

DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

BOX 10 OF 16

FOLDER 4

MCLL DETROIT REFORMISM

LOCAL REPORT

"Thus in analyzing the national situation the direct results of the USNA imperialists' foreign policy of detente, the Watergate scandal and the "energy crisis" hoax is a shift not just to the right, but a shift towards fascism. The political situation in this country and the resulting moves of the imperialists are extremely dangerous. The working class is outraged at the situation, but disunited, is standing in a relatively powerless position to do anything about it. (People's Tribune, Vol. 5 No. 9 p. 10)

How does the above quotation on the national situation apply concretely to the Detroit area? Dutt states in Fascism and Social Revolution, p. 99 on how fascism came to power in Italy, "The fascist jackal strikes only the wounded proletarian lion. Fascism was not the weapon of defense of the bourgeois against the advancing proletarian offensive, but the vengeance of the bourgeoisie against the retreating proletariat, after reformism had broken the workers' ranks, to follow up the victory by smashing the working class organizations."

The rise of reformism in the Detroit area has manifested itself concretely and is personified in the election of Coleman Young as Mayor of Detroit. Coleman Young based his campaign on a heavy reformist program. Abolition of STRESS, halting of crime, fight for more employment, etc., and his first 100 days in office clearly show that each issue that he proclaimed to fight against has worsened. The STRESS unit (Stop the Robbery, Enjoy Safe Streets) has been abolished in form but the content of the STRESS unit, the plain clothes killers have been assigned to two new units, an anti-rape unit and an anti-burglary unit. The homicide rate has increased as of March 25. There have been approximately 170 deaths, 6 more than last years rate, and joblessness has reached a ten year height. The picture is clear, under the disguise of reform that Coleman Young, lead man in the local area for the imperialists, has been reorganizing the forces of the state in order to unleash attacks on the working class. His plan for the decentralization of the police department is gaining wide support. The plan calls for 50 mini police stations and mini city halls in store fronts in the community. This plan is tied in directly with the community self-determination plan of the New Detroit Committee and it fails in line with the development of the Regional Board of Education plans developed locally in 1969 and 1970. The results of the regional plan have been tremendous. Now no longer is the central Board of Education under direct attack, but the regional boards serve as buffers against the onslaught on the working class. His appointment of Philip Tannian to the position of Police Commissioner is likewise an important factor. Tannian, an ex-FBI agent has been operating with a fascist efficiency in his new position.

With the election of Coleman Young, a cap has been placed on the spontaneous movement, especially the Negro peoples' movement. Coleman Young has used his appointive power effectively. Larry Nevels, ex-community organizer has been placed over community organizing from the Mayor's office. Leon Atchison, former activist, has been placed over the Department of Purchasing and Supplies. John Watson and Dan Aldridge, former Negro national minority activists, are both employed in running drug abuse centers for the state. Ken Cockrel, local attorney for the "damned" has announced that he is giving up criminal law in order to concentrate on Workmens Compensation cases and adopting a "wait and see" attitude on the Coleman Young administration. Young likewise has appointed an elderly Negro national minority

woman, a bus rider, to the transportation unit. Films are being circulated in the different communities on the life and actions of Coleman Young. All of these actions are attempts to disarm the proletarian forces by tying them concretely into the state apparatus. Meanwhile he has concretely sold out the Mexican people's movement, supposedly because of threats from the Teamsters' union locally. And he also has announced plans to make the Detroit Police Department 50% black by 1976.

These reformist programs being pushed here in Detroit are riding the crest of the spontaneous upsurge of the working class which is developing out of the present economic crisis. Unemployment figures have risen to a ten year high in the state of Michigan, comparable only to the 1957-58, 1960-61 levels. The current level is 8.2% of the total work force. By February 15 the unemployment claims reached 217,400 for the state and 137,000 for the Detroit area. Seventy per cent of the layoffs are concentrated in motor vehicles and equipment industries as the auto industry's stockpile of unsold new cars reached a record high of an 80 day supply. The previous peak had been a 75 $\frac{1}{2}$ day supply on February 1, 1970. Coupled with these increased layoffs, has come a corresponding rise in the cost of living. The national average as of March was 1.6%, but for Michigan it was 1.9%. Thus the economic crisis is calling forth an increased spontaneous fight back under the leadership of some newly developed organizations and some old organizations rising again. In the Negro peoples' movement, the NAACP in Detroit has grown to be the largest chapter in the country with upwards of 15,000 members. Jesse Jackson's Operation PUSH has become more active with a recent visit by Jesse Jackson to the Detroit area, touring the Ford Rouge complex and advocating that laid off workers refuse to leave the job. Also an organization called Operation Get Down has been expanding and growing on the east side.

Such are the bases and causes of the rise of reformism. But where and from whom is this rise of reformism spearheaded?

In the Detroit metropolitan area there are 1,838,200 non-farm employees (wage and salaried). These are broken down into 3 major categories 1) manufacturing, 566,100 2) non-manufacturing, 788,500 and 3) government, 227,900. Of these 3 major categories, the first or manufacturing sector is the most active and is most engaged in struggle with the imperialists. This sector is also the most organized. The largest portion of this sector is the 233,400 employees in the manufacturing of transportation equipment and the majority of these workers are organized into the UAW. The UAW lists an area membership of 167,671 and an active list of 132,496 organized into 62 locals in this area. The UAW is the predominant, **overwhelming** organized force in the Detroit area. Each local union has a Community Action Program set up to influence legislative and political struggles of all of the communities. The UAW-CAP councils are based on congressional districts and other regional geographic boundaries, State of Michigan CAP, Southeastern Michigan CAP (SEM-CAP), Wayne County CAP, etc. Thus setting the objective basis through which the bourgeois class pushes its influence on the working class.

The CPUSA, in coalition with the "liberal wing" of the Democratic Party provides the ideological basis for bourgeois influence on the working class. The CPUSA has consciously and actively supported the elections of Coleman

Young. On Angela Davis' recent visit here to Detroit, she announced the CPUSA's active support of "our Soul Brother Coleman Young." The inter-connection between the CPUSA and the "liberal wing" of the Democratic Party are so intricate it becomes difficult to determine who's who. Coleman Young himself has former CPUSA ties. John Conyers, Sr., the father of Congressman John Conyers had former CPUSA ties and was a long time UAW International Representative. All of the Negro national minority International Representatives, Homer Jolly, Shelton Tappes and Nelson Jack Edwards and Horace Sheffield, all had a history of being close to or actually in the old Negro Labor Councils.

Thus, in summarizing the rising fascist offensive of the imperialists in the local area, we have arrived at the following conclusions: firstly, that in analyzing the objective material conditions and forces in the Detroit area, the 594,600 employees in manufacturing in the Detroit area are the 233,000 in transportation equipment represents its most active sector and that further, of the 233,000 in transportation equipment that the 162,000 UAW members represents its most organized and concentrated sector. It is basically through these 162,000 UAW members organized in 62 local unions and 4 different regions that the union misleaders exercise its control over the proletariat in the Detroit area, and that through these 62 locals with its Community Action Programs (CAP) that the UAW structure controls much of the political life of the proletariat in the Detroit area.

Secondly, that the subjective base of the bourgeois influence on the proletariat in the Detroit area led by the bourgeois class is filtered through the CPUSA in conjunction with the "liberal wing" of the Democratic Party. Thirdly, in developing an area plan it is necessary for us to take into account both the objective and subjective factor in placing our cadre and to win over the influence of a section of the proletariat.