

# PARTY AFFAIRS

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## Preconvention Discussion Issue No. 2

### Party Conference on Economic Crisis

This issue of Party Affairs contains a part of the proceedings of the National Party Conference of District Organizers on the Economic Crisis. This Conference, held February 22 to 23, concentrated its attention on accelerating our work against the economic crisis. Comrade Hall's opening report appears in the April issue of Political Affairs. Every club must use this article as part of its pre-Convention discussion and planning against the effects of the economic crisis.

In order to get this issue to you before April 26, we were able to include only two of the discussion contributions in addition to the special remarks of Comrades Meyers, Rubin and Proctor and the summary remarks by Comrade Hall. We will print a number of other contributions to the Conference discussion in subsequent issues.

--The Editor



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# Summary Report from Panel on Trade Union Work

BY GEORGE MEYERS

## NEW IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

The deep economic crisis and the intensification of the class struggle are having a powerful impact on the trade union movement. 1974 saw the highest number of strikes ever recorded for one year, in spite of the fact that most major industries were not involved in contract negotiations. The Bureau of Labor Statistics recorded an estimated 5,900 official strikes, and they are still counting. This does not include the thousands of rank and file strikes over such issues as speedup and unsafe working conditions. This certainly gives the answer to whether or not workers will struggle in times of growing unemployment.

Structurally, the unions are being hit by a decline in income --a falling off in dues as a result of layoffs. Many have been forced to cut their staffs. Some unions are harder hit than others. Auto, more than steel, for instance, although steel is beginning to feel the pressure. Public workers, garment, chemical and other unions are very hard hit. Weak unions like textile and IUE are in a serious financial situation. Layoffs in construction are especially high, but most building trades unions require their members to continue paying dues as a condition of membership.

There are many examples of big corporations shifting production from unionized plants to those where the union is either weak or nonexistent. For example, Singer is shutting down one plant here in New York and cutting production in New Jersey, both organized in IUE, while expanding its non-union operation in Monroe, North Carolina. The Allis-Chalmers Corporation announced it was closing its plants at Pittsburgh, Pa., and Gadsen, Alabama. The reasons given as stated by a company spokesman, David C. Scott, "are exceptionally high wage rates and benefit costs which have resulted from collective bargaining negotiations over the years..." (New York Times, February 21, 1975.) The company announced they were transferring the work to their Sanford, North Carolina plant. The same edition of the paper announced that Allis-Chalmers' profits had jumped approximately 40% in the past year.

Non-union contractors have made terrific inroads in the construction industry. In one city after another unorganized construction workers outnumber those in the unions.

But the major impact on the trade unions is the powerful political impact of a rank and file that is increasingly being radicalized by the rising flames of the class struggle. Mass layoffs and short time in a period when the cost of living is constantly rising has created a deep mood of anger and resentment and a willingness to fight. The workers' sense of outrage has been further heated by a contemptuous ruling class bent on using this crisis to destroy working conditions and union benefits won through decades of struggle.

Take the public workers here in New York, and the role of Mayor Beame. His program of job cutting and elimination of contract benefits has won this corrupt scoundrel the title of "Beame the courageous" in the entire capitalist press. At the General Motors plant in Tarrytown there is a tremendous company drive to force the remaining work force to give up work and safety standards established by many years of contract negotiations. The same pressure is being exerted on the workers in every mine, mill and factory of this country. The impact of the class struggle and the mounting pressure from the rank and file is showing itself in a number of ways in the trade union movement.

### MARKED INCREASE IN RANK AND FILE MILITANCY

First of all there is a marked growth in the strength of militant rank and file movements, particularly those in which Communists and other progressives share leadership. This pressure is reflected in the more advanced positions taken by the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) at their recent meeting in ST. Louis, Missouri. The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) has called for demonstrations in a number of cities on April 5th and their coming convention in Atlanta is shaping up into one of great significance.

There is a marked increase in militancy at lower levels of trade union leadership, among those most intimately tied with the rank and file, particularly local union officers. At the recent carefully staged meeting of 700 Teamster Union officials in Washington, D.C., a number of local union presidents were gavelled down by President Fitzsimmons because their militant demands went beyond his conservative outlook.

As the Draft Main Political Resolution of our Party emphasizes, as Comrade Gus Hall stressed in his excellent opening report, and as many of you comrades have already verified, rank and file pressure is having a powerful impact at higher levels of union leadership, including some sections of the top AFL-CIO Executive Council. It would be a costly sectarian error to ignore this very important shift in our struggle against the class collaboration that is still dominant in the organized labor movement.

The UAW job rally of 10,000 auto workers in Washington, D. C. on February 5th was most significant. Originally this demonstration had been conceived as something much more limited. But rank and file pressure kept pushing the attendance up until the union leadership rented a hall holding 10,000. This demonstration was a powerful blow in the struggle for jobs, even though the participants left dissatisfied and promised to come back in the hundreds of thousands. Its special significance was in the fact that a union of workers in a key basic industry was leading the struggle for jobs. While the rally had its full complement of Democratic Party "liberals" as speakers, the auto workers left completely dissatisfied with what they heard and promised to return in greater force.

The most significant indication of rank and file pressure was the coming together of the AFL-CIO General Board on January 23-- its first meeting in six years. The six demands adopted ranged from a reactionary attack on the Arab oil countries to such modest proposals as reduction of interest rates and Federal efforts to create jobs. But from January 23 to their Council meeting the week of February 17th, the AFL-CIO position advanced noticeably, particularly the decision calling for labor demonstrations at all state capitals in the month of March and a stronger position against the big oil companies.

Regardless of how George Meany meant it, his poolside reference at the time of the Council meeting, raising the question of a 35-hour week and a \$3 minimum wage are certain to be transformed by the trade unions into mass demands.

## CLASS COLLABORATION CAN BE ENDED

The involvement of a comparatively sizeable number of union officers in the November 16th actions organized by the National Coalition Against Inflation and Unemployment (NCFIU) certainly reflected rank and file pressure on these issues. The Coalition itself admits many more could have been drawn in, but there was a serious underestimation of the need for trade union leaders to publicly demonstrate how they stand on these issues.

How is the leadership of the trade union movement responding in this crisis? Well, even the most conservative moss-backs are being forced to move, even though they are doing everything possible to keep the struggles of the union membership within safe, manageable grounds. The top AFL-CIO leadership spreads confusion by blaming the crisis on the Arab countries, the Soviet Union, high interest rates and the wrong stable of Presidential economic advisors. They have joined in the vicious lie that undocumented workers are responsible for the loss of millions of jobs. They continue their chauvinist attitude toward workers in other countries.

In a period of growing unity between Black and white workers spurred by common class confrontation with the boss, the AFL-CIO

leadership and its Right-wing Social Democratic supporters continue to make the false and divisive issue of "reverse discrimination" a matter of major trade union concern. Even the Hawkins Bill on full employment has come under their criticism because it contains a slight hint of affirmative action.

In spite of these very serious impediments, the tremendous pressure surging up from the grass roots is forcing the top AFL-CIO leadership to move. And they have initiated some proposals which are an advance over the past. This is important. But the main point I want to make is that in spite of some movement at the top, the class collaborationist sector of the top union leadership has no intention of mobilizing the rank and file for a political fight around any program. In fact, they are working to control and limit militant grass roots initiatives in every possible way.

This is what we have to change. As Comrade Hall stressed in his opening report, we must see through, reject and expose their established tactics of using militant rhetoric and bombast as a preliminary to abject retreat and cooperation with monopoly proposals. Meany's big talk one day is invariably followed by a go-along policy the next. However, it has happened so many times that most workers are no longer fooled and are demanding concrete action.

For example, the AFL-CIO passes fine-sounding resolutions calling for Federal funds for public unemployment compensation and other social needs, then backs every demand the Pentagon makes for more billions of tax money, including more money for the bottomless pit in Southeast Asia.

Yet, unions like the UAW who are mobilizing their members, tend to make no demands on the big corporations. Rather, they frequently join them in demanding Government funds aimed at maintaining bloated industry profits. The rank and file must not allow the monopolies to get off the hook in regard to their responsibilities to the workers.

Here is a serious problem. Instead of mobilizing for a fight, we have a situation where many union officials take on the responsibility of working out ways for the bosses to lay off workers. In an hour's bargaining they sometimes throw away hard-won conditions that in many cases it took years of struggle to achieve. No wonder living standards have taken a nose dive. This is directly contrary to the mood of the big majority of workers who are demanding militant leadership. They want to fight. They are not satisfied with stale, pat demands put forward year after year, but are ready to take more advanced, more radical positions, especially in the fight for jobs. A decent job at decent pay is the demand that just permeates working class struggles all over the country. Jobs--Jobs first of all and an end to the price ripoff! In one demonstration after another, the big demand is, "We want work!" Now, I am not suggesting that we give up our demands for unemployment compensation from day of layoff to day of rehire, and for the unemployed looking for their first job, or increased funds for people forced

to live on welfare. What I am saying is that I think the central demand in this period is what these demonstrators are calling for-- Jobs.

Around the fight for jobs we must build an advanced, radical program, then present it in a way the workers will understand and take hold of--a program that begins with the mobilization at the grass roots, the rank and file movements, and forces its way right up to the top of organized labor. In the process, class collaboration can be defeated. Class struggle trade union leadership can become the dominant trend in the trade union movement. This is possible. It is necessary. It is our responsibility as Communists in the struggle for revolutionary change to be in the thick of this fight.

How to develop an advanced, radical program? Comrade Hall's report and the reports from one district after another at this very fine Party conference show this is what the workers are looking for. How to present it in a way so that we neither tail nor isolate ourselves from the mass mood of the working class? How not to give the appearance of being "far out?" Well, I think Comrade Hall gave us an idea of how to proceed. First, project an advanced position and then retreat as necessary until the idea becomes a mass demand.

The struggles of the workers in the United States are part and parcel of the international working class and trade union struggles. The glorious victories of the working class in the socialist countries, the new high level of trade union demands in one capitalist country after another, are a reflection of the new stage in the worldwide conflict between labor and the monopolies. This is particularly true in the fight against unemployment and inflation. Although the U.S. trade unions have their own historic peculiarities, and although the ruling class has tried to keep them isolated from even the unions of other capitalist countries, U.S. trade union struggles are an integral component of the glorious international struggle of the world working class. I think we have to approach the question of how to present advanced demands within that framework.

Let's start with the struggle against unemployment. In one capitalist country after another workers are rebelling against layoffs. More and more they refuse to accept them lying down. There are now numerous examples of workers refusing to permit plant closings. In some cases they have taken the plants over themselves. In others, they demand the Government take them over and run them. In Japan, when an auto union president suggested the workers accept layoffs there was such an expression of outrage that he went home and committed hari-kari. In France, a national agreement has been reached guaranteeing workers a full year's pay if laid off. Even with that the French workers are complaining. They want jobs. They insist there are many things the French people need and they want to produce them. Trade unions in one capitalist country after another are up in arms over unemployment and inflation and, in most cases, the problems are less severe than in the U.S. General

strikes and other militant actions have taken place in France, Italy and other countries demanding decisive government action.

## SOME APPROACHES FOR A CONCRETE PROGRAM

I'm not trying to say such struggles are solving the crisis of capitalism in these countries. What I want to do is indicate the new level of working class struggle and militancy internationally, and to stress the fact that the working class in the United States is not isolated from this historic development. There is a burning urgency in the ranks of the workers for a militant, radical Communist leadership. Among other things, this means Communist workers sharing the leadership of rank and file movements, running for union office, as delegates to Central Labor Councils, etc.

I would now like to present some approaches around which such a concrete program of action can be developed.

First, I think Communist trade unionists and rank and file movements in which Communists share leadership must fight against any concessions by trade union officials which support ruling class schemes to put the burden of this crisis on the backs of the workers. Let's put an end to the shameful spectacle of union officials presenting plans to the boss on the best way to lay off workers, suggesting what gains workers are willing to relinquish, how many days they will work for nothing or even take wage cuts. The ruling class is working night and day to pit workers against each other in the fight for a constantly declining number of jobs. Let us present programs that will unite workers in the fight for more jobs.

We need a mass fight to prevent plants being shut down under any pretext. Municipal, state or federal takeover to continue plant operation with union participation and management. Demonstrative mass actions by the workers to enforce these demands. Heavy tax penalties on plants that do close as a first step towards confiscation.

The six-hour day with no reduction in pay is now a demand that must receive top priority. Without a reduction in the work week millions of workers now unemployed will never again find gainful employment. The short-hour work week can be won in this period of crisis and intensified class confrontation, just as the 40-hour week was won in the crisis of the 1930's. Trade unions must lead the fight against foreclosures on homes, repossession of cars, furniture and other necessities of life, while workers are unemployed. Increase pensions so that older workers will be able to retire at an earlier age. Nationalize the entire pension system, make pensions portable from one job to the next. The cry will go up, "such demands are too costly! There is no money!" We have an answer to that. Cut profits, raise taxes on the corporations and the wealthy. Think of the money that will be saved on welfare and unemployment payments with the number of jobs created by the six-hour day. With the development of a national system of day care centers the same will apply to many workers now on welfare.

The intensified class confrontation has created new opportunities to take the fight to unify the working class to new, high levels. Many white workers who thought they had it made on their own have lost their false sense of security. The struggle is creating a growing unity of Black, white and Brown workers. The struggle of women workers for equality in hiring, equal wages, and promotion is adding immensely to the unity of the class. The struggle for the rights of young workers among whom there is the greatest degree of militancy and radicalization, as well as unemployment, needs more leadership.

The limited gains made by Black, Chicano and other minorities and women workers are being wiped out almost overnight. Our Party cannot sit on the sidelines. It has to be in the thick of the fight to reverse this setback. The time is ripe to put an end for good to this business of "last hired, first fired." How to develop this fight is most important. It cannot be done with a fragmented working class, only with a firmly united working class. The monopolies have set a whole series of traps for the purpose of pitting one sector of the working class against another in the fight for declining jobs and adequate funds for social needs. The Boston school scandal is one example. The Charleston, West Virginia book burners are another. The fight against workers without papers is still another. There are many, many such examples, both at the point of production and in the working class communities. Whatever way we develop this fight--and of course the fight for jobs for all is foremost--the demand must be clear-- make the bosses pay for eliminating the effects of racism.

In this crisis, the questions of race and class can move in unison. In the 30's, white workers were forced to throw off their illusions of privilege in the bitter struggle of the class against the monopolies. The same is true today. A working class shoved up against the wall cannot afford the luxury of racism. It is now possible to challenge every racist barrier obstructing trade union and working class solidarity. Let's make the slogan, "Racism is Scabbing," a mass slogan.

Unemployment cannot be fought without expanding the job market. This means a heavy cut in military appropriations and a shift to job-making, socially productive construction. It means job-creating trade with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and honest trade relations with newly developing nations. The fight for jobs and the fight for peace are joined.

Nationalization (public ownership) is no longer a dirty word in the trade union movement. Certain industries should be selected for special attention--public utilities, all sources of energy, including oil, coal, atomic power, public transportation, housing--with workers sharing democratic control. The fight can begin at many levels.

For instance, a nationwide movement for nationalization of public utilities could very well begin with local campaigns for municipalization. The same could be true of housing projects.



The time is overripe for a drive to organize the unorganized. The unorganized workers are taking the worst brunt of this crisis. What is needed is a national, coordinated, organizing campaign, with special emphasis on the South. A number of trade union leaders completely agree with us on this, but in view of class collaborationist opposition at the top of the AFL-CIO, it is going to take a vigorous grass roots movement to make it come off. We don't have to wait. Rank and file movements in the unions can begin making this a mass demand. Along with the Young Workers Liberation League, our Party can play an important part. Both shop and community clubs can become involved in organizing drives. They can help initiate organizing drives. Right here in New York there are thousands of unorganized plants and shops. Let every district make concrete plans for this; which clubs are going to work on what plants or shops in need of union organization.

## POLITICAL ACTION REQUIREMENTS

Meany's disassociation of the AFL-CIO from the Democratic Party certainly deserves some study. However, he is obviously trying to disassociate himself from the democratically controlled "veto-proof do-nothing Congress," and in the process he tried to dodge responsibility for the political mess the policies of the top AFL-CIO leadership has helped create for the trade union movement. Still, it is a question that requires closer examination. There is deep disillusionment in labor's ranks with the two-party system in the U.S. and a growing search for political independence. Of course, class collaborationists are trying to head off this decisive development. Meany now labels COPE as "our political party." Some party! It runs no candidates and appears on no ballots. A few weeks ago on Dick Cavett's TV show, Meany declared that COPE had a better political machine than either the Democratic or Republican Party, but hastened to explain that, "...we do not want to run the country. All we want is a decent wage for the people who work for wages. If we wanted to run the country we would have a labor party and we do not have a labor party and never have had a labor party." It is easy to assume that if Meany had concluded his thoughts he would have added the following: "And we will never have a labor party if I have my say." The entire trade union movement must be alert to prevent any attempts of Meany and his associates to make top-level deals with such reactionaries as Nelson Rockefeller and smash any attempts to do the same with the racist, George Wallace.

There is a crying need for united front working class candidates running for office behind a militant program to end unemployment and inflation. Independent political action must be upgraded if the working class is to prevent class collaborationists and their Social Democratic flunkies in the trade unions from bottling up mass political demonstrations. These forces are determined to isolate the trade unions from the broader struggles against unemployment and inflation, including those initiated by such organizations as the National Coalition to Fight Inflation and Unemployment. Any attempts to replace trade union political action with top level

political deals at the expense of the rank and file, with reactionaries like Rockefeller, must be prevented. Top-level trade union deals already made with the racist, George Wallace, must be smashed.

Unemployment committees are beginning to emerge in a whole number of local unions and central labor bodies around which an advanced program can be developed.

- Central is the fight for jobs;
- The shorter work week;
- Rollback of prices;
- Moratorium on debts and taxes;
- Continuation of company-paid health insurance;
- Fight to strengthen and enact the Hawkins Bill for full employment. Participation in hearings on this and similar legislation by rank and file groups, local unions, central labor councils and the top bodies of the trade union movement;
- Drastic reduction of the military budget with the money earmarked for social needs;
- Through union unemployment committees, mobilization of mass labor demonstrations at city halls, state capitals and nationally.

Political action is the fight for labor's political independence. Mass demonstrations and delegations to city halls, state capitals and Washington, D.C. will help create the climate for political independence. Political strikes over elimination of city, state and federal jobs are not beyond the realm of possibility. Massive demonstrations demanding Government finance jobs for the unemployed can force the Government to become the employer of last resort at union wages.

Finally, comrades, let me conclude with the most important part of this report. There isn't the ghost of a chance of any on-going, militant, radical program getting off the ground without the direct participation and leadership of the Communist Party. This is not an abstraction. It means Communists giving personal attention and leadership to developing this program in the trade union movement. It means Communists building rank and file movements to support this program. It means Communists running for union office. It means Communists participating in union committees. As Comrade Hall and many speakers at this conference have pointed out, the objective conditions are present for tremendous gains by the working class and our Party.

What an opportunity for the Party to grow! What an opportunity

# Summary Report from Coalition and Community Work Panel

By Daniel Rubin

I think all the comrades in the workshop felt that it was a very rich discussion. There were a lot of concrete examples and a lot of probing, of digging more deeply into what it is that holds us back from involving much more of the Party to see this crisis more fully as the key link in the chain of their work, and to relate everything to it. It revolved around what we have to do as leadership coming from this meeting to help change the situation even more, and how do we go about building grass roots movements in the communities. What have we learned from our experiences? One of the slogans from the discussion might be "End double-digit unemployment and double-digit inflation and replace it with double-digit Party recruiting."

The comrades were in full agreement with the assessments in Comrade Hall's excellent report that one of the problems is the underestimation of the opportunities. We had many examples in the workshop. We have to overcome any tendencies to continue with old estimates. The estimates from before were very often wrong then, but it would be disastrous to continue them into this period. On the estimate of the economic situation, we still have not brought the whole Party to a common estimate. But the orientation is that we are in a deep-going depression and a fundamental crisis that is not going to be over in the near future. It is a matter of years. Even when you talk about an upturn you're talking about an upturn in total production. Although I tend to agree with Gus Hall's estimate that we're nowhere near the bottom and it's going to be some time even for that upturn in production. But when we speak about employment, there's going to be mass unemployment in terms of what the ruling class is out to do and doing for a long time to come as a major problem. All the bourgeois economists talk about four years for any recovery. It's going to be very slow--stagnation and so on, even in terms of production. And they make even more dire predictions in relation to unemployment.



## THE PARTY CAN BE THE PIVOTAL FORCE

Then there is the question of the estimate of ourselves and our own role that tends to hold us back. We have already been a major factor in the struggles that have taken place and we have the capability, even with our small size, to be a major factor in this whole tremendous mass upsurge. This is not fully understood in our ranks.

We all felt that the demands being put on the Party in relation to the situation are of a special character compared to other situations. That is, we are being looked to not only for ideological and political leadership, but also for organizational initiative and leadership.

In many of the coalitions, even the broadest, the Party is a pivotal force, with these new kinds of demands placed upon it. There have been other formations in the past few years in which there has also been such a pivotal role for the Party. In some ways this is the first to achieve such breadth.

We would not characterize these local or national economic coalitions as left-centers or anything of that kind. In many places they involve major sections of the trade union movement. There are a couple of areas in which the Central Labor Body is actually a part of the coalition, and many places where many trade union locals, religious groups, senior citizens groups are involved. Being a pivotal force in this situation is a tremendous opportunity. It also places special demands on our learning how to work in a way that we have not worked for some time in many places. In moving the Party more fully we've had the problem of shifting in terms of what we have been doing. Too few of our forces as yet are involved in the grassroots struggles on the issues of the daily living needs of the people. Many clubs have the problem of making that shift in their work--either of linking up what they've been doing with the crisis, or shifting their assignments completely. We have problems in doing that and also in the fight for collectivity in doing it.

## HOW DO WE HELP TO MAKE THIS TURN MORE FULLY IN THE PARTY?

There was one district which decided they were going to have an expanded meeting on this conference within a week, with an emergency sense about it. All districts have to examine this--prompt membership meetings, cadre meetings, etc. Some of them may be set up now from the standpoint of pre-Convention discussions. But we need more meetings with the content focusing on making a turn in the Party's work and the whole mobilization of the Party--linking the pre-Convention discussion with making a change in the activity.

There was a lot of emphasis on the work in the clubs. In larger districts it means singling out the key concentration clubs.

It means leadership going to those clubs. There have been different experiences. We find that if a leading comrade just goes to a club and meets with the club alone, well that's good and it's helpful in turning the outlook. But in terms of helping the concrete problems in building these grassroots movements, around what issues and organizational forms and so on--it's even more helpful if you go to the club executive first. Meet with the exec and discuss these things through in terms of what the present work of the club is and how to make that turn, and then participate in the full club meeting. Both the leading person coming in and the club leadership can present a much more concrete approach and plan. Then set a time when you're going to come back to that club to discuss what the problems have been and the successes they've had since the first meeting. In a number of districts it is possible for the leading committee to assign its members to meet with every club exec and club.

Following this meeting we need to discuss in every Party body and take a fresh look at what we have been doing. Have we really made that turn--in the center, in every district and commission of the Party? The Daily World staff? The staffs of all our publications? What more do we have to do to make it and to build in terms of the concrete tasks of the coming period, and first and foremost the question of a mass action in Washington, D.C. on April 26th and the companion actions on the West Coast.

We need to develop forms of checkup and control and examination of our experiences for the Party as a whole, nationally. We did not have time to discuss what the best methods would be. But following this intense period from now till April 26 we should provide some forms of checkup and examination. The District Conventions will of course be one form of that and the National Convention itself. But what additional forms are needed?

## THE FIGHT FOR IMMEDIATE NEEDS

On how to go about building grassroots movements, with emphasis on the fight for jobs, Comrade Meyer's report discussed the unemployed committees in trade unions and the establishment of those committees and what they could do.

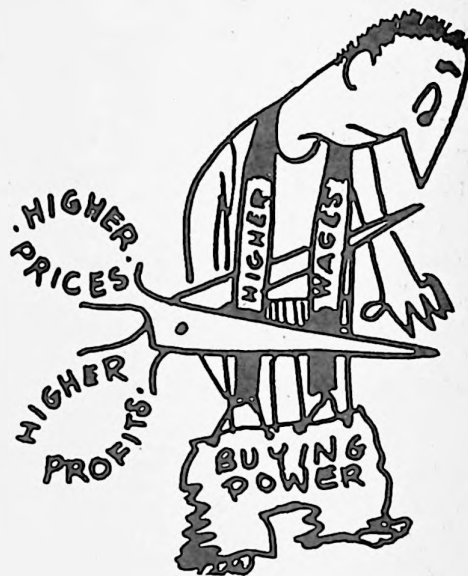
There was discussion of unemployed committees on a neighborhood basis, on the basis of the unemployment centers. There must be linking of the many levels and providing means of struggle as well as services on all the problems that unemployed workers face, not only around unemployment compensation, etc., but around the other questions of evictions, foreclosures and inability to pay debts.

Comrade Dlugin spoke of that in Camden, New Jersey. It started around a Black woman and her family who were being evicted and it led to a demonstration at the Federal Housing Authority because they were foreclosing the mortgage in that case. It involved finding the woman a place to live, but also social struggle in relation to the eviction that had already taken place, and the FHA foreclosure.

The example was given from Boston of people in communities getting together and physically preventing evictions and being successful, with the sheriff backing off and going away. This kind of thing is proper for unemployed committees to do, and then tying into the central city demonstrations, the April 26th national demonstration and the demands on city councils, state legislatures and the federal government for real solutions on the problems the people are facing.

## LINKING UP THE MASS ISSUES

There are also examples of other kinds of community issues which can be linked to the unemployment question and to this general struggle. A struggle which begins around a lack of school facilities in a given neighborhood can be linked with the need for construction jobs. We can try to involve not only every kind of community organization that exists, but workers from the unemployed centers to participate in those actions to demonstrate the unity and interconnection. Same thing in the housing struggles: Metropolitan Council on Housing takes lobbies to Albany around demands concerning rent control. It's a big mass organization. Can we link that with some of the unemployed? In some of these busloads of workers can there be unemployed workers who say part of the answer is public housing construction to help force down rents, etc.



Comrade Tyner made the point that in many of the large centers we do have connections with many of the mass formations in the neighborhoods. We have to find a way to relate those to the Coalitions. Doing that is a two-way street. They will add a grass roots character to those city-wide coalitions, and they will gain renewed vigor by seeing that they are not all alone in trying to solve the tremendous problems in their own neighborhoods. There are many such formations, including Youth United for Jobs that need to be built more widely and linked with the city coalitions. We can fight for centers for this kind of work. Yes, I think we are for our bookstores and centers working in this way and advertising their services and what they can do. But there has to be broader forms and outlets also that can serve the needs of the whole movement. There may be special places for this purpose, like a storefront across the street from an unemployment center, or it could be a union hall. There are some examples already of union halls opening their doors more widely for this purpose. I know in my neighborhood a Catholic church has been used for some time as a center for housing work. Incidentally, the comrades say there's a qualitative change in the last period. More people are coming in now with more problems, a lot sharper. There is also much greater willingness to engage in social struggle to do something about it, just volunteering. You

don't have to make any great effort now to get them to be part of it.

There was discussion about a certain narrowness in work which holds back our approach to grassroots building. Very often we have an administrative approach to other mass organizations. We go and ask them to do a very specific thing--affiliate to a city coalition or take a certain number of petitions or something else without real give and take as to the politics or outlook and the relationship of their organization--what it's doing and their problems and trying to involve them in a much fuller way in the activity. Too often we operate in ways to hug these things to ourselves for fear that this or that secondary mistake is going to be made and then the movement lacks cadre, etc., because we haven't worked in such a way as to draw in these forces.



## UNITY IN STRUGGLE AGAINST RACISM

We discussed the fight for unity. This side of the discussion could have been a lot stronger from the standpoint that the heart of the struggle for Black-white unity is unity of the specially oppressed peoples with the white working class people and so on. We discussed several aspects.

Special demands and approaches are needed on a very nitty-gritty level. We find a pattern in the Black community and the communities that have the highest rates of unemployment of no unemployment compensation offices. There is no way to reach out to make known the benefits. Demands for such offices are necessary. There are special demands in every aspect of the problem, which Comrade Meyers and others have already presented.

There are specific instances of racism that have to be tackled in the building of these movements. But we also have to see that building a united struggle around given issues is also tackling racism on a very positive footing.

We had some examples of this given in the construction industry among carpenters, etc. Some progress has been made in their response to seeing the need for unity now in a way they didn't see before, and to reject racism.

Then there was the example around a school situation where there was an attempt to split the parents and to say, "Well, the problems of this school are that there are too many Puerto Rican people." How do we answer this? You have to tackle this question frontally

as such, but part of the answer is: what are the needs of this school? Develop a program in relation to that school on the basis of what will meet the needs of all sectors. The more we put that forward and unite in joint struggle on those demands, the bigger our contribution will be to the fight against racism.

## BUILDING OF TRADE UNION AND COMMUNITY FORCES

Another approach has been to gather together a conference of neighborhood organizations--a block club, a civic association, the PTAs, the senior citizens groups that exist in almost every community. Queens had a conference recently. They made a list of 75 prominent trade unionists who live in that area and they worked to try to get them there and with some success on the basis of what the needs of this community are and how the crisis is affecting this community. They developed an action program in relation to demands and activities in the neighborhood, demands on the local council people, legislators and congress people for the measures needed to solve the crisis generally, pointing the finger particularly at the monopolies which are in that community.

We had some discussion on the question of the interconnection of this work on grass-roots levels in communities and trade union work in general. And, of course, we have to work at this from both sides.

**NO TAXES  
ON  
FAMILY INCOMES  
UNDER \$25,000!**

These coalitions that we're helping to build have a big role, and very often they find ways to open up the situation from within the labor movement. We've had instances where a union would say they did not think they could be in just the trade union formation on these issues because the local AFL-CIO council would see it as competition. But if they were invited to participate in a coalition which includes church, senior citizens, etc., they could in that way play a role in reaching other labor forces. We have to work from both these angles and sides. It gives us some new avenues into the labor movement.

At the same time, as Comrade Meyers has indicated, we want to work within the labor movement to relate rank and file groups, unemployment committees, the whole local to these coalitions, to broaden their perspective and overcome tendencies of pessimism which arise when workers fight alone.

Take the question Comrade Meyers raised about a fighting spirit in the unions around layoffs and the question of staying in the plant until a solution is found. Community support for this becomes very important. If you can get a whole coalition that is going to say, "A solution must be found," and they support the workers, then winning the fight becomes much more achievable in everyone's mind.

In many areas there are other formations developing and some of them are very positive and broad. We want the Party involved in all these positive formations. And we want the coalitions involved



in some working relations with all these formations.

But there's a question about the special contributions these coalitions make in content. Briefly, the features of their content that are special include a clear-cut anti-monopoly concept, the role of labor and the working class, Black-white unity and special approaches, mass action.

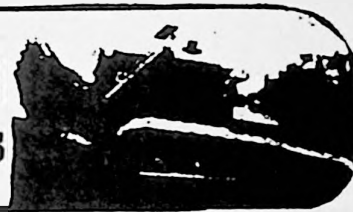
In this tremendous upsurge that is taking place there must be vehicles that are very broad. I believe these coalitions can be, and in many places already are very broad vehicles that inject this kind of special content. We have to view them as not just momentary coalitions which are going to be replaced and merged with other broader developments. In some cases they can be merged and should be on the basis of preserving this special content being the common outlook. But where there isn't that kind of content, their special kind of contribution is needed. I want to stress that it can have this kind of content and it can be extremely broad and involve all these sectors of the people's movement.

There are certain tendencies already present (and I believe they are going to grow) that with the emergence of these other activities and formations, to let go of the building of these coalitions or feel that they can only be built very narrowly. They can be built broadly but with advanced content.

## SPECIFIC TASKS

The March 1-2, Washington, D.C. meeting and legislative conference was discussed.

**DETENTE  
means jobs**



In relation to April 26th we now have to shift into really high gear in terms of the mobilization of the whole Party and from there the whole people's movement, for a big action on the 26th.

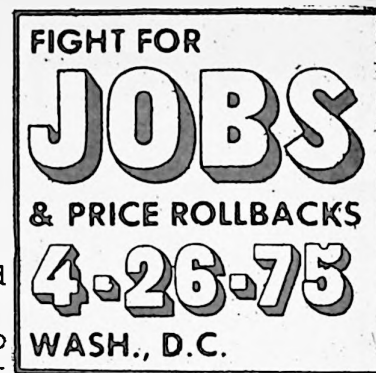
Of course there is the question of how to do this in such a way that it helps build the grassroots and does not pull away from it. We have to think this through. When you talk about big numbers going to Washington the endorsements are very important, but we know that will not do it alone. And we know that the formation of a committee for April 26th -- a top level committee adding forces to the coalition has to be done. But that alone also won't do it.

You cannot turn out big numbers without going down below into each neighborhood and building on a neighborhood basis, including in these various organizations that endorse--using that, of course, as an opening. Take CLUW, they have a position nationally for the April 26th Rally that they adopted in St. Louis. But without going into the chapters down below using that endorsement there will not be any turnout from that source or others.

One of the ideas that was discussed was that we must begin,

alongside of getting these endorsements and committees, we have to sign up people for buses and payment of money.

In relation to the unemployed--to work at unemployed centers in an organized way requires a plan on a Party district level, a plan of which club is going to work in relation to which centers and how to bring the coalition into doing this kind of work. We and others should actually sign up unemployed workers for a dollar or two for a bus, and then with a list of 50 unemployed workers who have signed up to go to Washington to protest their conditions and demand some real answers, go to a trade union, to a church group, to a community group and ask for the balance. That is the way to raise money rather than general appeals for funds.



The same should be done in relation to youth and the special problems of youth unemployment. We discussed with Comrade Steele the idea of these April 4th anti-racism actions. Every young person who turns out for that should be sold a ticket on a bus for 50¢ or \$1, or whatever it is to go to Washington April 26 and then approach organizations for the balance.

At least in the nearby areas, every single Party club should work in such a way in their neighborhood or in relation to their shop--that they are going to take the aim of one or more buses, not alone of course because we realize that we cannot do this job and get a big turnout alone, unless we move these other kinds of forces.

Since the Party conference the Industrial Union Department (IUD) of the AFL-CIO has called a "Rally For Jobs" in Kennedy Stadium, Washington, D.C., on April 26th at 1:00 PM. That action represents a break within the labor movement of major proportions as Meany has continued to publicly oppose such a mass action. The IUD includes the most important industrial unions within the AFL-CIO.

Undoubtedly, the IUD responded to the many pressures from below in reversing its earlier opposition to such an action. This pressure includes a generally high level and rising militancy of workers, expressed in thousands of small ways in the shops and at union meetings, over the economic situation, which reflects the militancy and the turnout of 10,000 auto workers, 2,000 from District 65, glass workers, teamsters, etc., in Washington, D.C., tens of thousands of construction workers in a whole series of demonstrations, AFL-CIO city and state conferences and rallies, etc.

It also reflects the growing activity and strength of the National Coalition to Fight Inflation and Unemployment (NCFIU) and its many affiliates, which has been projecting and working for

# March on Washington!

a mass action in Washington on April 26th ever since last December.

## For Jobs

As with all such developments they basically result from rank and file pressures in which leadership responds to some extent, representing an historic breakthrough which sets in motion new levels of struggle.

The leadership, having gone this far, is under pressure to limit the development by keeping it to a rally that just fills Kennedy Stadium--55,000 people--keeping the whole action relatively quiet. It can also be limited by the type of speakers invited and the content of speeches and demands.

But the potential is for the biggest, most militant trade union initiated expression in a single city in the history of the country.

The crucial question in guaranteeing that character is the turnout--that there be 55,000 on up outside the stadium, as well as inside. That will show the country the mood of the workers and will give more content to the demands than most of the speeches will.

The progressive forces have to avoid two tendencies. One is to feel that the action will be of little importance on grounds the IUD has taken it over with speakers, demands and a format little better than what Meany would do. This will lead to passivity and therefore a failure to achieve the fullest potential which will come mainly from a turnout way beyond what the IUD presently plans. The other is that it will be a very good action, but there is little for the progressive forces to do since the IUD has great resources--it is in their hands and they will fill the stadium. This position also leads to passivity.

It is already clear that in some places the resources of the IUD will not be used at all to assure any turnout without the progressive forces playing a conscious role. Resolutions of endorsement are necessary in every local, whether IUD or not, calling on central labor bodies and internationals to endorse and help guarantee attendance.

Concrete goals for attendance for each shop and union, backed up by payment for transportation from union treasuries, collections, etc. with shop meetings and shop

# April 26<sup>th</sup>

stewards signing up those going are among the necessary methods.

Similarly, goals are needed city by city, neighborhood by neighborhood, of trade unionists, unemployed, youth assurances of the role of Black, Puerto Rican and other specially oppressed communities, women, etc.

In Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington State there will be companion actions, organized by NCFIU-related coalitions and additional labor and community forces on April 26th.

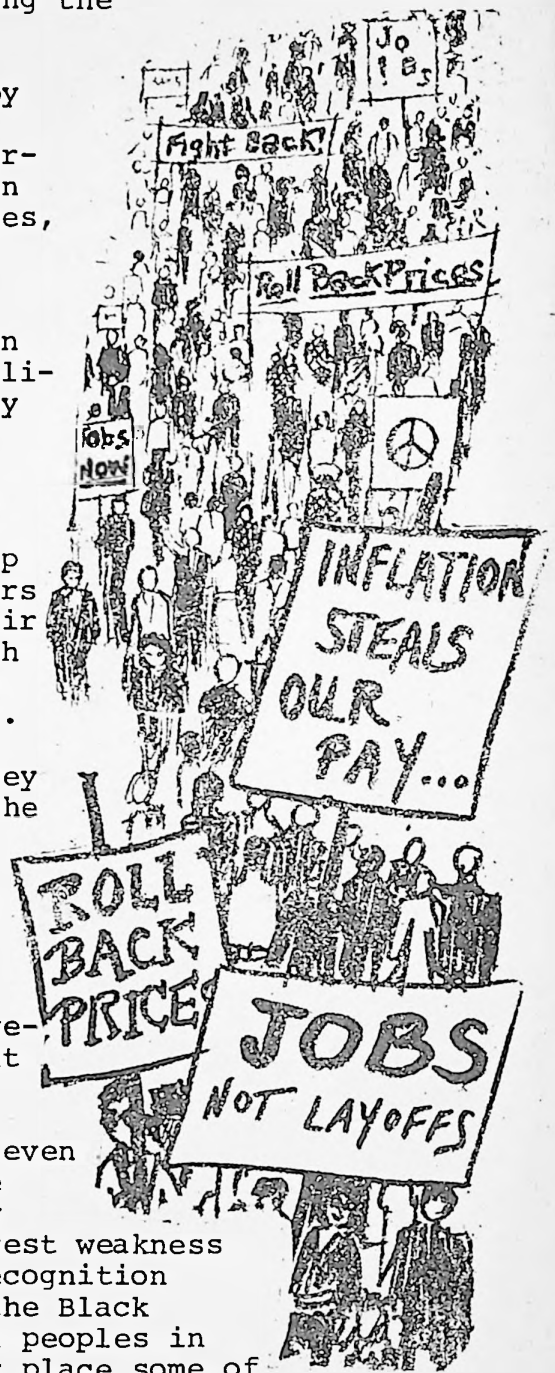
In addition, special contributions will be made by progressive forces, including the NCFIU on both the leadership level and below, around demands, speakers etc. This will be done by bringing their own contingents on their own buses, with their own signs and banners and through use of their own leaflets, posters, etc.

The coalition of New York-New Jersey unions will march to the stadium from the capital building, starting about noon. The NCFIU is urging its affiliates to participate in that march as a distinct contingent.

With respect to issues, it is expected the IUD approach will be relatively weak on the shorter work week without reduction in pay and on massive public works. It will not call for expanding trade with socialist countries and may even reflect protectionist approaches of the AFL-CIO. It will be silent on military spending in Southeast Asia and the biggest weakness will be avoidance and silence on the recognition of the special situation and needs of the Black community and other specially oppressed peoples in the crisis. One or another speaker may place some of the blame for the situation on the Arab peoples and on undocumented workers.

Special materials of the progressive forces should take all of this into account. It will be necessary to guarantee the widest distribution of special issues of our press at all buses and trains as they leave and at the demonstration in Washington and companion actions on the West Coast.

In relation to the Daily World, building the Daily World, the



the League and the Party, there was a strong feeling in the workshop that we must tie this in because there are these tremendous mass opportunities and tremendous demands on the Party and Party cadre. We could become so immersed in running with these mass developments that instead of taking advantage of the opportunity for Party, press and League to grow very rapidly in this situation there will be a weakening of that effort. We have had some such past experiences. Without a conscious approach, under the pressure of mass involvement building can get lost.

Therefore, we should be considering the earliest launching of a real Party recruiting drive. While we did not get a chance to discuss it out, we should at least have, between now and the Convention, a concept of an enrollment of Party membership in honor of the Convention and that the Convention launches a major recruiting drive.

At the end of the meeting one comrade, I think the only one in the workshop who did not get a chance to speak, drew up a little flyer for mass distribution that says: "Join the anti-crisis Party-- the Communist Party. If you would like some more information about the Communist Party's anti-crisis program of action, fill out the coupon, etc...." That was the spirit of the workshop.

There was also a proposal that our press provide service information on benefits for the unemployed.

In the workshop I reported more extensively on legislation in Congress and our approach to this type of struggle.

In brief, we look for bills to be introduced in Congress and at state and city levels that can be focal points for mass mobilization. To be that, they have to offer significant relief for the plight of the people or it will be impossible to get enthusiasm for a mass fight for them. If they are token measures that are about to be passed just through inner-parliamentary maneuvering they will not serve this purpose. They must have an advanced character, but be bills which masses feel can be won with struggle.

What seemed pretty good back in September by way of legislation in the hopper, can not excite anyone now as a significant solution.

We also cannot be in the position in estimating legislation of depending on who spoke to whom and got the inside story. At present, there are no measures in Congress that we can call advanced measures responding to the moment. If the Hawkins Bill provided for millions of jobs immediately on passage, which it still does not, it might be in this category. Therefore, it deserves support, but only rather critical support.

In Maine and Massachusetts youth employment bills have been introduced that are advanced and around which a people's movement of mass pressure can be built. That still has to be done with respect to Congress and the other states.

# New Possibilities for the Struggle Against Racism in the Current Economic Crisis

BY ROSCOE PROCTOR

I want to elaborate on some of the concepts that were put forth in the main report and others that have come out in the discussion.

In general, the net effect of the problems that the Black community are confronting now flow from what we have called the special oppression of Black and other nationally oppressed people in this country. In this economic crisis, the nationally oppressed communities are in the front lines. They have the greatest unemployment and therefore all their problems are much greater and much sharper--problems of mortgage payments, of having utilities shut off, of having difficulty feeding their families. These problems hit the Black and Brown communities much faster and much sooner.

We're talking about the possibility of an overall official 10% unemployment rate. That would not be a big new development in the Black and Brown communities. That's something these communities have been faced with for some time, even during the periods of so-called full employment. However, we're not talking about that kind of figure in the Black or Brown communities anymore when we discuss this particular period. I think that 4-4.5% has pretty much become accepted as a normal rate of unemployment now by the ruling class of this society. This statistic automatically means that the unemployment rate is up around 10% in the Black and Brown communities. So these communities started with that rate of joblessness when this new wave of unemployment and difficulty in making ends meet came on the American scene in the special way we're talking about today. Officially, the government is admitting that unemployment among Black youth is 41%. They also say that officially it is 46% in Philadelphia.

All of the cutbacks that have been instituted at the present time are coming on top of this situation. There are no jobs, recreation facilities are being cut back, there is no perspective and no outlet for the type of built-up emotions that the young people are experiencing. The activities of gangs are beginning to pick up. A dozen killings, I understand, have taken place already among the young people fighting each other in Philadelphia this year. That's the way oppressed people tend to turn, towards fighting each other if the anger and frustration is not directed outward at times like this.

I think something like 41% of Black people were trying to buy homes when the bottom fell out, so to speak. The number of mortgage foreclosures are much higher in the Black community. I understand also that the collection agency business is booming because the companies turn over their so-called bad debts to them. Here

in New York every time people get a past-due, second-month utility bill they get threatened with having their utilities turned off unless they pay the full amount by a specified date.

The criminal practice of the poor being forced to pay more for things is more true now than ever before. In fact, you almost have to put on an attitude before you enter the store in order to get halfway decent treatment. The supermarkets don't want to give receipts for the groceries purchased; the cash registers (they maintain) are not working. Additional price stickers are pasted one on top of the other to raise the prices at will.

The number of people on Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) has decreased during this period. There has been considerable talk about decreasing the number of families receiving aid. But I don't think this is the complete answer to what is actually happening. I know that all of the agencies (public and social welfare) are being cut back on their personnel and this is cutting back all the way down the line as far as services are concerned. Big delays are taking place in sending out checks to people on the program.

This points up the sharpening of another problem that the Black community has always suffered from--institutionalized racism. Most of these agencies' racist practices are bourgeois-led and directed. But we have a new situation now that requires a considerable amount of study because here we're dealing with institutions that are led by working class forces--the unions. The problem is the disproportionate discharging of minorities, women and young workers through union seniority systems, which have a built-in racism. It is a problem we have to really grapple with in trying to work out a proper approach, a correct approach to the problems that flow from racism in lay-offs, and the correct approach to uniting the class. These questions have to be raised within the context of the new situation in which we are living and working.



Comrade Hall raised the question this morning of the crisis opening up deeper thinking among workers and the people generally and that this new situation cannot be dealt with in a routine fashion. The question of making headway on the front of bringing together the problems that the working class as a whole confront, and dealing with the problem of racism is also at a new point. We have reached that point where things are in flux. The economic situation is having a real psychological impact upon people generally, and more and more of them are beginning to look for answers to problems that are relatively new to them.

For instance, there is the problem of white workers now

running out of unemployment insurance and other benefits and being forced to go on welfare. This kind of experience will do a great deal to modify some white workers' thinking, now that they are being forced to go on welfare; concepts like people cheat on welfare, that Black and other nationally oppressed people on welfare are lazy and don't want to work, etc.

It is being said that some people don't accept the estimate being made by the Party and the Party leadership concerning this period. However, in my opinion to understand and to grasp what is new about this period is the key to our ability to really join the struggles of race and class so that both movements go forward. It calls for some thorough probing and being tactful in our projections. The question is how to move both movements forward simultaneously and weld unity of the class.

We have to project programs in such a way that we open the possibility of moving racist-minded white workers forward on the issue being raised, forcing them to give up their backwardness on the race question because they see the necessity for doing so in order to accomplish what they're striving for. I don't think we can really take advantage of this new situation unless we see this clearly. It is no simple matter. We have to figure out how to get workers' struggles together, rather than permit confrontation. We have to work in such a way as to keep communication and exchange open and growing among working people and to make progress simultaneously.

We have to give a considerable amount of thought to the concept that we cannot take for granted that we are going to move in a progressive direction. The mood of the people is critical. They are looking for something or someone to blame and jump on for the crisis conditions they are faced with. While conditions are ripe for building unity in struggle, they are also ripe for the exploitation of existing prejudices and the creation of false scapegoats. Certain personalities within the federal government and the ultra-right are very busy fanning dissension favoring the latter.

Finally, Comrade Hall pointed out in his report that whereas in the 30's the trade unions were the last group to get into the struggle, today organized labor is up front in the struggle. And whereas in the 30's people did not automatically look to the government to do something about their problems, today that situation has changed. These changed attitudes and level of participation flow directly from not only the economic situation, but also the agitation, propaganda, experiences and organizational successes since the 30's, and the effect upon the mass consciousness.

We should utilize the current economic crisis and the new mood and motion on the part of the working people now being generated as a result of the rapid shift in their economic situation to develop in the mass consciousness the notion that every person able and willing to work is entitled to a job providing a decent U.S. standard of living.

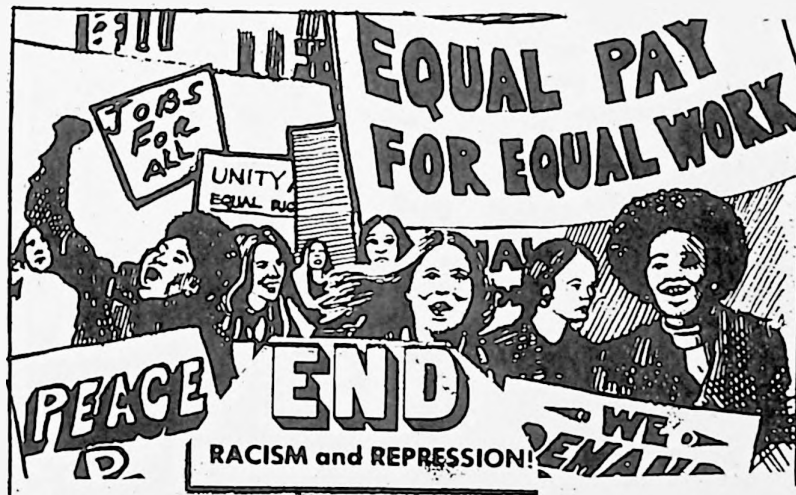


If we can move in the direction of establishing the concept that all people have a right to a job I think we can make tremendous progress in the whole struggle against racism. If we can achieve this we can take away from the monopolies their main weapon, used by the ruling class to whip up racist divisions and negative competition within the working class.

The basis of national oppression is economic--profits. The basis of economic competition among workers is the struggle for jobs, the maintenance of a job, and the desire of each particular worker to guarantee that he or she will have a job in periods of economic downturn and higher-than-usual job scarcity.

A mass consciousness that holds that every worker is entitled to a job will help to undermine inner-working class competition, the kind which is carried out in a selfish fashion. A mass consciousness which adopts the premise that there must be jobs for everyone will help to direct the main energy of the workers toward making the companies and the government live up to their obligation to all working people. Moreover, this demand is a revolutionary one in that it strikes at the very heart of the inherent inability of the capitalist system to fully satisfy the economic needs of the working people.

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cont. from page 9

to develop new Communist cadre! This crisis has created a much higher level of class and socialist consciousness among workers. Right-wing social democrats are very concerned that "this crisis is going to help the Communists." Well, I don't think we should disappoint them in their panic. Let's put the building of the Party at the center of all our work! Let's refine and apply our policy of industrial concentration until we have Party clubs in every mine, mill and factory in the country and in every working class community. The time is ripe!

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## Remarks of New York State Chairperson

Jarvis Tyner (New York)

I think Comrade Hall's report was very good and that this meeting is a very necessary one for the Party.

The decisive ingredient in turning from a routine approach which we have had in our work is the example set by the leadership of the district. At least that's definitely true here in New York. But I think it would generally apply that the leadership, through its example and a certain spirit it suggests, can show what is possible in this period. I think that the membership of the Party will respond. I would also say that if actual examples from the leadership aren't provided then you will not get the response on the level that this crisis demands.

First of all, in the area of rank and file trade union work there is a new enthusiasm among trade unionists in the Party because the years of work around rank and file developments of various kinds are beginning to pay off in this new situation.

For example, in Tarrytown, General Motors has sent word all the way from Detroit that they're going to carry on quite a campaign to block Communist leadership in that plant. They feel the Communists can take over that plant. This is only an example of what can indeed happen in this present period. We should be bold in respect to defining the decisive factor (for example) in comparing the trade union movements in the U.S., France and Italy. It's the absence of Communist leadership in the trade union movement in the U.S. In this period the Party can emerge leading a large section of the trade union movement in this country, if we work properly.

I would like to emphasize that leadership by example is most important. We had almost lost the Harlem Center here in New York and when the new leadership took over one of our first steps was to organize to save the Center. We not only saved it, but have now begun the process of rebuilding the Party in Harlem. We have a new club, some new and important people have come back into the Party in Harlem. We've built a Harlem section. It's not quite complete yet, but we're developing it. We have a new director for the Center and we have a Harlem organizer for the Party--two different people--not one as we had before. There's a new enthusiasm in the entire Party about what we can develop there and I think we're going to see great things happening. Older comrades who have been working there for years feel it's a whole new ballgame now and we're really going to be able to move forward.

It took a certain initiative and struggle to create the spirit, the atmosphere and the positive attitude to realize this. But the initiative on the part of the leadership was the most decisive factor.

For example, take the unemployment struggle. The most dramatic example we have is the development of the Youth United for Jobs. We have two branches of YUJ in New York. Comrades, we ought to build this organization throughout the entire country. As soon as it's formed it immediately doubles the number of youth that come around the League and the Party. The process of coming into the League has been very rapid and natural. It has also enhanced our base among Black and Puerto Rican youth very quickly. Rather than being more work for us, it has brought more cadre around to carry out work, that have potential to become mass leaders. There is already a committee working on the possibility of building this form in the Bronx.

YUJ is now working on the proposal for an April 4th Youth March for Jobs through Harlem. By building this Committee and contact with youth organizations throughout the city, such a March could have thousands participating. This is possible because the groundwork for it has already been laid through their contacts.

On the legislative front, I think the Party is gearing itself very much towards the work of the Coalition. Many legislators have been very favorable toward working on and accepting proposals--in many instances insisting on legislative proposals. Often that pragmatism creeps in though and they don't want legislation that "you can't win," which is a left-over notion that the way to get legislation passed is through compromise. We have to change that kind of thinking. We have to convince people that the way to pass legislation is by people's struggles and that we have to project proposals for legislation that the people feel they can back and fight for. That's why we have to fight for the more advanced type of legislation and create a movement around it. If you walk in demanding chicken-feed you'll get just that and most likely less. So we have to go in with substance. But convincing some of our friends in the legislature in the city and state that this is a fact is not an easy battle, much less in Washington.

One of the problems around the Coalition is the question that Gus Hall posed--developing a grassroots base to the Coalition. This seems to me the most decisive thing we have to work for. We have comrades in New York who are active on many fronts. The more I learn, the more I realize how vast this is. But the work is not coordinated. Often they don't work collectively. There's good individual work being done, but individual work is limited in scope, in importance and in its impact.

On the question of affiliation, the people working in housing or in a rank and file organization should work to convince their organization to affiliate with the citywide coalition around inflation and jobs. If we could just plug into the Coalition 3 or 4 of the major mass movements we are in this would immediately give the coalition a grassroots base. This would make the Coalition the largest and most community-based movement in New York City. Achieving this means giving a new quality to our work. If these organizations don't plug into the citywide Coalition, they're really not talking crisis. They're really not talking about what's necessary to carry on a successful struggle today.

A representative of the Coalition should be invited to speak to the community organizations to raise the question of affiliation.

Leadership by initiative and example is very important. For example, on the Middle East I think we've been very slow in general in responding to the dangers of war. One of the things we've done is to initiate a demonstration at the United Nations around this question, tying in also the question of Indochina. Rather than deemphasizing the peace question during this period it is necessary to again elevate it. It can be given a new quality because of the economic situation that exists now. A growing majority in this country are beginning to see that the money spent for the military budget and therefore for policies of aggression, is to the direct detriment of their standard of living and day-to-day life.

People are more and more beginning to see this and it has an effect on the growing anti-imperialist consciousness among masses of people. It gives new possibilities for accelerating the struggle on the peace and anti-imperialist front. The response of the New York comrades reflects what's happening among the masses. There is a tremendous enthusiasm over the proposal to initiate a demonstration on the 27th around the Middle East, Indochina, the war budget and of course unemployment and other issues.

As far as the leadership of the New York State Party is concerned this is not a routine period. Therefore, no questions, not even the smallest proposal, action or whatever, can be routine either. For example, our May Day proposal this year is not going to be for the usual rally, which is generally a gathering of about one thousand participants. This year, perhaps it will be based on the struggle for jobs, against unemployment and inflation and calling for people's unity in the fight against the monopolies. This should be the ringing theme. We're calling for a May Day March this year with a view toward tripling the number of people

who usually attend May Day demonstrations--perhaps even more. Working properly, we could probably bring out five thousand people to Union Square this year. I think this is possible and that's looking at it in a new way.

Although this period means that everybody is going to have to do more work, I don't think it means just that. I think it is also a period in which we can change the quality of our work.

Take the individualist approach to work. The fight to elevate collectivity of the Party and collective methods of work is going to be a decisive one in this particular period. For example, one of the things we're talking about now in Harlem is that people are being evicted from apartments, their utilities and heat are being cut off. We're talking about how to develop a movement that can fight against evictions and cut-offs, a movement out of the Center around these issues.

We've still got whole sections of that act as though they are a separate Party. On mass work questions, or in their neighborhoods, they act like they're separate parties. They don't want to plug into the leadership or to feel responsible to the Party as a whole. The fight for collectivity means that such attitudes have to go. They won't do in this period. If we're going to realize our strategy and goals we'll have to drop such attitudes. This is what is meant by a new quality of work.

Finally, united front means not just that we have to do more work. It means also that we bring in other forces. If we build a movement around unemployment, like the experience of Youth United for Jobs, that means there is a new source of cadre who can manage offices and many other jobs. Although this does mean that we have to work harder too. Without the united front we cannot realize our strategy.

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### A CORRECTION

The article, "For a League of Mass Youth Action" (page 8) in the February 1975 issue of Party Affairs contained a very unfortunate omission, the name of the author. This evaluation of the Third National YWLL Convention was presented to the Political Committee by Comrade Roque Ristorucci, National Executive Secretary of the League, as a result of collective discussions in the newly elected staff of the national YWLL. We deeply regret this error.

--The Editor

# Remarks of National Women's Commission Chairperson

By Alva Buxenbaum (New York)

I think that the discussion is stimulating and exciting. It means that there's a new level of collectivity in our Party work. And that's essential. This meeting signals that new level of collectivity.

I very quickly want to go into two main things: 1) The effects of the crisis on all women's organizations and movements which has led to the growth and the influence of working class women; 2) New working class forms of organization for women. But I don't want to go into the whole women's movement.

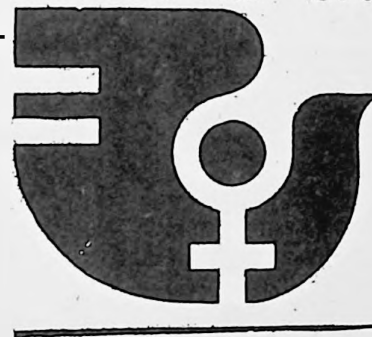
The new organizations are the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), (I will discuss some of our experiences with CLUW and how to strengthen our work with it), and the Women for Racial and Economic Equality (WREE), which up to now is a New York organization, but with movement and the beginnings of formation in other cities.

In the Women's Commission and in the Party generally there have been problems concerning relationship to these two organizations. For instance, which do we help build? Do we put more emphasis on this or that? The answer is that we help build both. We should talk in terms of strengthening the working class movement through both because they both have similar, but also different features.

CLUW is a women's trade union organization. It is one that includes various unions and its purpose is to organize trade union women. It is not an organization that does not include trade union women. It does work to organize the unorganized, but through the trade union movement. This is important because there has been confusion on this in the districts. Therefore, we see CLUW as a trade union organization.

In relation to WREE, it is a more advanced form in several ways. 1) It is an avowedly anti-monopoly form, 2) it is an anti-racist form, 3) it has certain key elements to it that are different from CLUW in that CLUW is mainly reflective of the trade union movement and not of the movement outside of that, 4) WREE's aim in its composition is to include organized and unorganized women, unemployed and housewives, retirees and senior citizens, welfare recipients, professional workers, and those middle class women whose

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interests and outlook coincide with WREE, 5) it seeks primarily to reach those women who are active, but don't yet see themselves as part of the women's movement, 6) it attempts to build unity around the program which is expressed in the Women's Bill of Rights. It is important to understand this.

I want to talk a little bit about the Party's work in relation to WREE. The main problem has been in understanding the relationship between CLUW and WREE. I think the Commission had this problem at first. But as things developed we began to become clearer on it and we now see that our efforts should be to help build both. But in districts there is still confusion. Time and again I've come across the pitting of one against the other. "Do we work to build CLUW? To build WREE? If we're going to assign forces to CLUW how are we going to assign them to WREE? I say we must do both.

But in doing so we must have this approach to assignments. Number one, we have to assign women to build the women's organization (WREE). We can't talk in the abstract because women are an essential section of the working class, and because of their relationship to the community, to trade unions and to national liberation struggles. Like youth, women are a very important section of the working class, and in this time of tremendous upsurge and possibilities it is important that there be special forms of organization in relation to them.

I want to speak about how to work. The role of the Party caucus has been essential to guarantee the building of CLUW. In those areas where Party caucuses have been formed there's no question that the work in CLUW has been significantly different. The starting point has been confidence in our policy--in terms of industrial concentration, of winning the working class to class struggle--but fighting for this by preparing ahead of time to go in with a specific outlook and a specific approach, a unified approach toward winning on certain questions.

As a result of this, at the last meeting of the National Coordinating Committee of CLUW the following things were fought for and won by our comrades. I'd like to list them because they are important examples of how to relate the economic crisis to trade union women and class struggle.

1. Danny mentioned the fact that the NCC of CLUW endorsed April 26th. Again, I want to point out that these specific things were won based on collective work. This means that in local areas we fight to make sure CLUW chapters endorse April 26th; that the coalitions go to CLUW chapters and say, "We understand you have endorsed it nationally. Therefore...."
2. CLUW endorsed the March 8th International Women's Day actions to initiate special struggle for jobs, using this date as a kickoff. This is an official position of the National CLUW, so that March 8th can also be that kind of focal point.
3. CLUW calls for local and national hearings for April on the

economic crisis. We should build them toward April 26th, which is endorsed by CLUW.

4. CLUW has endorsed the national march and lobby demonstration on Washington by women, including all trade unionists, to take place before mid-June. The exact date has not yet been set. We work toward building that in every area.

5. With regard to certain economic demands that were adopted at the NCC meeting, things we must concentrate on are more jobs, by emergency legislation if necessary. We had a big discussion on the question of seniority and how to handle it. The answer was--no layoffs and unemployment insurance for first-time job seekers. Our fight to end discrimination in seniority has to be placed in relation to the fight for more jobs. We can't win it any other way. We have to fight to eliminate layoffs. But first the discussion was--well, if there are layoffs we should guarantee that women are not discriminated against. But we said--no, that's a wrong approach. We say: No layoffs (and we fight to keep those jobs); unemployment compensation for first job seekers; two-thirds of the wage on previous jobs; rollback of prices and no wage controls; actively seek, in the endorsements of the labor movement, for the above demands. These are official positions of CLUW. A resolution on Chile will also be presented. If you want to know how to organize around CLUW, this is the way.

But this means the assignment of cadre--assignment of cadre to help build both CLUW and WREE. I want to give you an example of what we've done in New York. We have two leading comrades--both trade unionists, both members of WREE, both members of CLUW. One is responsible for work to build CLUW and for developing the Party caucus. The other is responsible for work to build WREE. These assignments are not separate, they are related. We are encouraging districts to take this approach and to assign cadre to both.

All trade union women comrades should be members of CLUW, whether or not that is their main assignment. CLUW is a national women's trade union caucus, and membership for all eligible comrades is part of industrial concentration. However, work in building CLUW is also a responsibility of male trade union comrades in whatever shops it is possible, and of the national trade union commission and leading trade union comrades in districts.

In terms of WREE, the Women's Bill of Rights has been a key link to CLUW and its ability to work with CLUW. Wherever the Women's Bill of Rights has been presented it has been very well received. Each district must work out the assignment of cadre to build WREE, and part of this cadre should be women trade unionists--Black, Brown and white. If that is not possible, the cadre must include nationally oppressed women in leading positions in WREE.

WREE went to Albany with the intent of getting the women legislators who were introducing the Equal Rights Amendment to put on the record that since the intent of the Amendment is to assure



# Summary Remarks

By Gus Hall

In general I agree with all the comrades that this meeting has turned into a very important conference of the Party. And one of the reasons for it is that it takes place at a moment when the Party already has a high level of activity and experience. And secondly, it takes place at a moment when we can raise the activity to a much higher level. We can do this very quickly. The conference reflected that moment very well.

Listening to the discussion of the comrades, we in the Political Committee obviously do not have all of the information. Secondly, our press does not cover all of the activities. This is a problem that we have to discuss with the districts and the comrades on the paper. But the basic assessment of our weaknesses remains valid and basically correct.

Comrade Dennis and others who thought the report did not evaluate the developments in the trade union movement highly enough are correct. We must see these activities as an historic break with past practices. Their full significance comes from the fact that it is a break with the past. The same is true of the criticism that I didn't say enough about the role of Communists in these developments. This is so important because first of all it shows the possibilities that are present. Wherever comrades move it is really possible to change the nature of the actions, the programs, the size. Therefore, we should have given it more emphasis.

I like Comrade Tyner's expression when he said, "We must find ways of plugging in all struggles and movements into the crisis question." I think that expresses a very important thought and something that we ought to think about. It gets away from the idea that it is an additional task. I think "plugging in" is a good phrase, a modern phrase. On connecting, I think yesterday's Daily World headline is an example of how to plug in the struggle on the trade bill and detente into the crisis. I think it is

excellent and the Daily World and People's World don't always do that. But I think that's a headline that no other paper will have. At the same time it has a mass appeal, and it is plugged into the crisis.

The Conference Against the Military Budget plugs in the struggle for peace with the crisis. The struggle for peace takes on a little different character now. It must take on, in a new way, opposition to the military budget. And that, of course, plugs into the crisis and the economic questions. I would say generally that no matter what issue we discuss one of the most available areas of resources is the military budget. It is the most available area of resources for other needs. Generally, the country is ready to accept that idea.

I want to say a further word about what was wrong with the November 16 actions. I think the central weakness was that we did not emphasize the need for local actions before the day of nationwide protest, and after. That was the big weakness. This resulted in a couple of things. As a consequence the local committees were left treading water. This almost always happens when you project something months away. Secondly, it left a kind of vacuum in many areas, for instance, in California. When you have a vacuum that's when the ultra-left moves in and where they have their successes. I want to use this to emphasize that question. Had we given the proper attention to the question of local actions following the national day on November 16--all kinds of actions, but especially state legislature, city councils, etc.--I think we would be on a different level now. The ultra-left has successes only where there is a vacuum. In the trade union panel Comrade Tyner had a useful expression on the attitude towards these ultra-left organizations. Number one, you don't underestimate their nastiness, but also you shouldn't overestimate their ability to go very far. They can disrupt; they're like flies; they bother you and you've got to swat them down. But they're not going to go far because of their politics and programs. But, as I said, the best antidote for the ultra-left is our correct program, and a policy of a continuous series of militant actions. That's the best antidote. Otherwise there will be a vacuum and that's where they move in.

One of the good things about this kind of meeting is the fact that so many concrete ideas come up. I think generally that the content of this meeting should become more and more the content of our national gatherings. More and more this kind of content has to enter in. I say this now because it isn't easy to hold to this kind of a meeting. As soon as we decided to call this kind of a meeting you should have seen the pressures to change it. They were just tremendous. People said--let's do this or that, or in addition--and next thing you know we're back to the old format. This doesn't mean that we're not going to discuss international affairs. That would be absolutely foolish. And it doesn't mean that we're not going to have general analyses. But concreteness must become more and more the essence of our gatherings. As I said many good ideas developed, for instance, Youth United for Jobs. By the way this is not new. The first one in New York was organized about two years ago. We ought to really pick up that question and work on it--give it life as a movement. Or take the Camden idea of

weekly demonstrations. In this period that's the kind of approach we need--a demonstration of one kind or another on a weekly basis. Or, take block associations. They can be transferred now into a totally different kind of movement, and the clubs ought to take on that kind of assignment.

There is also the question of how to organize against the bureaucratic structure of unemployment and food stamp centers, and how to do it on the spot. Actions have to be taken against these centers and holding back because the people employed there are workers is nonsense. If the people working in the centers don't join, well that's just too bad. They can't be permitted to be the obstacle to a militant action against the bureaucratic structure. Hire the unemployed to take care of the unemployed! There's no lack of forces that can be hired.

It is important that no one spoke of the experience of a Party club in this crisis. That says quite a lot. I know there are some, but I think this indicates a serious weakness. Nobody really spoke about a club and its experience in organizing a movement. And what is beginning to take place on a city and state level must take place on a club level. When we take initiatives we must now make sure they include the clubs in the plans. This is a special thing. We have to insist that each club has a plan of work on the crisis. If we do it will force a discussion in the clubs--if we insist that between now and the National Convention they develop a plan of work on the crisis. In the 1930 crisis the clubs were centers of activity.

I think it is obvious that the Party's influence is growing. From everything that was said here this is confirmed. We are on a new level on three fronts that we should take note of.

We are reaching a new level on the open role of Communists in the united front organizations. The National Coalition to Fight Inflation & Unemployment and the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression demonstrate this.

Secondly, we are reaching a new level on Communists being elected to official posts in the trade unions. This is a very important development. I'm mentioning it only because I think we should encourage this as much as possible. It is especially outstanding in Northern California, and the election of comrades in the Longshore Union is really something. These are mass locals. They are not small. In this recent election, they elected a couple of new comrades--publicly known comrades. One comrade, for instance, who two years ago received, I believe, 67% of the vote (he ran for full-time business agent)--now after two years of working he is a publicly known Communist. Now he received 73% of the vote for the post. It is obvious that in Northern California, and in other places also, it is possible for Communists to be elected to trade union posts. You can see what that means in terms of what kind of a base we're laying for the struggle against class collaborationist policies and class struggle trade unionism. We should study very carefully where that is possible.

Thirdly, we're moving to a new position on the question of the possibility of electing Communists to public office. These possibilities are obviously growing. There are more and more indications that this is going to be increasingly possible. And who knows, perhaps next meeting we'll have Comrade Alva as a member of the elected board. This all fits into the level of the Party's influence and the potential. We should look at this concretely, as well as generally, as we develop.

Comrade Tyner, at New York's meeting as well as here, emphasized the role of leadership. This is an important question. It is the decisive element in getting the Party to shift gears. Leadership really decides that. Based on this, the New York meeting reflected a spirit that was just tremendous; you could feel new vibrations in the New York organization. This is because the comrades in the leadership in New York are giving this kind of leadership now. There is no question that New York is now going to emerge on a new and higher level. It is leadership that makes the change and the difference. The important thing is the response of the membership. They respond when they feel they're getting that kind of leadership.

Finally, I think it is obvious that we must continue to fight against weaknesses like sectarianism. Sectarianism in mass work on the crisis definitely flows from underestimation of the change in the patterns of mass thought. It is also true about the concept of "the open face of the Party." We are still hiding and in many, many cases it is totally unnecessary.

In this connection I want to say a few words about one example, mainly because Comrade Matt (Minnesota) didn't get a chance to speak. Work in universities at the present moment shows the existing possibilities. There are a couple of comrades there who are doing outstanding work. For instance, they have an official class on Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Students will get credit for this course just as they would any other. It is a public, regular course in the university. It is not just generally on Marxism-Leninism; they officially say that what they teach is the official version of the world Communist movement. The professor in charge is a known, public Communist. He was the Minnesota Party's candidate for Governor in the last election. That's only one thing. Besides that there's another group of Marxist scholars which includes a number of professors. This is a big thing that continues to grow and has regular sessions. This shows that if the work is organized correctly with the proper approach that there are unlimited possibilities. There are already so many changes. The YWLL there is a totally different organization now and growing and the Party club of professors is also totally different.

One more factor concerning approach. There has to be more of an emergency approach. I was listening to the report of the Connecticut conference, and it sounded tremendous. It is a fine movement. But I'm just wondering if anything came through from that conference that was of an emergency nature. There are people

who are in emergency situations now, millions of them. Besides everything else we've got to insist on emergency action, demands and slogans.

Someone mentioned the Penn-Central bill. They called a special session of the Senate to pass a bill to finance the Penn-Central. Well, why can't we use that to insist that special sessions of the state legislature be called, and city councils and the Senate, for special appropriations, emergency appropriations to feed the poor and the starving? That's an element we have to add to everything we've said.

Concerning the struggle against racism, Comrade Roscoe's contribution has to be seen in relation to what he said at the Central Committee meeting. It was a continuation of that, which is in my opinion a most important and significant shift in emphasis in the struggle against racism. We really have to understand this. (Party Affairs, February 1975.) The Party really has to grasp what was in Comrade Roscoe's report to the Central Committee, along with what he said at this meeting.

Comrade Steele's remarks about Boston are extremely important because what he (and Comrade Roscoe) argued for was that our approach must be to win. This is fundamentally different from others--to win against racism. The reason for that approach is that we are convinced that we can win. That's the basic shift in approach. Therefore, Comrade Steele discussed the Boston experience in terms of how we can continue and persevere in that kind of a policy and line in view of the provocation of the Trotskyites who sound radical. And they are provocative. Under some circumstances it is very difficult to hold onto a principled position. That's what Comrade Steele was saying. But a principled fight can win. That is the key. Concerning the Boston Party's work. We are not going to win and we are not going to turn the tide of racism in Boston until we take seriously the organization of a movement uniting the people on the economic questions they face. Until we do that we're not going to turn that tide against racism on the school issue. This comes back to the question of what the focus is. The comrades in Boston must really take seriously and study this question. It doesn't mean that we don't move on the school issue--busing, etc. But if we don't do the other our work is going to limp, and the other forces will demagogically keep using the school crisis. The movement has to be tied to the economic questions as the fundamental basis for winning against racism.

Concerning the work of the Party generally, concreteness is the crucial part of organization--detailed concreteness. Without that there is no organization. This is still lagging in much of the Party's work.

Let me come back to one question on the struggle against racism--the racist patterns of the layoffs. It is the same process in reverse of the hiring patterns. It is a problem when you put that against the question of seniority rights. On the one hand, we have to and we should fight against these racist patterns

in the layoffs because it is a continuation of the same old pattern. On the other hand, we cannot be a factor in breaking up the principle of seniority. Seniority is not just a defense of old workers. In fact that is not the origin of seniority. It was a method of stopping the corporations from always firing the most militant workers, the active workers. That's the origin of seniority and therefore it has a very important place. As I have said, my "Basics" article on "The Economics of Racism," (World Magazine, 3/1/75), was the result of wrestling with this problem. The way I tried to handle it in this "Basics" is that number one, we must have that approach which many comrades have already spelled out; the finger must be pointed at the corporations at all times. They must pay for everything that we demand. That is a fundamental principle. Therefore, we struggle for jobs for everyone, (six-hour, five-hour day) including everything that goes with it, and including taking over plants. That kind of a struggle and movement must be developed. What I say in this "Basics" is that then we can talk to workers and say that this, however, does not resolve the question of two-hundred years of discriminatory hiring and upgrading. In this context of struggle white workers must understand and accept the idea of special adjustments that go into this question. Special adjustments include variations on the question of seniority in firing, etc. There are many ways of handling it once that principle of special adjustments is accepted. But it must be done in the framework of working class struggle to keep united, to correct inequalities--but in the context of the struggle against the bosses. I'm sure this doesn't resolve all questions, but in the "Basics" I tried to give a framework for it, and I think that's important. Then we can think through specific ways of doing it in specific situations, once that principle idea is accepted. After "Basics" appears I would like to get the reaction of all the comrades, and suggestions on how to improve it. Perhaps it can be printed as a piece of mass literature, issued by the Party.

Now, a word about demagoguery generally. In this period we're going to see a lot of this by a lot of people and groups--Baraka, Kinoy, etc. Besides exposing them, I think there is another side to it that we have to pay special attention to. We must take into account the fact that their demagoguery is successful only because the masses are ready to talk about and think about more basic questions. This is an important factor. And how we are going to approach these masses is even more important. I recently watched two one-hour programs of Baraka's and I'll tell you he presents some real problems for us, and they're not easy to solve. He has really made a study, and under sharp questioning he really comes through on many issues--on the working class, on Marxism-Leninism, on socialism. For instance, I watched one program where almost the full hour was devoted to people asking him one question in many ways: "How come you changed? Won't your followers now say that you betrayed them, that you led them down a certain nationalist road and now you say differently?" Under these difficult circumstances I must say he gave a good accounting. What you have to remember is that he's doing it because there are all these people listening and he knows they are ready to accept ideas that are

much deeper. Well, you know there was a conference in New Jersey of 550 Black professors and students, called on a different subject. But I've had reports that for two days they couldn't get off the subject of socialism. No matter how they tried everything came back to the question of socialism as a solution to the problems of Black Americans. That is what Baraka and others are reflecting. We must expose him, but we must take into account how to win these same people because they're very serious about these questions. Therefore, on the question of our education, our propaganda, we must really re-master the skill of mass propaganda and education.

The question of press circulation fits in here. We have to think BIG--think in terms of totally different numbers. When I say press, I'm thinking in terms of the Daily World and People's World. I have been hearing that some comrades, when selling the paper house to house, say that some people don't pay; they owe such and such amount. Well, we have to reverse that kind of thinking. We're smarter than that. It is true that people owe, but in the meantime they're reading the paper; we're changing their thinking. And at some point their thinking will rise high enough so that he or she is going to say, "By god, I'm going to have to pay for those papers; reading them gave me a whole new outlook." So, let them owe money--subsidize it. Let the bill grow. They'll pay it back. That's money in the bank, ideologically. Think BIG! That's the whole approach to the press.

Party building is concrete and we've got to take the concrete steps to force us to recruit. And we must have checkup. There has been some improvement, but not in the way it should be and can be. Here again we have to think in new terms. That can be the spirit of this meeting--because of the crisis we have to think BIG and act BIG. It will have been an historic meeting if we do this.

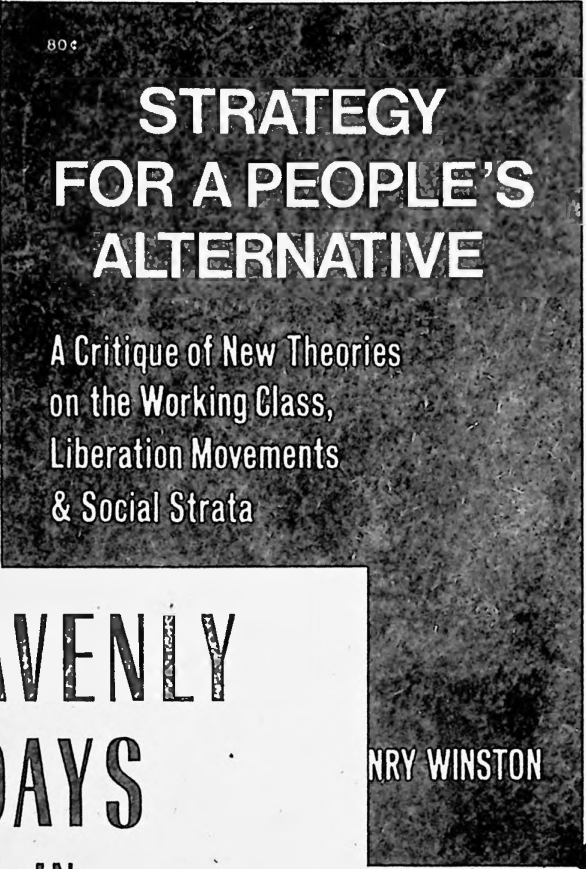
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equality, protective laws should not be eliminated in relation to women but extended to include men. If this can be written into the legislation, into the body of the text, it becomes a basis for struggling against the elimination of protective laws, and a basis for presing aspects of the Women's Bill of Rights.

I want to point out that what's also been key in building our work in CLUW is the collective work between the Labor Commission and the Women's Commission. This is an important achievement in regard to developing policy.

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