

— MOBILIZE! — AGAINST APARTHEID, RACISM!

All the gains of the civil rights movement of the 1960s are being overturned and attacked at the same historical moment that Blacks are fighting for their lives in South Africa.

Since the bombing of the MOVE house in Philadelphia by police, a number of incidents involving attacks on Blacks and threats to their rights have occurred.

Dearborn, a suburb of Detroit, has declared its parks for "residents only" to keep out the majority Black population of Detroit. The NAACP launched a boycott

of Dearborn businesses with limited success before the holidays.

In Concord, California, a Black man was hanged for the "crime" of being a homosexual. Berhardt Goetz, the "subway vigilante" of New York, who shot down four Black youths in cold blood last year, was acquitted of all serious charges. And once again in Philadelphia, racist vigilantes mobilized to stop Black families from moving into a largely white neighborhood. These and many more incidents show that Blacks now face the worst re-

pression in more than a decade.

It is not a coincidence that these attacks are on the rise in the U.S. alongside the rise of the revolutionary tide in South Africa.

By working in concert with the Blacks of South Africa against repression and racism, equality will be more than a noble phrase to repeat on Martin Luther King's birthday.

Boycott South Africa!
Against racism!

DEFEND HORMEL STRIKERS!

By BARBARA PUTNAM

Austin, Minnesota continues to hold center stage in the fight against concessions. Hormel workers, Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers, in this little company town, now fight not only the company but also the National Guard. The mayor of Austin, Tom Kough, was a striker, but that did not stop him from calling in the National Guard when strikers refused to allow scabs to take their jobs.

On January 25, twenty five cars organized by the union blocked Interstate 90, which the authorities had been using to import scabs. On the fourth day of this effort, the pickets succeeded in totally preventing any scabs from going in. But on Tuesday, the police and the National Guard closed the plant after union leaders agreed not to hinder motorists (New York Times, January 25, 1986).

There has been a real progression to the fight against concessions since PATCO was crushed. There was the bitter Grey-



hound strike, which attracted large support committees and mass picketing, the AP Parts Plant strike in Ohio in which 3,000 unionists of many different unions fought against the use of scabs, and now the Hormel strike. But the Hormel strike raises the ante, drawing in whole sections of the local population into the strike —

for or against. It directly inspired the formation of the National Rank and File Against Concessions.

This strike demands the widest possible support in the unions and in the working class population in the form of material and militant aid.

≡ In the 1986 Congressional Elections ≡ For an Electoral Alliance of Labor

National Rank and File Against Concessions

By BARBARA PUTNAM

On December 6-8, a new union organization dedicated to fighting concessions — the National Rank and File Against Concessions (NRFAC) — held its founding conference in Chicago. About 500 union militants representing nearly every union and every major city in the country were present. This inter-union organization signifies a new turn toward organization and centralization of the opposition to concessions.

Two of our organizers, Barbara Putnam of UAW Local 2071 and Fred Michaels of the American Federation of Teachers, went to the conference. In addition to supporting the fight against concessions, we appealed to the conference to run anti-concessions labor candidates in the 1986 congressional elections.

One of the high points was a march to the Chicago Tribune workers' picket line. Conference militants succeeded in turning back a couple dozen scab trucks trying to cross the picket line. It was clear that all who stayed and fought, those that linked arms even as the police beat up one of us and arrested another, were not unfamiliar with fighting the workers' class enemies. Undoubtedly, this action had an impact on the Chicago Federation of Labor. After a delay of six months, it finally led a demonstration of 1,700 against the importation of scabs on January 4, regrettably only for one day.

We were heard at the conference and able to make some good arguments for the NRFAC supporting and running workers candidates versus bosses candidates in the coming congressional elections. But since there was no way to have this discussed and voted on, any support remained on the level of sympathy for the proposal. We did make contact with a number of militants interested in the proposal.

As a result of our fight for a Labor Party and workers candidates versus bosses candidates in several elections, most recent in the Detroit mayoral elections, we were in our natural element in the NRFAC conference. Others who call themselves socialists were either at a loss for words, or simply riding the waves, or

worse, attacking the NRFAC. The Socialist Workers Party complained of the "narrowness" of fighting concessions, that the NRFAC is not "broad" enough to suit them. They refused to vote during the election of officers and on the by-laws, and they have not bothered to mention the conference in their paper.

But the worst attack of all on the NRFAC is coming from the Communist Party USA. It would seem to the uninitiated that those who claim to lead workers would welcome the formation of the NRFAC with open arms. But no, not the CP. Here is what Herb Kaye said about the NRFAC in their paper, the *Daily World* (January 9). The full quotation bears repeating so that militants will be better armed to fight these reactionary attacks and will know that the CP defends the trade union bureaucracy and its ties to the Democratic Party.

The CP says: "Increasingly, workers are seeking to maximize the power and potential of their union organization at all levels to defeat and roll back the offensive of the Reagan-monopolist forces.

"A different approach, that endangers the unity of the labor movement, is being offered by a group of ultra-leftists, who recently set up an organization known as the National Rank and File Against Concessions (NRFAC).

Then Mr. Kaye placates: "No doubt some conservative, bureaucratic leaders and their methods will be an obstacle to greater gains for the workers. However, super-militant tactics that make union leaders the main enemy and drain away the energies and vitality of workers through dual structures outside the channels of the labor movement, can weaken the strength of labor at a time when the greatest unity is needed."

When Barbara Putnam brought the resolution coming out of the NRFAC to the floor of her union board meeting a similar rotten line was put up as a reason to be hesitant and "cautious" about joining the NRFAC. Fred Vocino said there was a "contradiction" between fighting concessions and attacking union leaders who cave into them because this, he said, would "help" the companies. Wrong! What has

helped concessions is the blatant acceptance of them by the likes of Beiber, head of the UAW, Kirkland, head of the AFL-CIO, etc., etc. Most of the tops leaders of the unions are agents of the bosses: they lay down concessions. They are the worst danger because they truly divide the unions and weaken them. Unity, yes. But give us real unity and not the fictitious unity of covering for trade union bureaucrats, who are selling us out. The NRFAC can be a tool of real unity because it cuts across all the unions and it is dedicated to fighting, not accepting, concessions.
Down with concessions!

Working Class Must Stop U.S. Intervention

By FRED MICHAELS

This past week Reagan has revealed his plans for 1986. High on his hit list is Nicaragua. He will ask the Congress for \$100 million with the goal of crushing the Nicaraguan Revolution.

But this escalation is not being met by the anti-intervention movement with a strong united call for militant action against Reagan.

The Administrative Committee of the Actions for Peace, Jobs and Justice Coalition — the coalition that organized the April 20 demonstrations of over 100,000 last year — met January 9 in New York City and, once again, delayed calling for a national demonstration.

Last Spring this same body refused to organize any actions, stating that the coalition would be better prepared for a national offensive this Spring by supporting the actions of other organizations in the Fall.

Under the enormous pressure of the revolution in South Africa, coupled to a growing movement in this country, the Administrative Committee has called for a meeting of the National Steering Committee of the coalition on February 3. This meeting, which excludes local coalitions (!) and allows only national organizations, will discuss a possible Fall action.

It is safe to say that this Administrative Committee (and the whole coalition) is caught in the web of its contradictory roles: it includes the leadership of many

Candidates and Working Class Parties

organizations that represent Blacks, workers and the oppressed in this country, yet it is intimately linked to the Democratic party of capitalist oppression.

The policy of the Emergency National Council, and in particular the working class parties — Socialist Action, the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, the Socialist Workers Party — is to remain "non-partisan."

This means that all during this intense political struggle the working class is supposed to remain passive and abstain and, when the 1986 elections roll around, vote Democratic.

Only the working class has no one to defend its interests. The Democratic Party is, as they say, "loaded for bear." None of the major organizations involved in the anti-intervention movement can remain "non-partisan."

It is impossible for this conflict within the anti-intervention movement, which is a sharp expression of the class conflict in its entirety, to be resolved in favor of a militant action line, without an energetic defense of the workers political independence. It is the working class forces who should give leadership to the wavering elements — not the other way around.

CISPES's major national campaign has been developing house meetings in neighborhoods of targeted congressmen to influence their voting. In other words, building a base of support for liberal Democrats to run against these congressmen. The Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign has called for a special intervention in the Fall elections around Freeze issues at its recent National Convention in Chicago.

The recent Student Anti-Apartheid Conference at the University of Chicago was heavily influenced by forces of Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition that want to target key congressmen, similar to the CISPES campaign, as the major activity of students against apartheid.

It has become very clear that a policy called "non-partisan" is an ostrich-like response to a very sharp political struggle. A "non-partisan" policy places all its adherents on the side of the Democrats, or on the sidelines for 1986.

Most importantly, it lets slip from the workers hands an unprecedented opportunity to build a Labor Party, or more precisely, to create the building blocks for a Labor Party with a working class electoral alliance.

It is imperative that the anti-intervention movement and its organizations open up a discussion about what stand to take in the 1986 elections and for the working class forces to join together in a fight for workers political independence — for a workers electoral alliance against the Republicans and the Democrats — for a Labor Party.

Blacks and Democrats

By DAVID MARK

For decades American Blacks have given their political allegiance to the Democratic Party. Since 1964, Blacks have cast 80% of their votes in presidential elections for the Democrats. In the 1984 presidential elections, Walter Mondale received 90% of the Black vote.

The 1986 congressional elections are approaching. While the economic "upturn" has benefited the capitalist class of rich and powerful, the "trickle down" for the vast majority of Blacks, especially the inner city poor, has been non-existent. There is a chance to build a new movement, stronger and more powerful than even the civil rights movement.

What, after all, has the Democratic Party done for Black Americans? Despite the fact that Democrats had held a majority in Congress for most of the last two decades, the gains of the civil rights movement have been steadily eroded. The civil rights movement was itself not inspired by the Democratic Party, but by a grass roots movement of Blacks.

While it is true that the Reagan administration and the Republican majority in the U.S. Senate have created a new atmosphere of racism, and have accelerated the attacks on Blacks, the Democrats have done nothing of any substance to stop these attacks. In fact, the Democrats have moved quickly to adopt Reagan's policies and to appeal to his constituency.

Basically, the Democrats have knifed Black Democrats in the back. Many promises were made at the San Francisco convention in order to appease the Jackson forces and Black party activists, in general. Promises that the Democratic Party would become more open, that Black Democrats like Jackson would be

granted a fairer share of delegates. (One of Jackson's key grievances was that he received more than 20% of the popular vote in the primaries and got only 12% of the delegates to the convention.)

Then, after the convention, Paul Kirk, a conservative Democrat, not Jackson or another Black, was selected as chairman of the Democratic Party. Democrats were not willing to grant even a symbolic, token roll to Blacks in the leadership of the party.

A special "fairness commission" met October 18 and adopted new rules that will further reduce the role of Blacks, and labor, in the Democratic Party. A new "superdelegate" rule raised the percentage of Democratic members of Congress who will automatically be granted delegate status (no elections) from 60% to 80%! In addition, now the entire Democratic National Committee, 372 members of the party hierarchy, will also be "super-delegates." The commission also refused to do away with the threshold rule by which a primary candidate must obtain a certain minimum percentage of votes in a district in order to receive any delegates at all. This was the particular rule used to cheat Jackson out of delegates in 1984.

For more than two decades the Democratic Party has been the means by which the struggle of Blacks has been channeled and contained within a framework that is acceptable to the capitalist class. This has been achieved not only through intimidation, but also through maintaining the majority of the Black leadership within the Democratic Party, thereby preserving class relations within the Black oppressed minority. Without a working class party, the Black minority does not have any way to build a movement against the root of their oppression, the essentially white and capitalist ruling class.

More importantly, a working class party, a Labor Party, would have a larger impact, liberating not only a movement of the Black working class from the capitalist parties, but also liberating the trade unions which have been one of the most important means for Blacks to organize and to win the support of white workers, away from their conservative white leadership. The capitalist class would be confronted with a movement far more powerful than the civil rights movement.

This is the road that can be taken in 1986. Beginning with a fight for a workers alliance in the elections.

What Color is Your Flag?



By MARGARET GUTTSHALL

Thousands of youth and young workers rallied in solidarity with Black South Africans and against racism in America in the course of Bishop Desmond Tutu's recent tour and Martin Luther King Day.

Yet there was a contradiction between this initiative — an effort to link up with brothers and sisters in South Africa, to renew the struggle against racism here — and the message of the leadership.

Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther King's widow, and Bishop Tutu, Black South African leader, linked arms with Reagan's representative George Bush and sang "We Shall Overcome." Coretta Scott King called on Blacks to fly the American flag on Martin Luther King Day and practice non-violent action at a moment when the U.S. government is training and arming reactionary forces in Angola to put down the revolution in South Africa; when it is bombing El Salvador and preparing to invade Nicaragua.

She claims that: "Martin Luther King Jr. always marched under the flag . . . His timeless dream of a nation unified in e-

quality and brotherhood is really the American dream, and the movement he led embodied the highest patriotism and the very spirit of democracy . . . He would have been the first to point out that the key to the movement's success was the commitment to disciplined non-violence" (*Detroit Free Press, January 3, 1986*).

First, it is necessary to say that this is not true. While King's political work as a whole was characterized by his loyalty to and illusions in American democracy and non-violence — particularly the Democratic Party — he did not always march under the flag and preach non-violence. He opposed the war in Vietnam, eventually; he supported the garbage workers' strike shortly before his assassination.

In any case, whether King always marched under the flag or not, does that make it right? Is it enough to say Dr. King did it to make it right?

Why should Blacks be loyal to the American government or system when they are run by racists, bosses, capitalists, who profit from racism, from the exploita-

tion of Blacks and workers of all races and nationalities in Africa and America?

Why should they preach non-violence when these same racists, these same bosses when these same racists or bosses are armed to the teeth, arresting, imprisoning, torturing and murdering Blacks and others every day, legally and illegally?

In fact, such a policy can only isolate Blacks from youth and workers of other races and nationalities rising up against the American oppressors and exploiters in Africa, Europe and America.

That is why they can link arms with racist, imperialist politicians like George between solidarity with Black South Africans and loyalty to American and non-violence: between a struggle against racism in America and this same loyalty — is a class contradiction. The vast majority of Blacks in America are working class, compelled to struggle against the bosses and in solidarity with other oppressed and exploited by their very situation. Their leadership is not working class. The current leadership is, in Marxist terms, petty bourgeois, even bourgeois. Coretta Scott King and others are tied to the capitalist parties that profit from the exploitation of Black workers in Africa and America.

That is why they can link arms with racist, imperialist politicians like George Bush. That is why they are so concerned with loyalty to America and non-violence at a moment when thousands of workers are rising up against American racist and imperialist oppression. And that is why they try to pass off this reactionary policy as the word of god.

Now is the time to resolve this contradiction, break with the bosses and their parties and all those who speak for them within the Black working class. Young Black workers should forge links with their fellow workers of other races and nationalities, in Africa, Europe, America; build an international working class party to lead this struggle. Blacks should fly the red flag of international working class solidarity against racist and capitalist oppression, not the red, white and blue flag that symbolizes that oppression to the oppressed peoples of the earth.

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