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Marxists Try Again in Detroit

When the Maoist-oriented Progressive Labor Party began pointing its propaganda weapons at the 1973 automobile industry negotiations, neither the industry nor the UAW paid much attention. Even if they had, it probably would not have made much difference.

A small band of dedicated Marxists did manage to close down at least one Chrysler plant when negotiations were at a delicate point. By that time dissidents were maintaining an identity a bit apart from PLP. What they proved, if anything, is that a handful of True Believers can still strike a spark in a tinderbox situation.

The old line Communist Party-U.S.A. has mellowed to militant elder statesmanship. The various splinters, Maoist, Trotskyite, et al, are ideologically reeling as the major powers seek a detente. Still, they offer publicity and a philosophy to those seeking to formalize their opposition

About September

HF just became impossible to produce in September. In order to get out our annual quota of 10 issues, we will have both November and December editions.

to the Establishment, the old confrontation of the angry "Outs" and the insulated power-wielding "Ins."

TO THE embarrassment of the UAW, proud of its role in helping eliminate serious Communist influence from the trade union movement, the difficulties at Chrysler must have been like a touch of old times.

Many in the present leadership were in the same early caucus as the late Walter P. Reuther. This included Pres. Leonard Woodcock and Sec'y-Treas. Emil Mazey. Vice Pres. Doug Fraser, director of the Chrysler Dep't. was early one of Reuther's administrative assistants. The UAW union leaders started eliminating the Communists from local leadership three decades ago, and after World War II they helped eject the Communist-dominated unions from the old CIO.

If the dissidents were unprepared for the speed and firmness of the Union reaction to their adventures, as it now appears, it may simply be that they were mostly too young to have any recollections of the harsh struggles of the era in which the present major industrial union took shape.

(Continued on Next Page)

*Bosses' Lust for More Dough Creates
Blinding Speed-Up. Causes World-Wide...*

Subscribe to CHALLENGE!

STRIKE FEVER IN AUTO



Subscribe to CHALLENGE!

ABOVE—Last year the Progressive Labor Party was laying a base for this year's action with extra attention to the automobile industry in its newspaper, *Challenge*.

BELOW—Even though WAM maintained at least the illusion of apartness, PLP was quick to take credit for WAM's Mack Ave. shutdown at Chrysler.

CHALLENGE
The Revolutionary Communist Newspaper
PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

S.F. & N.Y.C.:
Over 110,000
Sign For 30,40

PLP'S COMMUNIST
LEADERSHIP
HELPS
SPARK...



SIT-DOWN STRIKE IN AUTO

Black-White Unity
WAMs Guards,
Stamped Bosses

1,000 Cheered Agnew at YAF Convention



Tom Huston

To Young Americans for Freedom this is a heady period in our history. One of their boys, Tom Charles Huston, had made it to the inner echelons of the White House.

Not only had he drafted the security memo which led to the creation of the White House plumbers—where it all started—he was now back in Indianapolis deliciously blasting the Nixon Administration for a lack of "ideological commitment."

And YAFer Howard Phillips, having provided high level—if temporary—employment for a lot of other ex-YAF staffers at the Office of Economic Opportunity, was now their celebrity in residence, the deposed (by Court order) grand high executioner of OEO there to tell his peers how it was out there in headline land.

Phillips was just one of the celebrities who

graced the program for this year's YAF convention in Washington's posh Shoreham Hotel. An estimated 1,000 delegates attended one or more of the sessions, solid evidence that whatever they lacked in campus power, they made up in their members' personal purchasing power.

Phillips—later to attract no less than Charles Colson—at one of his farewell banquets had to share the spotlight with William Buckley, Sen. Barry Goldwater, Sen. Jesse Helms (a new rightwing national celebrity), and Lloyd Bucher, the former Pueblo commander, now out of uniform but showing his colors.

The loudest cheers, however, were for the man who only sent fraternal greetings, then Vice President Agnew.

(Continued on Page 45)

Marxists

(Continued from Page 39)

The first indication that the build up was underway came in the pages of PLP's publication, *Workers World*.

Still when the Union was under the negotiating gun in August, the attack on the flanks came from revolutionary bands who stood for their own brand of Marxism, a sliver off the Maoist splinter.

THE ACTION moved from the leaflets and rumor stage to a strike in late July when two Black workers, Isaac Shorter and Larry Carter, seized and chained themselves in an electrical power control room in the Jefferson Ave. Chrysler plant in Detroit and held it for the day idling 5,000 workers. They demanded that Chrysler fire Thomas Woolsey, a foreman whom they claimed was "racist," and that all who participated in the brief sit-in be granted amnesty.*

Chrysler agreed to both demands. *Workers World*, the *Guardian* and Detroit's underground newspaper, *The Fifth Estate*, treated them as heroes. The UAW chided Chrysler for surrendering.

Shorter and Carter were also interviewed by Lou Gordon, a Detroit TV personality, and a transcript shows their stance:

GORDON: Let's get down to the actual facts of the matter. Are you a Communist? Aren't you a revolutionary?

SHORTER: Right. Right.

GORDON: You're both Communists and you'd like to really take the whole system over by a revolution!

SHORTER: Right. Not just me and Larry—but the masses of the people we work with.

GORDON: You'd like to take over everything!

SHORTER: Right!

GORDON: You'd like to do it with guns?

SHORTER: If necessary.

GORDON: If necessary you prefer to do it with guns. Now—

SHORTER (cutting in): We are prepared—but the people must be prepared.

GORDON: If necessary to get guns and shoot people and kill them and take over the whole system? Right? Is that what you're proposing?

SHORTER: No! No!

GORDON: Are you members of the Progressive Labor Party?

SHORTER: No. No. We're not members of any—

GORDON: You're just Communists!

SHORTER: Right.

LATER IN the interview, both Shorter and Carter, denied that they were pre-

pared to kill, and retracted the contention that they were "revolutionaries."

Their objectives, they said, were first to get control of Chrysler Local 7, and then the UAW and then Chrysler.

Whether they were just a pair of "Independent Communists,"** as they claimed, the groundwork for their action was organized.

An established group in several Chrysler plants was the Workers Action Movement (WAM), sired in 1972 by the New York-based Progressive Labor Party. It managed a printed publication *New Solidarity* implying an update of the UAW's publication *Solidarity*.

Another presence was the National Caucus of Labor Committees which put out a mimeographed press release containing the claim, "There are only two forces in the world today vying for governmental power. One is the internal bankers and finance capitalists, with their headquarters in Bonn (West Germany) and the other is NU-WRO, and the Int'l Caucus of Labor Committees."***

NU-WRO, the National Unemployed and Welfare Rights Organization claimed 120 members. The Caucus claimed representation in 11 cities and produced a Labor Committee Directory with numbers listed coast-to-coast. (A sampling of four produced two recordings "the number you have called is not in service" and two D.A.'s.

Despite its claim of being at least No. 2 in the world power struggle, the Caucus-NU-WRO combine apparently did not attract many converts.

THERE IS general agreement, however, that WAM did manage to close the Mack Ave. plant for two days. The strike was called by William Gilbreth, a WAM organizer who had earlier been discharged from the same plant for leading a wildcat strike to protest working conditions.

Fewer than 100 workers stayed with Gilbreth, and after Chrysler sent 4,800 workers home and two guards were injured in effort to oust the remainder, Detroit police entered the plant and ejected the strikers. The UAW did not interfere.

The *Wall Street Journal* claims the radical bands led the union to ponder its selection of Chrysler as the bargaining target, but it ultimately concluded the situation was under control.

Just before the Mack Ave. shutdown, workers got a handbill inviting them to a rally at WAM headquarters sponsored

**Christian Science Monitor*, Aug. 27, 1973.

***The Guardian*, Sept. 5, 1973.

*** Press Release from "Detroit Labor Committee" 8/13/73.

DEMONSTRATE FOR JOBS JUNE 15

On June 15th the youth of Washington, D.C. are going to rally the leaders of this city and country that we are tired of unemployment, poor salaries and the lack of professional opportunities. We want meaningful jobs to rebuild our communities.

ASSEMBLE: Carsons High School, 11th and Clifton Streets N.W. at 12:00 noon

ASSEMBLE: Washington office of District building

ASSEMBLE: Washington office of District building and C Streets N.W. at 12:30 and march

RALLY: District building, 11th and E Streets at 1:00

Young Workers Liberation League

P. O. Box 21034 Kalorama Station

Washington, D. C. 20009



YOUTH DEMAND THE RIGHT TO EARN



(Labor Democrat)

The Marxist Young Workers Liberation League supported an early summer demonstration in Washington with this leaflet.

by the "Communist PLP." The response was sparse.

Later, WAM indicated it wanted to bargain directly on selected grievances and Shorter and Carter had wanted to deal directly with Chrysler management. That never happened.

Three decades ago, the "Commie watchers" generally presumed the movement had to establish cells inside the unions in order to get financing for political activities. The latest probe hardly gave the movement any grounds for opening bank accounts.

Agnew Watch

The Agnew resignation took many publications by surprise, including this one.

Most of the Right was in his corner, and even James Kilpatrick conceded on national radio that what the Right views as a forced resignation will further strain President Nixon's relationship with his starboard flank.

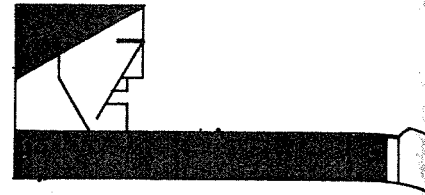
The tip-off to the Right's reaction likely will come from *National Review* and the John Birch Society. If both are brisk in the Agnew defense, a political deal will be in the making.

Two years ago Dr. Medford Evans wrote a column for the *JBS' American Opinion* magazine indicating his distrust of Agnew, as too glib, too slick, too programmed. Will he now reconsider?

IAD will monitor the Right's reaction, and report.

Coming up soon—a recollection of the time even IAD ducked the ex-Veep.

Who's Who on Far Left



After 25 years, there are card carrying Communists in the United States again. In a major policy decision, the Communist Party-U.S.A. decided that members can now show their faces (and membership cards) to the public without getting picked up by the F.B.I. for questioning or rendered ineffective by over-zealous opponents.

Gus Hall, the Party's long time general secretary, claims the younger members wanted the cards.

The older members, ignoring Hall's miserable showing as a presidential candidate, view the new acceptability as vindication. But most of the members are middle-aged or older, and among some at least, there must be a feeling that history is passing them by.

"I firmly believe that within 10 years in this country we will have millions of people for socialism, on the order of 5 to 10 million," Daniel Rubin, membership secretary, told a *Washington Post* reporter recently. "Socialism is going to become so popular that we are going to have competing brands. We'll even have 'Rockefeller socialism,' only I'll continue to call it monopoly capitalism."

When you take a hard look at it, it is a concession of sorts that whatever the social tides in the country, the old CP-U.S.A. isn't likely to be in the vanguard.

Membership appears to have stabilized at about 1/100th of 1% of the adult population.

* * *

THE ANGRY young men and women who take up the issues, tend to tolerate the old CP, at best. They are more likely to make their tie with the more militant Maoists or the Trotskyites.

The CP is still publishing; still muckraking, often with great inaccuracy; still the custodian of an ideology, but as an organized force, it shows no prospect of living up to the myths about its powers.

Breshnev paid a visit to Party Headquarters in New York after a UN appearance, something that would have been diplomatically inconceivable a few years ago. The press treated it like a courtesy call on an aging aunt.

The new Left is still searching for issues. With the war passe, poverty not terribly real to children of middle class Americans, and inflation a problem the answer to which is not plausibly theirs, it is not projecting current relevance.

The groups to watch are the Independent Marxists. They are as angry as the Birchers over the Chinese-American and Soviet-American efforts at detente. Their goal is home grown revolution, although they maintain an active liaison with Third World impoverished nations. As yet the ideology is too vague and the leadership too fragmented to mount more than hit-and-run forays. Widespread poverty and unemployment would expand the market for what they are trying to exploit.

* * *

EVEN MORE durable than the CP are the Black Muslims. The Panthers are almost gone. The Nation of New Africa and other Black Nationalist organizations have virtually disappeared, although local groups are constantly coming together and separating. But the Nation of Islam (Muslims) and their newspaper, *Muhammed Speaks*, continue to show a depth of support.

Meanwhile the radical news services and the so-called underground newspapers, continue to function, but with curtailed circulation and readership.

ORGANIZATION	IDEOLOGY	ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP	PUBLICATION	ESTIMATED CIRCULATION	GAIN (Loss)
COMMUNIST PARTY-U.S.A.	Soviet	13,000	<i>Daily World</i>	26,074	10%
Young Workers Liberation League	Soviet	1,500	<i>People's World</i>	7,205	
WORKERS' WORLD PARTY	Maoist	300	<i>Workers' World</i>	n.a.	
Youth Against War and Fascism	Maoist	200			
Revolutionary Union	Maoist	150			
PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY	Indep.-Maoist	700	<i>P.L. Challenge</i>	65,000	Doubled
SDS Worker-Student Alliance		1,800			
Workers Action Movement	Indep.-Maoist	n.a.			
Nat'l Caucus of Labor Comm.	Indep.-Marxist	n.a.	<i>New Solidarity</i>	n.a.	
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY	Trotskyite	850	<i>Militant</i>	24,605	Doubled
Young Socialist Alliance	Indep.-Trotskyite	1,500	<i>Int'l. Socialist Rev.</i>	8,100	Doubled
Spartacist League	Trotskyite	300	<i>Young Soc. Organizer</i>	n.a.	
Workers League		300	<i>Workers Vanguard</i>	minimal	
<i>Bul. of Int'l Socialism</i>				n.a.	
SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY	Pure Marxist	500	<i>Weekly People</i>	10,770	Trebled
Students for a Dem. Soc.	Independent	minimal	<i>SDS Notes</i>	irreg.	
LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE	Indep. Radical	n.a.	LNS Service	250 subscribers	
Underground Press Syn.	Indep. Radical	n.a.	UPS Service	200 subscribers	
GUARDIAN ASSOCIATES	Independent	5,000	<i>Guardian</i>	18,487	-34%
Black Muslims	Nationalist	100,000	<i>Muhammed Speaks</i>	530,000	
Black Panther Party (Newton)	Independent	300	<i>Black Panther</i>	irreg.	
Black Panther Party (Clever)	Maoist	100	<i>Right On</i>		