candidate, if he is to win the South must be a moderate Reagan.

This strategy of seeking the "middle ground" and ignoring what they term "special interests," is not just a strategy for the South. New York Mayor Ed Koch has travelled coast to coast to carry the same message, which is fundamentally opposition to Reagan but not Reaganism.

The Jackson candidacy poses a threat tho this strategy, and would be key to expanding and broadening the scope of the opposition to Reaganism, to the President himself and to his policies and programs, supported by many sections of the Democratic Party itself.

Further, a Jackson candidacy, while based in the Black community, is more than a Black candidacy. It has the potential to mobilize broad sectors of the anti-Reagan front, as well as bring into the political process millions who heretofore have not participated.

First, the Jackson candidacy has the potential to tap the growing mass discontent and militancy against the reactionary and war-mongering policies of the Reagan Administration, as well as the vacillation and capitulation to such policies by the Democratic Party, the all too loyal opposition.

Secondly, Jackson's candidacy would serve as a catalyst, a practical focus for that discontent, while spurring increased Black voter registration and participation in the electoral process. Fundamentally, this increased mass participation could change the political landscape of the country. Not only could it lead to increased Black representation at the local, state, and Congressional levels, but as regards the South, increased Black participation and Black representation would have a pivotal role in the passage of such critical issues as the Equal Rights Amendment, and the defeat of union busting right-to-work laws. Further, increased Black electoral participation nationally provides an expanded political base for Black progressive, trade union, and even Left and Communist candidacies at many levels.

Reaganomics and Affirmative Action

By Robert Lindsay

The section on Afro-American equality of the Draft Document places a number of "Challenges" before the Party and the peoples' movement which is crucial to realizing the main propositions of the whole document.

It places the following challenges: how to more effectively raise the struggle for Afro-American equality and against racism to a new levels; how to more effectively fight against the racist policies of the Reagan Administration; how to more effectively convince white Americans that besides being just, from every viewpoint, the struggle against and the rejection of racism is also in their self-interest.

The Draft Document then places a number of special responsibilities — concrete, concise and necessary — to advance the fight for equality.

Charlene Mitchell, secretary of the Afro-American Commission of our Party, spoke of the mass upsurge among Afro-American people and the positive signs of growing unity of Black, white, and all the nationally oppressed people, women, and youth. This is spurred on by the harsh economic conditions being forced upon the working class, particularly Afro-Americans, by the Reagan Administration and monopoly capital. This policy is born out of the insatiable greed for maximum and maximum-plus profits. It seeks to turn the clock backwards, to erase the gains of the Civil Rights period, to destroy the trade unions, and return to the "good old days" of Jim Crow and plantation life when Black people had no rights which "whites were bound to respect."

Though all the facts and figures on the results of the racist Reagan policies are not in, there is, nevertheless, unfolding a horror story of widening income gaps, unemployment gaps, increasing poverty, diseases, homelessness and declining educational opportunities, etc.

Due to racism Afro-Americans have always been the special victims of capitalism's drive to reap maximum and maximum-plus profits. However, the Reagan Administration has, as the Draft

Document says, the aim of wiping out the hard-won gains of many years of struggle. It is openly placing the full power of the state against equality and for inequality, that is to widen the economic and social gap between Afro-Americans and whites.

Through illegal, unconstitutional means, the Reaganites have for the first time used the Justice Department to argue against Civil rights, to nullify the gains won in the 60s and 70s. It has nullified the Fair Housing Act of 1968, went to court to render ineffective Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and made drastic cuts in Title I programs and funds for desegregation in education.

What are some of the results? I think we can say in many respects the Afro-American community is relatively and in some instances absolutely worse off today economically than it was prior to the Civil Rights period.

In a recent Census Bureau Report, it was found that a "recessionary economy coupled with inflation have eroded both Black and white family incomes during the 1970s, together they were major factors contributing to an increase in poverty among Black people, especially among women. The disproportionate impact on Afro-Americans of the economic downturn beginning in 1974 and of the relatively sluggish economy throughout 1983 effectively brought to a halt the momentum of overall social and economic improvement apparent at the beginning of the decade." *Effects of Reagan's Cuts*

The Reagan budget cuts have been and still are aimed at especially those programs on which a disproportionate number of Afro-Americans are dependent, such as welfare, school lunches, day care, unemployment benefits, social security, educational loans and grants. The new federalism of Reagan is simply a renewed effort to erase the legislative, political and judicial gains won by all working people, but especially Afro-Americans.

As a result of the Reagan budget cuts:
—305,000 families have been terminated from Aid

for Dependent Children Program.

—700,000 children have lost their eligibility for Medicaid.

—1 million recipients had food stamps reduced, and another 4 million have been eliminated from the program altogether.

—900,000 have been cut out of the breakfast program and 1.1 million children have lost their school lunches.

—Youth unemployment programs have been reduced by 68 percent.

—Education grants and loans have been substantially reduced.

When one considers that one-third of all welfare recipients are Afro-American and one-half of AFDC recipients are also Afro-American, one can fully appreciate the racist nature of the budget cuts. These cuts have brought an increase in hunger, homelessness and diseases associated with poverty. Some 34 percent of Afro-Americans now live below the poverty level, including 44 percent of Black children.

However, the heart of the problem is the monstrous level of unemployment among Afro-Americans and especially among Afro-American youth. It is here where the racist policies of Reaganomics are clearly revealed.

As the Draft Document points out, the corporations are using the layoffs to foster racism and division in the ranks of workers. The policy of last hired, first fired results in brutal dismissals of Afro-American workers under the guise of being "color blind." In some plants where 10-13 percent of the workforce were Afro-Americans, 60-70 percent of those laid off are Black workers. According to a poll taken by Business Week magazine, every corporation without exception stated that it abides by the policy of last hired, first fired.

In the recent period we have witnessed the spectacle of Reagan and the Reaganites going to court in order to guarantee seniority rights of workers, to preserve the institution of last hired, first fired. This policy is a class policy with a racist cutting edge which results in higher unemployment among Black workers and a continuation of a division of labor where Afro-Americans are forced to remain in positions of unskilled or semi-skilled jobs with lower wages and little or no seniority. It is now being used to specifically wipe out affirmative action programs.

During 1982, one out of every three Afro-

Americans were unemployed for all or part of the year. While the unemployment rate for Black and white workers has increased drastically under the Reagan Administration, it has increased much greater among Afro-Americans. According to recent figures put out by the BLS, while the unemployment rate remained unchanged among whites, it actually increased to over 20 percent for Afro-Americans during the month of July. That is, the rate of unemployment among Afro-Americans is more than twice that of white workers.

As a result of this racist division of labor, in general the Black workforce suffers from higher unemployment, underemployment, intermittent employment, involuntary part-time employment, marginal jobs, lower wages and unskilled jobs. The policy of last hired, first fired reinforces over and over again this inequality for Black people. Though certainly accentuated by Reaganomics, it has its roots in centuries of inequality in the work place, from slavery to the present. This disparity between Black and white workers exists during "good" and bad times — economic downturns or upswings. However, with the new structural changes in the economy, as the Draft Document points out, this inequality of Black workers in the economy is leading to new conditions of widening economic gaps, greater misery and hardship.

This is vividly demonstrated in the proportion of jobs held by Black workers which are being eliminated due to technology, robotics and automation. For example, 15 million jobs have been eliminated since WWII, most of which are unskilled and semi-skilled positions. This has resulted in a larger proportion of Afro-Americans being knocked out of the jobs force. Black males have lost 13 percent of their share of the labor force participation since WWII. According to some statistics, over one-half of Black males are no longer in the labor force.

The structural changes in the economy toward high-tech under capitalism lock increasing numbers of Afro-Americans into permanent unemployment and lower wages. This is especially true for Afro-American youth.

In a special report by the AFL-CIO's Committee on the Evolution of Work, it says that the U.S. faces a chronic labor surplus of up to 6 million workers due to massive changes in the structure of the U.S. economy. The report makes the point that while computer occupations are expected to

increase by more than 45 percent over the 1980s, this represents an increase of only 600,000 jobs.

The reports concludes that along with growing technology is the tendency toward the creation of a "two-tier" workforce. "At the top there would be a few executives, scientists and engineers, etc., performing high-level, creative, high paid full-time jobs in a good work environment. At the bottom, however, would be low-paid workers performing relative simple, low-skill, dull, routine, high-turnover jobs in a poor work environment. Between the two will be fewer and fewer permanent, well paid, full-time, skilled, semi-skilled jobs. And below the two-tier will be a labor-surplus underclass made up of those who don't have jobs or any prospects of finding employment."

A disproportionate number in this so-called underclass, resulting from the racist division of the labor force, of course, would be Afro-American. (The labeling of these unemployed as underclass" is incorrect. Such concepts argue for a hands-off approach by the trade unions towards organizing the unemployed and fighting for jobs.)

Effects of crisis on youth

A few words on the effects of the cyclical and structural crisis on Afro-American youth. Due to the decline and contraction of capitalism at this stage, a majority of these youth are growing up with no prospect or hope of ever finding employment. Shop gates to basic industries are closed. There is now over 50 percent unemployment among Black teenagers. However, when one considers the method of arriving at these statistics, the figure jumps to over 80 percent in the inner cities.

Black teenagers are also victims of a widening gap of inequality. For example the unemployment rate among Black youth is over two times that of white youth today whereas during the 1950s it was about the same.

This high unemployment, or virtual total unemployment, is coupled with declining enrollment in colleges and universities for the first time since since the 1970s. This is due to dismantling affirmative action programs, particularly open admissions, increasing tuition costs and decreasing availability of loans and grants because of cuts in education. Job-training programs have been drastically cut as well.

Therefore, the policies of Reagan toward Black youth are tailored for the structural changes in the

economy which call for fewer jobs and a corresponding decline in educational training.

These youth of today are being prepared for permanent unemployment, with little or no development of skills, and little education, requirements of an economy long since past.

Hence the large numbers of Black youth are being forced into the armed forces to be "all you can be." Over 30 percent of all enlistees in the army are Afro-American. Considering the turnover rate, or the number recruited over the time span of a generation, we can appreciate the dimension of the problem. A substantial number of today's Black youth are under the educational training and tutelage of U.S. imperialism. They are being recruited to protect the interest of U.S. corporations abroad, the very ones which are throwing them out of mines, mills and shops at home.. This policy is coupled with a drive to force today's youth to work at sub-minimum wage levels, thereby hoping to turn them into scabs against the trade unions.

Key propositions to be emphasized

There are a number of key propositions in the section of Afro-American equality which I would like to emphasize.

The document points out that "the main lesson is that in a new way it is now possible to build people's coalitions and win."

"Because racism is an instrument for creating class disunity we must, therefore, stress the centrality of the struggle for equality in the development of class unity. Because the Afro-American workers are an inseparable part of the U.S. working class as well as the dominant numbers of the Black community they are central in the molding of unity and coalition relationships between the working class as a whole and the Afro-American community."

The attack on affirmative action is effecting the whole class. It is precisely for this reason that Reagan goes to court for seniority rights. The laying off of Black workers results in the trade unions losing its most militant section, and in many instances, the ruling class seeks to use this to turn the Black community against the trade unions.

Let us consider the unemployment in basic industries, where Black workers have been a key factor in molding militant trade unionism for years. Unity within the class overall and unity with allies of the working class pivot around

workers in basic industries. Whereas the unemployment rate among Black workers is over two times that of whites in general, in Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, and Philadelphia, where basic industry is located, the rate is three times more for Black workers than for white workers. It is estimated that 15 million jobs were permanently lost between 1969-76.

Class struggle unionism

It is here that the trade union movement has been forced to make concessions. I should add that concessions begin with attacks on affirmative action by taking a "color blind" approach. This confirms that not only do the bosses believe in and fight for last hired and first fired policies, but that seniority in the hands of the bosses is racist, divisive, and anti-union.

There is no job security for white workers predicated on inequality for Afro-Americans and other nationally oppressed peoples, women and youth. To the boss, job security means wage cuts, two-tier wages, job eliminations, speed-up, forced overtime and maintaining in place higher unemployment. This is the price white workers and the whole class pay for inequality of Black people and disunity of the whole class. In other words without affirmative action white workers and the whole class are the sitting prey of big business.

I agree with the assessment of the Draft Document that new victories are possible against racism. This is a profound conclusion from which appropriate tactics should develop. Increasing numbers of proposed contracts, inherently stacked against the workers, with a strong dosage of racism to boot, are being rejected. Recently workers at the GM electric division in Ohio rejected a tentative contract that sought to preserve existing jobs by drastically cutting the wages of newly hired workers. It was rejected by three to one. This despite the action of the union leadership which favored the reduced wage by disguising it as "two-tier." The article carried in The N.Y. Times says that "GM had hoped the approval of the plan would set a precedent for similar efforts in its other operations."

There are other examples which are listed in the Draft Document.

The Black community cannot be taken for granted by the trade union movement or the peoples movement. The fight for equality does not begin with rhetoric or resolutions of intent. The eco-

nomic conditions are too harsh for that.

The reason Afro-Americans seek to unite with white workers is the assurance of overcoming inequality and the prospect of living a better life. This is not based on long term promises or pie in the sky dreams, but today's needs. Therefore, it is self-defeating to talk of waiting for a recovery, or until times get better. Corrective measures must be fought for now at all levels, in contracts, in the legislatures, the streets and, of course, in the courts.

The Draft Document states, "There is a dialectical interchange and unity of cause and effect between the struggle against racism and the rise of class consciousness. Class consciousness has a built-in limitation unless it takes up the struggle against racism."

The fight for equality is a class demand. Hesitancy in raising the needs for affirmative action is shirking our responsibility of building class consciousness, especially among white workers. The only way white workers will develop further consciousness is to make the opportunities available for struggle against racism. This is the role of our Party which is premised on confidence in all sectors of the working class.



The Fight for Unity in the Trade Unions

by George Meyers

Our conference is being held at a time of bitterly intensified attacks against the living standards of the entire working class, Black, Brown and white — male and female. But Black and other specially oppressed workers are being forced to suffer the severest blows due to generations of racist discrimination in hiring, promotion, education and other elements necessary to a decent livelihood. This situation has been grievously aggravated with the accelerated use of racism by the Reagan Administration and the big corporations.

It is being held at a time when the organized sector of the working class, the trade unions, are being hit from all sides with a concentrated, coordinated drive of union-busting and strike-breaking orchestrated by such Big Business outfits as "The Committee for a Union-free Environment," and the "National Right to Work (for less) Committee."

Strike-breaking, scab-herding and the use of police violence to smash picket lines are once again becoming an everyday occurrence. The use of the state militia, and state and local police against the striking Phelps-Dodge copper miners in the "right to work" state of Arizona is a clear example.

Aug 27 and Labor Day

But our conference is also being held immediately on the heels of two magnificent manifestations of Black and white working class unity, expressing a vigorous determination to fight back.

August 27 had very special connotations because of strong labor endorsement, contrary to 20 years ago. Labor participated in meaningful numbers in spite of insidious attempts by the right Social Democrats, right-wing Zionists, and right-wing union officials, working in collusion with the ruling class, to prevent its success.

Labor Day saw literally millions marching and otherwise participating in huge demonstrations in over 150 cities. Literally, these two great events delivered a solid one-two punch against Reaganism, graphically demonstrating the growing unity within the working class, united in common struggles against the Administration and the big corporations.

This conference is being held at a time when the more progressive forces in the trade union movement are growing in strength and influence. This process is being fed by the rapidly expanding militancy and radicalism taking place at the grass roots — in the rank and file — and is being fueled by the anti-labor offensive in close harness with the economic crisis.

I think we can say that it is becoming clearer to a significantly growing number of white workers organized and yet to be organized, that the struggle against racism — for working class unity — for recognition of the special problems facing Black and other specially oppressed workers, is irrevocably welded to a successful movement for jobs, for the defense of the trade union movement, for the defeat of Reaganism, for Jobs, Peace, and Equality.

Conditions have ripened for a new level of struggle in the ranks of labor. I think this is key. It would be a serious mistake to limit our orientation to the way things have been or are at this moment.

For example, organized labor is deeply committed to the defeat of Reaganism in 1984. This can only happen with a united working class in unity with the Afro-American community and other allies of labor.

A successful electoral struggle to defeat Reaganism can at the same time guarantee the defeat of some of the most reactionary, racist, anti-labor senators and congress members since the days of the notorious Dixiecrats... Bilbo, Rankin, Smith of Virginia and the rest of a well-forgotten rabidly racist lot.

A key to election victories in 1984 is the unity of labor and the Black communities in organizing registration drives now, followed by a massive turn-out of Black and white voters, around a mutually agreed upon program, on election day.

A number of recent elections have made it very clear that Black voters are in a position to play a strategic role. Take the case of Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina's \$7 million man. (That's how much Big Business put into his last election campaign and he was worth every cent of it to them.) In 1978, Helms won with 54.5 percent of the vote.

Now labor and the Black community have united in a big voter registration drive in North Carolina. On a recent visit to that state, I had the opportunity to meet with several Black activists associated with Operation PUSH. They informed me that 505,000 adult Black North Carolina citizens are not registered. If only 100,000 of these register and vote against Helms, their estimate is that he will be soundly defeated.

Labor-Black unity can also put in jeopardy the candidacy of Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, who won last time with 55.5 percent of the vote, and Roger Jenson of Iowa, who slipped through with 51.1 percent. Tower of Texas has already seen the handwriting on the wall and bowed out.

On the vital matter of jobs. Organized labor and its allies are firmly committed to the concept that in times of crisis, as of now, "the government must become the employer of last resort." That boils down to a jobs program for all who are ready and willing to work — planned and financed by the federal government.

Affirmative action is key

What is it going to take to win this demand? A titanic struggle! And again, only by a united working class in close partnership with its allies, first of all the Afro-American community.

The key to building that working class unity, to building an unbreakable alliance between labor and the Afro-American community is the fight for concrete affirmative action programs in all arenas of struggle. How to do that requires much serious study, accompanied by determined actions.

While we still have far to go, considerable progress has been made in labor on this issue since the days when Walter Reuther and George Meany contemptuously dismissed affirmative action as "reverse discrimination." Only the likes of Shanker and other right Social Democrats and right wingers in labor continue to promote this racist concept in company with the Ku Klux Klan.

We have seen labor's positive and winning participation in the Weber case. Its opposition to Reagan's attacks on federal affirmative action programs.

The problem before us is how to prevent affirmative action from being confined to a situation that finds workers fighting for jobs in an ever shrinking economy. The Party and the Left have the profound responsibility of linking concrete af-



firmative action programs to the expanding struggle for jobs, to the struggle to curb monopoly attacks on the working class.

Shorter work week

Take the fight for the shorter work week. This key demand is now moving to the front burner as the realization grows that without it, a minimum of 10 million will remain jobless even in a period of temporary economic upturn.

Essential to victory in this fight is the mobilization of young workers — and in particular Black youth who are without jobs in such overwhelming percentages ranging from 50 to 80 percent. High-sounding rhetoric and phoney jobs training programs that leave them jobless is no answer. We must project concrete jobs programs that incorporate the recognition of the special needs of young Black workers relating to their unacceptably high rate of unemployment.

This means on the job training with pay. It means special training courses to help overcome the glaring deficiencies of inner city schools (also with pay) to prepare them for higher skilled jobs — to prepare them to be able to participate to the fullest extent as workers in high tech, in the "chips and robots revolution."

What about a jobs program to rebuild the crumbling infrastructure of our nation? Proportionate funds must be allocated to those sections hardest hit. Where else but the ghettos and barrios of our big cities? And in the process, provide use-

ful employment to the sections of the population hardest hit by unemployment — but certainly not limited to these areas.

Labor and the Black community have a common interest in the struggle to expand trade with the Socialist countries. Capitalist economists estimate this would very quickly create two million new jobs, plus contribute to peace and the calming of the international political climate.

There is a growing struggle against the export of capital, runaway shops, arbitrary plant closures, contracting out of jobs, in-plant elimination of jobs. All hurt workers in basic industry. Each is directly related to the special problems of Black workers. It is in the basic industries such as steel, auto and rubber, now in structural crisis, where Black workers have won a higher rate of employment with better pay and better opportunity for advancement. It is in these industries, organized into powerful industrial unions, where the principles of Black-white unity have become more firmly established in years of sharp and often violent struggles against the giant monopolies that control them.

Organizing the unorganized

In the struggle for more jobs, for more advanced



trade union demands, for expanded union organization, there is a better opportunity to fight for concrete affirmative action program under conditions that exist today. For example, the maintenance of the rate of proportional employment during times of layoff as established by court orders in the Boston firemen and teachers cases is but one example.

Take the question of organizing the unorganized. A successful campaign will benefit all workers and strengthen the democratic base of the U.S. It will certainly benefit millions of Black, Hispanic, Asian and women workers in general who are disproportionately frozen into minimum pay jobs.

National Left organization is needed

We will all agree that none of this can be accomplished without the Party — and a much bigger Party at that. But even a bigger Party can't do it alone. That's why we need a nation-wide Left organization that will develop a militant, advanced program and project it into the trade union movement, into the ranks of the working class, employed and unemployed, organized and unorganized. A Left that will initiate the kind of militant concrete, realistic program around which Left-Center coalitions can be built.

This Left will have the special responsibility of involving white workers in the fight against capitalist inspired racism. That is, labor has to spell out the need for unity and the meaning of affirmative action programs and it has to fight to guarantee that concrete affirmative action programs are incorporated in every single union contract in this country. This is the kind of job that this Left has to carry out.

At this stage the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists is basically a center organization with Left participation. It needs more of a left face. Regardless of any weakness, it is an outstanding organization of predominantly Black trade unionists that deserves the maximum amount of support of the Left — and that includes the members of our Party.

A key aspect of this conference is the building of the Party among Afro-Americans. Based on my experiences in traveling around the country, the closer we get to the working class, the more workers we recruit and the Afro-American membership in our Party will grow by leaps and bounds.

Affirmative Action and the Fight for Equality

by James Jackson

Some questions have been raised at this conference concerning our concept and approach in the use of the term "liberation" in defining the nature of our freedom course. I want to touch on that for a couple of minutes.

But before that I want to speak briefly on some other points developed in the course of today.

I think we need to sharply define for our purpose what affirmative action means. Affirmative action is a code word, or phrase, endowed with general meaning. Many people use it with different definitions, and it serves a certain tactical usefulness in its generality. Therefore, it means a number of different things to a number of people.

The meaning of affirmative action

But the essence of our use of the term needs to be set forth clearly and unambiguously. Affirmative action means equality plus the catch-up factor due to years of exclusion and deprivation. We need to define it clearly and popularize our definition among the masses.

Therefore, it means that there is nothing so hopeless that we cannot do something about it, in small measure or big measure. We have to analyze each situation. But, as W.E.B. DuBois said at the turn of the century, we are to settle for "not one jot or tittle less" than what others have who are similarly situated. That is the objective: equality plus the catch-up factor.

We should not assume that everybody has that kind of content in mind in their concept of affirmative action.

Within the trade union movement in particular we should call and initiate a dialogue for a new dimension for Black-white unity. Every contract and workplace should set meaningful affirmative action goals. This should be initiated by and sustained among white workers in the first instance.

It is clear from the discussion at this conference that there is a great awareness that discrimination in employment is increasing. The income gap is

widening in a very critical time. It means that we have to be more than observers of this phenomenon. We have to generate a new crusade for realizing affirmative action goals.

Strikebreaking in the movement

We must also set the standards and fight for them. Opposition to affirmative action is race discrimination, is racism. Opposition to affirmative action is the moral equivalent of strikebreaking in the trade union movement. Opposition to affirmative action is scabbing in the trade union movement. Therefore, the opprobrium of scabs must be put on those who tolerate or practice racism, particularly at the economic level which has to do with survival and the unity of the trade union movement.

The only basis of unity is equality plus contributing to closing the historic gap in employment opportunity and upgrading Black and white workers.



Just like it is unthinkable to have a successful marriage save on the basis of equal and fair treatment, equality is the only basis for the labor movement holding together and the only basis for maximizing the energy in our own Party.

This brings us to the question of sharpening the sensitivity to racist manifestations in our Party. We never rest on our own laurels. True, we are out front in comparisons with others of public concern and working class organizations. But we do not live in a fool's paradise. We live under the impact and influence of prejudices that flow from our friends and others.

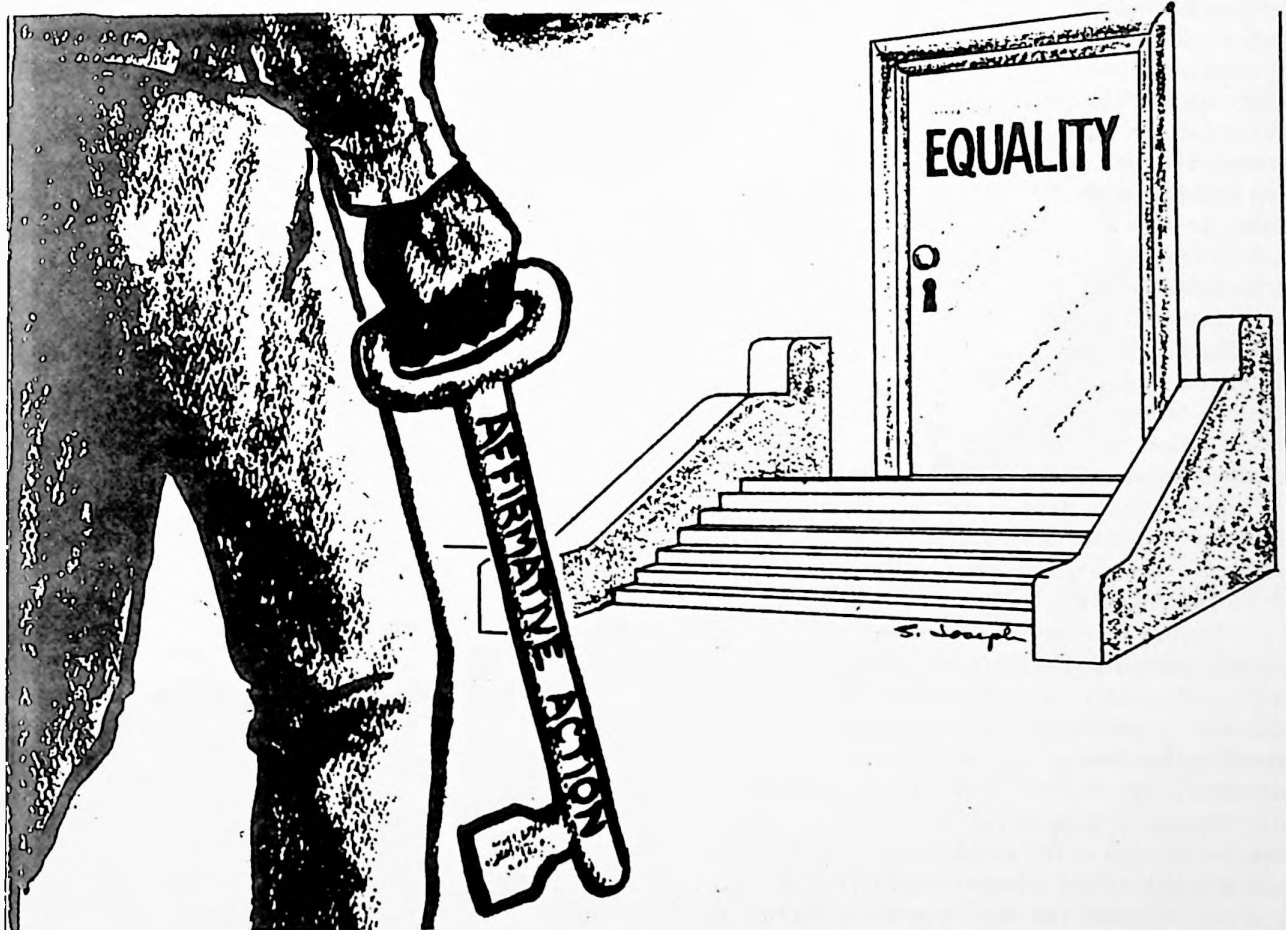
Liberation and the fight for equality

On the question of liberation. I want to refer to pages 228 and 155 in my book, **Revolutionary Tracings**. There are some concepts used, formulated by Lenin in analagous situations, which describe the struggle of oppressed nationalities in the context and as component elements of the class struggle.

In my opinion the use of the term "liberation" has its place discriptively, just like the terms emancipation and freedom. We must bear in mind, however, that we are not talking about emancipation from slavery. We are not talking about freedom from a colonial situation. We are not talking about liberation from the U.S., from this country.

We are talking about liberation from a condition: racism, injustice, suppression. When we speak of the working class we are talking about emancipation from wage slavery and exploitation. We are talking about emancipation from discrimination and so forth.

We use these terms in a broad sense, and not in particular sense. Therefore, it is possible to make an argument out of the misuse of these terms and obscure that aspect which is essential for our liberation, emancipation and freedom. That aspect is equality. It must be realized in order to realize liberation, emancipation and freedom.



William E. Burghardt DuBois has applied for membership in the Communist Party of the U.S.A.

Dr. DuBois is the father of the modern Negro liberation movement, a pioneer organizer and inspirer of the independence struggles of the African peoples against colonialism, and an honored world figure in the cause of peace and friendship between the nations.

This titan of our times has authored scores of books in the fields of the social sciences, literature, and history, which have become a part of the intellectual and cultural treasure of our age.

Dr. DuBois, this great fighter in the cause of human progress and the emancipation of man from tyranny, ignorance and poverty, has stepped into the breach that the ultra-reactionaries have opened in the wall of the people's democratic rights.

Not only is Dr. DuBois' action in making public application for membership in the Communist Party a political testament to the unassailable dominance and the power of attraction of the Marxist-Leninist science of society, not only is it an historically important judgment of the main direction in which human history moves — that is, toward communism and away from capitalism — but it also constitutes an indictment of the little men in authority who would rob the people of our nation of their hard-won, and still to be realized, democratic rights as vouchsafed in the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.

DuBois' principled act is a blow against the McCarran Act and the mounting attacks on the Communists and their Party.

Dr. DuBois, at 93, standing upon the summit of great works performed in the cause of humanity's advancement, raises aloft the banner of Marxism-Leninism and points to mankind's golden tomorrow, communism. November 26, 1961.

The View From Here — James E. Jackson

The history of the American socialist movement treats inadequately with Afro-American participation. The position of Left elements, which is a prevailing tendency, is totally ignored. Yet Blacks have made significant contributions. We will deal with this factor separately. Here we will devote ourselves to one of the nation's outstanding intellects, a social leader, whose contributions for close to seven decades has had a great influence on



W.E.B. DuBois: A Pioneer of Socialism

**by Philip Bart*

developments in the U.S., and internationally, in the freedom struggle of the colonial peoples — William Edward Burghardt DuBois. These facts have been largely suppressed by a racist ideological practice pervading all avenues of knowledge.

Afro-Americans in their inexhaustible experience in the struggle for freedom were attracted to socialist ideas. But the party largely ignored them, despite the criticism of Blacks, and some white leading socialists.

There were three basic trends exerting influence and leadership in the organization: The conserva-

tive Right wing; the Center, which had the majority, and leaned towards alliances with the Right; and, the Left-wing group. These groups controlled state and city organizations, foreign language federations, and, at times, some trade unions. Black socialists were not an organic part of any of these groups. Consequently they had to seek out their own sources to disseminate their opinions. they utilized the Black and socialist press, lectures, Black churches, and, infrequently when openings occurred availed themselves of the Party's institutions.

Early Socialist Ideas

In view of the W.E.B. DuBois' brief, formal party membership in 1912, historians have neglected to deal with his socialist beliefs and his efforts to influence the course of the Party's development. From his early years DuBois professed socialist ideas. In a reply to the Socialist ideologue, Isaac Max Rubinow, he wrote even before 1905: "While I would scarcely describe myself as a socialist still I have much sympathy with the movement and I have many socialistic beliefs." (Nov. 17, 1904. *The Correspondence of W.E.B. DuBois*. Edited by Herbert Aptheker. Vol.I, p. 82. 1973.)

While preparing the resolution for the second Niagara conference in 1906, DuBois took note of his indecision, yet indicated that socialist ideas were reflected in his thought. He reminisced that "the philosophy of socialism was not yet applied. But the philosophy hovered in the background." (*The Autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois*, 1969, p. 251) However the methodology he pursued logically led to the application of elements of historical materialism in his writing. At the end of the 30's he summarized his ideas in his book entitled "Dusk of Dawn." There he concluded: "It was not until I was long out of college and had finished the first phase of my teaching career that I began to see clearly the connection of economics and politics; the fundamental influence of man's efforts to earn a living upon all his other efforts." (Schocken Books, N.Y., p. 41, 3rd Printing. First published in 1940.)

James E. Jackson, Communist Party leader, who had been associated with DuBois in the years of the Southern Negro Youth Congress, discerned that "the DuBois logic was essentially the Marxian dialectical process of reasoning." (*Black Titan W.E.B. DuBois*, 1970, p. 19.) It was this ideological

foundation which secured DuBois life-long confidence in socialism. His characteristic modesty was displayed in his self-critical estimation of his contributions to the science of socialism. Jackson observed that "the purity of the man's integrity was such that he protested that he was too old to ever earn the right to identify himself as a Marxist." (ibid.) Yet throughout his life in the 20th Century he moved in its stream.

Struggle For Clarity

The centrality of the Afro-American issue was the crucible in which the Socialist Party would be tested. The party's founding convention, in 1901, adopted a position "On the Negro Question," which was never reviewed. The party was founded only 35 years after the close of the Civil War, and some two decades after counter-revolution set-in with the "Hayes-Tilden compromise" which was a betrayal of Reconstruction. The raw wounds were barely covered when new legislation was introduced eliminating every vestige of gains made. Jim Crow was riding high throughout the South.

The Socialist party's resolution was amended by William Costley, a Black delegate from San Francisco. He urged a clause against lynching. (135 lynchings occurred that year.) But it was rejected for it would alienate (sic!) white Southerners! Basically the document presented a dogmatic stand, excluding the need of responding to urgent issues of the day. It presented socialism as a doctrinaire concept, which would arrive eventually. Yet some historians consider the validity of the resolution. Over the years there had not been any discussion on the resolution, nor an attempt to bring it up to date.

DuBois wrote in the *New Review*, February, 1913, on "Socialism and the Negro Problem." He addressed his thesis to "the class of theoretical socialists." This was an opportunity to open a wide discussion, which could have benefitted the whole party. While Black socialists continued to write on this subject, the Socialist party ignored the opportunity presented.

DuBois rejected the argument that progress for Blacks is realizable, while ignoring the urgent problems facing an oppressed people. Actually it could only lead to deny the plight of Blacks, and totally ignore the problems facing the South. Consequently, at a time, when racist legislation was mounting, the socialist movement did not re-

spond. DuBois wrote caustically that: "We must not trun aside from the great object of Socialism to take up the issue of the American Negro; let the question wait; when the objects of Socialism are achieved, this problem will be settled along with other problems." (ibid. 138) And this led him to observe that "No recent convention of Socialism has dared to face fairly the Negro problem and make a straightforward declaration that they regard Negroes as men in the same sense that other persons are." (ibid.) His sharp rebuke came as a result of racist statements made at previous party conventions. William "Big Bill" Haywood was the only opponent who took issue with those chauvinist assertions at the 1912 convention.

The Socialist party correctly recognized the need of participating in daily struggles to advance the interests of working people. It lent its support to the trade union movement. It participated in the women's suffrage movement. Yet it did not see the need to respond to the urgent problem facing four million Black workers, and to the plight of an oppressed minority of ten million people.

Rejection of Opportunism

DuBois took issue with this false position. He asserted that it is not a struggle for Socialism. He wrote: "can the objects of Socialism be achieved as long as the Negro is neglected? Can any great human problem 'wait'? If socialism is going to settle the American problem of race prejudice without direct attack along these lines by Socialists, why is it necessary for socialists to fight along other lines? Indeed there is a kind of fatalistic attitude on the part of certain transcendental Socialists, *which often assumes that the whole battle of Socialism is coming by a kind of evolution in which active individual effort on their part is hardly necessary.*" (ibid. emphasis added) DuBois rejects the party's opportunism, which, by some kind of "evolution" will arrive at socialism. Consequently they see no need of struggle on issues facing Afro-Americans.

Lest the reader consider DuBois' criticism as lacking concern for Socialism, he made it clear that his interest was in enhancing the party's growth. He stressed the need and opportunity of attracting Black workers. He wrote in the previous issue of the New Review on party building. His topic: A Field for Socialists. He called the party's attention to the "group of ten million persons...toward whom Socialists would better turn serious atten-

tion." He underlined that "their actual numbers and their distribution geographically and by occupations make them of great importance. A labor movement and Socialist movement without them in the Southern South is unthinkable." He put before the party the question: "Facing such a situation what has Socialism to say to these black men? Is it going to ignore them, or segregate them, or complain because they do not forthwith adopt a program of a revolution of which they know nothing or a movement which they are not invited to join?" But the old socialist party did not respond to this profound and amicable contribution.

Socialist and the NAACP

Under DuBois initiative the Niagara movement was formed in 1905, inaugurating a united effort for complete equality. It led to the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, four years later. It was a time of the introduction of numerous racist exclusionary laws throughout the South, and intensified discriminatory activities, nationwide. The newly established association found many Socialist adherents, among them William English Walling, Charles Edward Russell, Mary White Ovington, and Florence Kelley. But the Socialist party did not take official note of this new development. But favorable sentiment was expressed in its ranks, as reflected in the Socialist press. The New York Socialist Call carried reports on the Association's conference. It indicated that a workingclass approach must be applied to this question. In an editorial, June 3, 1909, it stated: "The Negro question is a part of the class question. Its solution cannot be altogether independent of the solution of the labor problem." Consequently it must be related to the party's objectives in the trade union movement, and is a direct responsibility of white Socialists in labor's ranks. It called attention to its readers that "Nowhere else is a certain color of the skin so associated with the past, and not very long past, status of slavery." Although imprecise it introduced the problem of white chauvinism. The influence of DuBois on these slight, but important changes cannot be ignored.

An Advocate of Socialism

No one recognized more the difficulties and obstructions faced by Blacks in their search for Socialist theoretical knowledge. His constant self-critical attitude confirmed this fact. Yet he amassed a great body of thought on this subject.



W. Alphaeus Hunton, his co-worker, Marxist scholar, who accompanied him to Ghana to prepare the Encyclopedia Africana, left us an inestimable legacy of his life-long interest in socialism. Dr. Hunton wrote that socialism "was another great cause to which DuBois gave his life. His advocacy of socialism developed from wide reading and study, from an extraordinary abundance of travel and observation in both capitalist and socialist countries, and from the functioning of a disciplined and penetrating intellect. Someone will some day trace the unfolding of the idea of socialism in the long succession of his published works which began in 1896 and continued down to the year of his death. It will suffice to say here that in his later years his convictions regarding socialism became the core of his life and thinking." (Black Titan W.E.B. DuBois. By the Editors of Freedomways, 1970. p. 136.)

This great intellect was no ivory-tower scholar — he was a man of action. His services were parti-

san: dedicated to his people and to the cause of world peace, the freedom of oppressed nationalities and of socialism. In "Criteria for Negro Art," the Crisis, October, 1926, he wrote trenchantly: "I stand in utter shamelessness and say that whatever art I have for writing has been used always for propoganda for gaining the right of Black folk to love and enjoy. I do not care a damn for any art that is not used as propoganda. But I do care when propoganda is confined to one side while the other is stripped silent."

For too long historians ignored Dr. William E.B. DuBois as a Socialist in thought and action. Devious writing or utter silence was the treatment reserved for him. Nearing his 80th year, DuBois left us a precise declaration of his convictions: "Socialism progresses and will progress...I believe in socialism. I seek a world where the ideas of communism will triumph — to each according to his need; from each according to his ability. For this I will work as long as I live. And I still live," (Black Titan, p. 137.)

Unite for Comprehensive, Mandatory Sanctions Against South Africa

General Declaration of the National Imperialist Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation

A Most Important Moment in History

Ours is a most important moment in history. The forces of peace, national liberation and social progress are in the forefront of human progress. However, the current situation in the world is made dangerous by the aggressive course of the Reagan Administration's foreign policy. This policy seeks to reverse history, to re-establish the political and geographic supremacy of imperialism in general and U.S. Imperialism in particular in Africa and the world. Everything that is peace-loving, everything that is freedom-loving and seeks to achieve justice and human rights is bitterly opposed by the Reagan Administration. To achieve its ends, this Administration has identified itself fully with the racist South African regime.

We, representatives of our nation's majority, take our stand with Africa and join the fight to abolish all vestiges of racism and colonialism, of neo-colonialism and zionism from the African continent. We heartily embrace the struggle to make Africa a continent of peace and national freedom. We support the removal of all foreign military bases from Africa, and oppose the use of Africa as a sphere of military operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. With Humanity's majority, we support the removal of all nuclear weapons from Africa and the oceans which surround it.

The cause of freedom is being heralded by the people of South Africa and Namibia who are waging a magnificent struggle for freedom and social



progress. The struggle in southern Africa is, moreover, imperative to the fight for nuclear disarmament and global security.

The Struggle for Economic Independence

Africa's 50 independent nations and its 400 million people are engaged in an intense fight with the transnational corporations, headquartered in the Western nations, for economic independence and the total control of their natural and human resources. The revolutionary break-up of the Portuguese colonial empire and the emancipation of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde accelerated this struggle. Simultaneously, it brought the borders of free Africa to the frontiers of the nerve center of racism and imperialism on the African continent - South Africa. Furthermore, the overthrow of the Smith Regime in Zimbabwe made irreversible the liberation movement.

As a consequence of these events, the struggle against the racist regime in South Africa has reached its final stage. The African National Congress of South Africa and the South West African Peoples Organization of Namibia have intensified their blows against apartheid. In response to the heroic march of the freedom struggle, the United States and its imperialist allies have rushed to support the South African regime. President Ronald Reagan refers to the fascists of South Africa as "friends" and asks, "Can we abandon a country that has stood by us in every war we have fought, a country that is strategically essential to the free world in its production of minerals that we all must have?" Not only does Reagan refuse to abandon the fascist regime of South Africa, he has strengthened the U.S.-South Africa axis.

South Africa's Minerals - the Achilles Heel of the U.S. Nuclear Arsenal

The Reagan Administration calls its embrace of South Africa a "strategic partnership." This "partnership" is based upon the fact that South Africa guards the strategic southern access to Africa's minerals and raw minerals and is a shield of the billions of dollars of investments from the U.S., Canada, West Europe and Japan. Moreover, South Africa is a spearhead of the global military policies of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The U.S.-South Africa al-

liance is a beachhead of the global forces of imperialism and counter-revolution.

The United States, moreover, is dependent upon South Africa in particular and southern Africa generally for a vast array of minerals. These minerals are the Achilles heel of the U.S. military industrial complex, in general, and its nuclear arsenal, in particular. They include manganese, platinum, chromium, titanium, cobalt, uranium, diamonds and coal.

The U.S. imports all of its titanium used in aircraft frames and missiles; 90 percent of manganese essential to steel-making; 90 percent of the cobalt used in cutting tools and jet engines; 89 percent of platinum metals crucial to automobile production and oil refining and 90 percent of the chromium used in making stainless steel. These minerals are a strategic component of the U.S. war-making capability and the bulk of them come from Southern Africa.

Furthermore, U.S. transnational corporations are at the heart of South Africa's military vehicles. Exxon, Mobile and Caltex refine over 50 percent of South Africa's oil and the U.S. is South Africa's main oil supplier. IBM supplies South Africa with 75 percent of its computers. GE, Westinghouse and ITT manufacture most of South Africa's electrical components. U.S. corporations have supplied South Africa with almost all its enriched uranium and technology used in its nuclear program.

This partnership between the Reagan Administration and racist South Africa includes efforts to construct a military alliance called the South Atlantic Treaty Organization and to coordinate joint naval maneuvers in the Indian Ocean

South Africa - Launching Pad for Nuclear War

The main danger rests, however, upon the fact that South Africa has become a potential launching pad for a global thermonuclear war. Its virtual declaration of war against the whole of Africa, its threat to use weapons of mass destruction and its development, with U.S. assistance, of nuclear weapons constitute a grave threat to international peace and security and is a crime against humanity. The Reagan Administration, through former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Defense Secretary Casper Wienberger and Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Chester Crocker have all called

for the use of war to "defend" southern Africa's minerals. Reagan's 5-year \$1.6 trillion military budget is dependent upon minerals from southern Africa. That is the entirety of the U.S. first strike nuclear arsenal like the MX, cruise and trident missile systems. To preserve control of these minerals and to expand its nuclear arsenal, the Reagan Administration has committed itself to defending fascism in South Africa. Furthermore, a significant part of the U.S. military budget goes directly to support the South African regime. These policies could turn southern Africa into a thermonuclear graveyard.

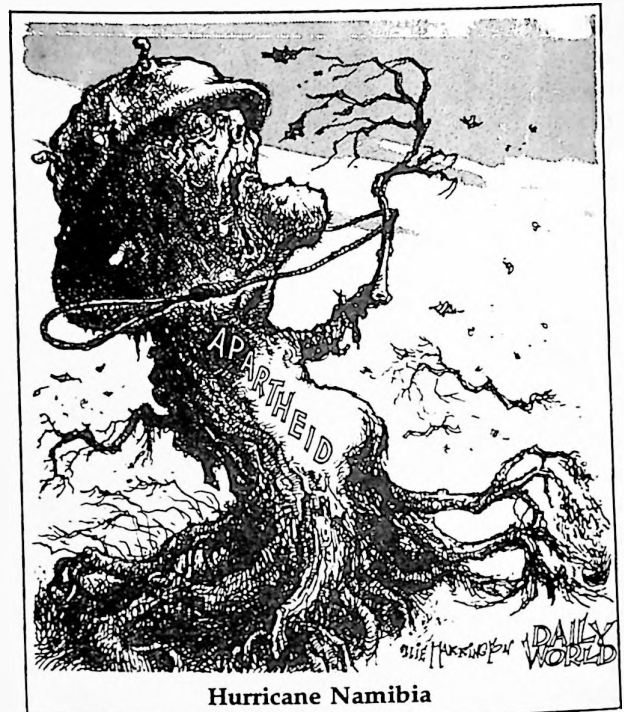
South Africa & Israel — Joint Aggressors

South Africa's aggression against the African nations is comparable to that of Israel against the Arab people. The brutal massacres carried out in Lebanon by Israel are identical to the mass murders carried out by South Africa in Namibia and in Angola. Just as Israel seeks to annex southern Lebanon, South Africa seeks to deepen its control of Namibia and annex southern Angola. Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon in 1982 was with the South African invasion into Angola. Israel has helped South Africa build an "automated" battlefield in Namibia. U.S. weapons delivered to Israel are transferred to South Africa. Israeli aircraft, tanks, artillery and other weapons are a part of the South African arsenal. South Africa and Israel maintain extensive and intimate trade, financial and other economic ties. Finally, South Africa and Israel are linked in joint nuclear weapons development. Both nations refuse to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and are jointly testing and building neutron weapons against its neighbors. All of this has the full support of the Reagan Administration.

South Africa illegally occupies Namibia and uses that nation as a springboard of aggression into Angola and Africa generally. The Botha regime in South Africa does not intend to leave Namibia, but hopes to annex southern Angola and to overthrow the sovereign government of Angola. South Africa is engaged in efforts to overthrow the sovereign governments of Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the Seychelle Islands. This goes hand in hand with South Africa's terrorist murders of freedom fighters. This is part of an effort to drown in blood the liberation movement of southern Africa and to reverse the

liberation struggle on the entire African continent. Such violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nations of southern Africa constitute a brazen violation of international law.

Within the borders of South Africa, the Botha regime has declared the Black majority of that nation aliens in their own land and is in the process of removing this majority to barren concentration camps. The Black majority have no civil or



Hurricane Namibia

human rights whatsoever. Trade Union and human rights leaders are murdered and jailed. Unarmed workers, youth and women are shot down and beaten in the streets. All protests against the barbarous regime in South Africa are met with armed repression.

U.S. People — A Special Responsibility

South Africa's economy and its military industrial complex are linked to and dependent upon the U.S. The multi-billion dollar financial and industrial corporations of the U.S. refer to South Africa as the "Persian Gulf of minerals." The steel, auto, electrical and computer industries are shifting a significant sector of their production to South Africa.

The people of the U.S. have a unique responsibility in the face of these developments. This is so

because only with the support of the U.S. government and U.S. based transnational corporations is South Africa able to carry out these policies. The Reagan Administration carries out its support of South Africa in our name. These policies which benefit only the big corporations, the banks, and the Pentagon are being asked to shoulder the cost and shame of these racist policies abroad. In a real sense we share a common struggle and common objectives with the people of South Africa and Namibia. The same banks who are wrecking small businesses, farmers and homeowners, and who are holding cities financial hostages, are loaning billions to the fascist regime in South Africa. Lockheed, GE, Chrysler, GM, Boeing, IBM and other military producers, who each year get billions from the taxpayers for useless military production, are the bulwork of South Africa's industrial complex. Americans of every race and nationality face, with the Black majorities of South Africa and Namibia, the same enemy.

Peace and Freedom Require Sanctions Against South Africa

Peace and national freedom are at the center of human survival. To defend these objectives on a world scale, they must be fought for and defended in South Africa. The fight in solidarity with the peoples of South Africa and Namibia against racism, apartheid and colonialism is fundamental to securing world peace, to preserving and advancing democracy, to throwing back racism and to defeating the anti-people, big business militarist drive of the Reagan Administration. The National Anti-Imperialist Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation calls upon every trade union, church, community and peace organization, every individual to join us.

Our demands are:

Comprehensive and Mandatory Sanctions Against South Africa

- *End all economic ties to South Africa, including bank loans, International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans, credits, trade, investment, pension and retirement funds, and shipments of oil and technology.

- *End all military ties, including nuclear and conventional weapons, patents, police equipment, and all military and intelligence relationships to South Africa.

- *Break all diplomatic relations, including voting in the U.N. to expel South Africa, and closing all South African consulates in the U.S. and all U.S. consulates in South Africa.

- *End all cultural, sporting, scientific and university ties to South Africa.

Recognize the ANC and SWAPO

- *Recognize the ANC and SWAPO as the sole, legitimate representatives of the South African and Namibian peoples.

- *Support U.N. - supervised elections in Namibia and cease the linkage of freedom for Namibia to removal of Cuban troops from Angola.

- *Immediate release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners, as well as extending prisoner-of-war status to all jailed and captured freedom fighters in compliance with the 1949 Geneva Convention and Protocol Agreements of 1977.

In the interest of freedom and peace, of justice and social progress, we demand a total break of all economic, military, political, diplomatic and cultural ties with South Africa. The people of the U.S. must mount an immediate mass offensive to defeat the Reagan Africa policies and realize these demands. In this regard, the Afro-American people provide a consistent bulwark and sterling example to the solidarity movement of how to fight racism and imperialism. In so doing, we uphold our responsibility to the brother and sister peoples of southern Africa and simultaneously advance our own cause

INTERVIEW

**by Keorapetse Kgositsile*

A few years ago a fellow South African writer asked me to explain to him how people like la Guma and I could be in the Movement but still manage to write novels and poems. And I replied, with a bit of acid on my tongue, that I had always wondered how a South African writer could be outside the Movement but hope to write anything of value or significance. It seemed to me that, perhaps my friend believed that in the Liberation Movement there was no room for the literary artist to create; that possibly some frustrated thug with itchy fingers, and too cowardly to confront the boer fascists, spends his time dictating lines of whatever non-literary garbage to the supposed poet at gunpoint like some foul-mouthed Hollywood movie gangster. It is that preposterous and ignorant presumption that put acid on my tongue. But Arthur Nortje had already written:

*And let no amnesia
attack at fire hour:
for some of us must storm the castles
some define the happening.*

I hope that in discussing "Culture and Resistance in South Africa," I will make a contribution towards clarifying a few things about what time this is in our life; what tasks are facing us; what writers and other artists worth their salt are doing in living up to their responsibilities.

Fighting for the Seizure of Power

On January 8th this year the African National Congress turned seventy; seventy years of organized resistance against national oppression and economic exploitation; seventy years of rich experience in fighting many freedom battles, including civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts, marches, passive racist regimes took no heed of

the people's grievances, as we all know; instead, they continued to rule our country with brute force, increasing the size of their army, of their navy, of their air force, of their police and arming their racist white civilians. Finally, in the face of this neo-nazi barbarism, the ANC established its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, to meet the unbridled violence of those fascist maniacs with revolutionary people's violence to liberate South Africa.

In fighting for the seizure of power, the freedom that the struggle is for is clearly defined and incorporated in the Freedom Charter, adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown on June 26, 1955. Briefly, these are the people shall govern; all national groups shall have equal rights; the people shall share in the country's wealth; the land shall be shared among those who work it; all shall be equal before the law, all shall enjoy equal human rights; there shall be work and security; the doors of learning and of culture shall be opened; there shall be peace and freedom. In declaring 1982 the Year of Unity in Action, the year in which to move forward to a democratic South Africa, we must act in unity and unite in action. Comrade O.R. Tambo, President of ANC, points out:

*The comradeship we have formed
in the trenches of freedom, transcending the barriers that the enemy sought to create, is a guarantee and a precondition for our victory. But we need still to build on this achievement. All of us workers, peasants, students, priests, chiefs, traders, teachers, civil servants, poets, writers, men, women, and youth Black and white – must take our common destiny in our own hands.*

Literature is a Site of Struggle

Based on experiences from some other gatherings of this nature, I suspect that there are some people here who will probably accuse me of being partisan. They can save their energy and put their minds to something else hopefully more purposeful; I am, like many of my colleagues and comrades, unapologetically partisan.

Others might even wonder as to what most of what I have said so far has to do with culture and the arts. And I will do, everything, because what happens in life and social consciousness finds expression in artistic creativity. Everything in society results from human activity, interaction and interests. This applies as much to the creation of literary as it does to mobilizing workers to go on strike or to pick up arms against their oppressors and exploiters. In clarifying the relationship between literature and life, Alex la Guma, himself a cultural activist and a leading cadre of the Movement says:

When I write in a book that somewhere in South Africa poor people who have no water must buy it by the bucketful from some local exploiter, then I also entertain the secret hope that when somebody reads it he will be moved to do something about these robbers who have turned my country into a material and cultural wasteland for the majority of the inhabitants.

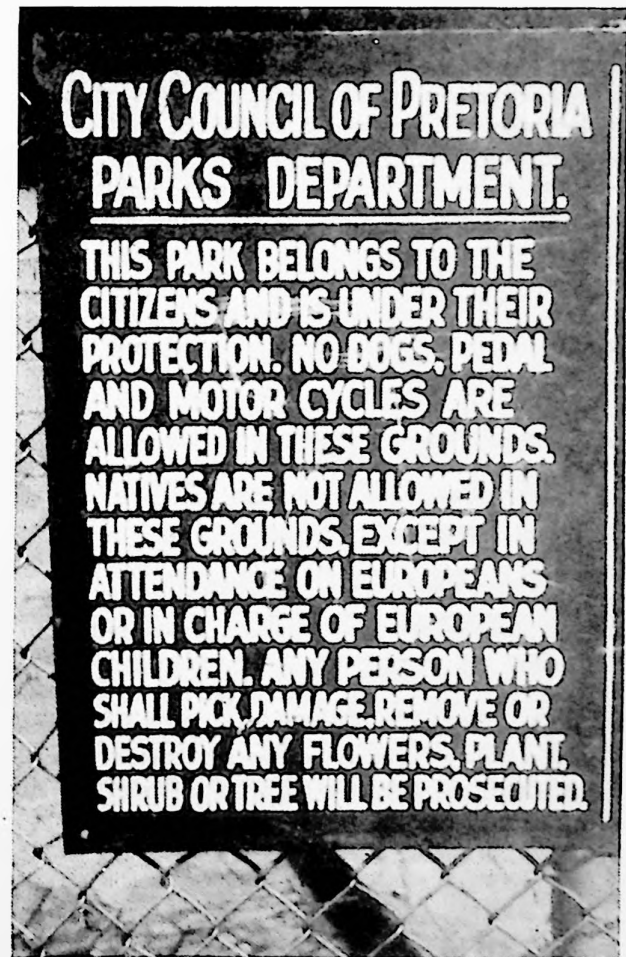
In other words, literature is a state of struggle; it must serve the interests of the people in their fight against a culture which insists that they should be robbed.

Writers and other artists, along with all the other groups in society referred to in comrade Tambo's statement quoted earlier are joined together by their understanding and hatred of imperialism, capitalist exploitation, racism, and their aspiration for, and determination to bring about, peace, progress and happiness. Not in the

hustler-preacher's sense, doping us into believing that the more we suffer on this earth we walk everyday the better our chances for everlasting bliss inside the pearly gates of heaven. These issues are clearly political and may seem, to some among us, not to have anything to do with literature and the arts. However, let it be stated very simply and clearly that there can be no literature or any other art of value without them.

The Personal and the Social

What about the personal, then? After all, have poets not written personal love lyrics and so forth? In our view there is no intrinsic contradiction between the personal and the social in the sensibility of an integrated, whole personality — whether the person is an artist or not. Love, even the love between a man and a woman, parent and child, friend and friend, is a unifying factor in the



wholeness we seek. Fulfilment is the quest of our lives. In any society, group, community or class, where this does not exist there is no peace; there is only misery and suffering; there is no life, only despair. And Dennis Brutus, who knows "the shriek of nerves in pain" when there is "thunder at the door" following the sounds of "the sirens in the night," appeals to us:

*To those who persuade us to purchase despair
we must say No:
Let us cherish our humanity
which they seek to devour:
from our seed
the liberated world must grow.
It is time for action:
enough of craft and cunning
and calculating wisdom.*

Our Ultimate Responsibility

And we say Mayihlome!, because this speaks directly to our lives even in our personal terrors when we individually hear that "thunder at the door" and know what kind of perverse, two-legged bloodhound is out there ready to break that door down. The poem is carved out of the realities of our lives. Life is itself the major creative activity. And what is truly creative in art is a reflection and an affirmation of life in moving images.

We are not interested in how it is to be an artist, if the artist is finally interested in fooling around with paints and brushes or in perverse juggling with words, while he contemplates his next royalty cheque or how he is going to mesmerize his liberal patrons at the next exhibition or book party; we are interested in how it is to be alive. And what is it to be alive today? Fascist tyranny and barbarism is a reality that even the most limpminded need not be reminded of. To be first with the spirit of freedom, to be determined to fight and destroy that tyranny, to usher a new chapter of life where there is peace, progress and happiness — this we see as our mission, our duty; our ultimate responsibility. Lindiwe Mabuza, who uses language admirably as a weapon in our struggle for life, expresses this spirit in her *Epitaph of Love* (in memory of Solomon Mahlangu):

*Didn't I hear him today
Even right now
Sing his poem of love
Write an epitaph of love*

with LIFE

*'My blood will nourish the tree
Which will bear the fruits of freedom'...*

Yes for him too with LIFE

We must reach freedom's rich estates...

Marching

To the unbroken rhythm

Of surging dancing spears

Heritage of Cultural Resistance

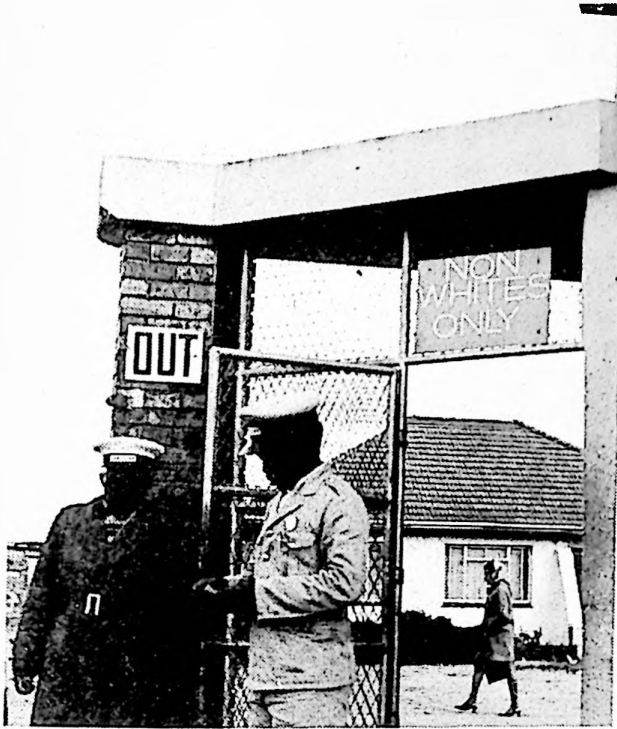
This determination and commitment to life reflected in the arts, that is, in cultural resistance, is not a new development in South Africa as some, even among the artists, erroneously think. There is a body of literature, oral and written, in practically all the languages in Southern Africa, which is an important part of our heritage of cultural resistance. The highwater mark was the nineteenth century epic, when the African people put up resistance against the invaders, fought many heroic battles; and, in spite of the invaders' superiority of arms, won some of them. This heroism is part of our living history and inspires the artists of today as much as it inspired our predecessors. In 1979 we celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Isandhlwana at which the British were thoroughly whipped. Bheki Langa, a contemporary young poet, in a poem titled *Isandhlwana Incarnate*, comments:

*The struggle is food
age-old rule of bloodhounds
gives birth to revolt
the sharp teeth of class struggle
chew off whole epochs*

*we have travelled a long way
in soweto
we were matadors
tricking bullnosed war tanks
and learned
how much a brick
can bleed a bullet to death.*

From Soweto to Sandhlwana

Note how the poet's sensibility sees the heroism of our ancestors reflected and re-enacted in the youth in their 1976 resistance against 'the rule of bloodhounds'. He takes us, with consummate skill



in clear visual images, from Soweto to Sandlwana.. It has been a long road and our journey on it has not been a pleasant one; our blood has sunk into the 'greedy soil' of our land; there are many casualties on it, even 'hearts torn from souls', brains, dry intestines and much more. The enemy still had fire power while all we had were knobkieries, stones and bricks. But we fight on courageously and mobilize until there is:

*a shower of hope
from the AK for the MK
when we take aim
we salute not the dead stone
but the living spirit and blood
isandlwana incarnate*

This long way we have travelled is sung by another poet, Victor Matlou, in *'The Long Road, The Tunnel.'* It also ends with a commitment to, and an affirmation of, life:

*and women give birth here
a choice in anguish
binding a generation to this road
my past is on the pulse of this road
there is light down there at the end
of
tunnel*

*to grope on to touch to carve hopes
breathe songs into hearts of martyrs
to dry tears to summon the dead
to life*

The poets from whose work I have quoted a little, are not exceptional; they are exemplary of many other artists in theatre, music, painting, sculpture, song and dance and so on. Our artists have over the years struggled along with the people, sensitized to and expressing the feelings, sufferings, hopes, failures and achievements in our struggle for national liberation. The past few years have seen attempts by the artists, both at home and in exile, to organize themselves into collectives, identifying themselves with the struggle and fashioning ways of making their talents functional in their communities and to the struggling masses of the people as a whole. *Mayibuye, Amandla!* are examples of such cultural collectives.

Art in the Interest of the People

The task facing these artists is formidable. There are a number of charlatans, pimps and prostitutes running around the world masquerading as artists; talking about how sensitive they are; how they cannot be involved in social issues; how art is for its own sake and a lot of other nonsense. Their hideous masks must be ripped off by the artists with a sense of duty and a clear social vision. Creative energy is not locked up in a tower, ivory or black, inside a typewriter, a musical instrument or a can of paint. Recently at Wits there was a benefit concert in aid of detainees and their families. Popular groups like Juluka, Sakhile and Malopoets performed. By participating in a fundraising concert of that nature, they identified themselves with the detainees and their families; they performed a task that could best be handled by artists in the community; they made their art functional in the needs and interests of the people. This is part of the struggle for national liberation and in it there is no such creature as a revolutionary soloist. We are all involved. The artist is both a participant and imaginative explorer in life. Outside of social life there is no culture, there is no art; and that is one of the major differences between man and beast.

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George Meyers is Chairman of the Labor-Farm Department, CPUSA.

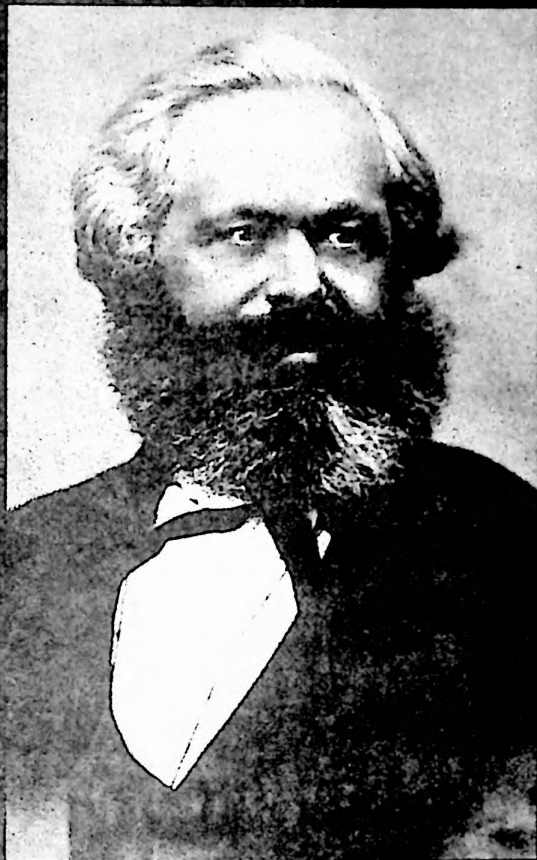
Charlene Mitchell is Secretary of the Afro-American Commission, CPUSA.

James Jackson is Secretary of the Central Committee, CPUSA. In addition to delivering a report he gave the above discussion remarks at the conference.

Mark Allen is a member of the Central Committee, CPUSA.

Robert Lindsay is a member of the Afro-American Commission, CPUSA.

Philip Bart is Chairman of the History Department of the CPUSA.



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