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Affirmative Action

(Editors' Note: The "Bakke Case" is emerging as a major focus of the struggle for affirmative action and equal rights.

In September, 1976, the California State Supreme Court ruled in favor of Allan Bakke, a white engineer who had applied to and was rejected by the University of California, Davis Medical School in 1973 and 1974. The Court agreed with Bakke's claim that he was the victim of "reverse discrimination."

The Davis Medical School had reserved 16 out of 100 places for minority and economically disadvantaged students. Bakke claimed that, because he had received higher test scores than some of the minority applicants who were admitted by the quota system, he was unjustly kept out of the school.

This fall, the Supreme Court will hear an appeal on the Bakke case. If the California decision is upheld, all affirmative action programs will be under attack; and the small gains made in the 1960s by women and minorities will be further eroded.

The following is a statement by Union WAGE on the Bakke decision. It was presented by Joyce Maupin at a June 7th press conference in San Francisco called by the National Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision. For further information, write to the national office of the NOBDD at P.O. Box 3026, Berkeley, CA 94703. This statement is reprinted from Union WAGE. This excellent newspaper is available from PO Box 462, Berkeley, CA 94701.)

The Bakke decision is not only an attack on minority admissions to universities. Its target is every program in education and employment which seeks to overcome race and sex discrimination.

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The Israeli Elections

Joe Gerson

Many of us had hoped that 1977 would be the year in which there would be real progress toward a negotiated settlement between Israelis, Palestinians and neighboring Arabs. A year in which a Palestinian state could be established alongside Israel. The chances of it happening were not spectacular, but there had been enough changes amongst Israelis, Palestinians, Arabs, and even Americans to give us hope.

Kurt Waldheim had reported that Yassir Arafat would accept a two-state solution to end the conflict for the land of Israel-Palestine. Officials of the PLO had initiated meetings with representatives of the unofficial Israeli Council for Israel Palestine Peace in Paris. During the meetings the Palestinians agreed that the Israeli Council's manifesto, which calls for a two-state solution, could be the basis for future negotiations between the PLO and the Israeli government.

In Jerusalem the Israeli Knesset (parliament) debated whether Mattitiyahu Paled and Lova Eliaf, who had gone to Paris to meet with the PLO, should be jailed as traitors. In the vote following the debate it was decided they had broken no Israeli laws and could thus continue their meetings.

Leaders of all the Arab states bordering on Israel, including Saudi Arabia which bankrolls the PLO and the confrontation states, had indicated a willingness to live at peace with an Israeli state within its pre-war 1967 boundaries. These Arab states, desperate for peace so they could address unemployment and development needs at home -- hopefully in time to buy off revolutions -- were urgently pressing the United States to reconvene the Geneva negotiations before the end of 1977. And the American president, though committed to "defensible" borders for Israel, had recognized that the Palestinian question was central to the Middle East conflict. He went so far as to advocate a "homeland" for them.

Then came the Israeli elections on May 19.

One thing most people who follow events in the Middle East agree on is that if there is not a drift or momentum toward an eventual peace, there will be a drift toward another eventual war. The victory of the Likud Party has slowed, if not completely stopped, the momentum toward peace. Since Prime Minister Begin's statements that the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been liberated -- not occupied -- Arab states have been remarkably quiet, but they have renewed their attention to preparations for war. The "New York Times" recently headlined, "Two Sides . . . Speak Casually of a War."

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Affirmative Action

Some people claim that minorities and women have not only achieved equality but that white men are now getting the worst of it and are being unjustly deprived of opportunities and jobs. There was an instance of this attitude on a television program last week, "You're Never Too Old," a pep program for seniors. The commentator began by saying that senior citizens are being discriminated against "as blacks and women used to be."

But minorities and women have not achieved equality. The lie of "reverse discrimination" is being used as an excuse to maintain existing racism. When there are not enough jobs to go around, we know who is left out.

PROGRAMS NOT IMPLEMENTED

Over the last 15 years corporations have done a lot of paper work, thousands of people have been hired to implement affirmative action programs, millions of dollars have been spent and a few minority and women workers have been hired.

But affirmative action did not become really controversial until the U.S. economy hit a downward spiral, jobs were eliminated and workers laid off. That's when they discovered "reverse discrimination," claiming there was so much improvement in minority employment that the jobs of white male workers were in jeopardy.

Is this true? How much real progress have we seen? Yes, through tokenism and affirmative action some advances were made in the 60s and early 70s. But the situation of unemployed youth in the ghetto has not improved. It is getting worse. Minorities and women are the first victims of restricted job opportunities and growing unemployment.

LOWER WAGES FOR WOMEN

The wage rates of women, in comparison with those of men, have not improved. They are getting worse. Since 1955, the gap between men and women's earnings increased. In 1955, men's earnings were 56.4% higher than those of women. In 1974, men's earnings were 74.8% higher than those of women. In dollars, the difference is $5,133 in 1955 -- $5,093 in 1974. A threefold increase. These are US government figures. The Labor Department says: "Women of all races are clearly over-represented among workers whose earnings are low."

Last week another Supreme Court decision intensified the attack on minority workers by upholding discriminatory seniority lists -- as long as they were in effect before July 1965. So, if an employer and a union have been discriminating long enough, it's O.K. The reason given was that these seniority lists did not "on their face discriminate on the basis of race or sex." In other words, you didn't get to be a long-haul driver but they never said it was because you were black, or a woman. This is one of the difficulties, legally, with discrimination cases — you have to prove it. Now if a woman, 15 years ago, applied for a job as a plumber, she didn't get a letter from the employer telling her that her qualifications were all right but she was the wrong sex. He just laughed.

DECISION AFFECTS US ALL

The Bakke case is going to the Supreme Court, but it is not the Supreme Court that will make the final decision. Courts are not impartial; they represent the people who rule the United States. They are part of the attack on the limited gains of minorities and women, on the rights and living standards of all U.S. workers.

The final decision rests with us, particularly with workers in unions. We must not take the limited view of the Bakke decision that is fed to us by the press and television. We must understand that it affects not only minorities, not only women, but the entire U.S. working class. They are trying as usual to divide us through racism. They are trying to sell the myth that whites are now the victims of discrimination, the myth that women have not only achieved equality, but that we are running things now.

We must expose these lies and bring the true facts to the people of the United States. We must explain the need for solidarity so that we can successfully fight back. We can demand that our own unions put affirmative action in their contracts (courts will not overrule union contracts). We can defeat the present repressive drive of U.S. rulers, which makes working people the victims of economic crisis, only if we are united, if we work and struggle together.
Begin's election has frightened many Israelis, Arabs and the elites of the super-powers. The costs of another war will be far more catastrophic than anything yet witnessed in the Middle East. Since the 1973 war the flow of arms has increased twenty-two fold. More sophisticated weapons, including missiles, are in place throughout the region. There is always the possibility of a super-power confrontation over the conflict, and the United States (not to mention Western Europe and Japan) is twice as dependent on Arab oil today than it was in 1973.

WHO IS MANAHEM BEGIN?

Manahem Begin is a European Jew of the "old school." In informal Israel he wears a suit and tie, and he kisses women's hands on being introduced. He was born in Poland, was early a religious Jew, and as a teenager joined the Zionist Youth Movement. As early as 1938 he called for guerilla warfare to end the British occupation of Palestine. He was imprisoned by the Russians when they occupied Poland in the early years of the Second World War, but he managed to escape and make his way to Palestine in 1942. By 1944 Begin was elected commander-in-chief of the Irgun, which was fighting the British occupation at the same time that regular Haganah troops were fighting alongside the British against the Axis forces.

Like Yassir Arafat, Begin is better known for his terrorist past than for his more recent political activities. In the West he is best known for the Irgun bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem (then the British headquarters) in which 91 people were killed and 100 wounded. In the Arab world he has been called the "butcher of Deir Yassin." In 1948, as part of its campaign to intimidate the Arab population of Palestine and drive them from the newly emerging Israeli nation, Irgun forces occupied the village of Deir Yassin and massacred more than 200 of its inhabitants -- many of them women and children.

David Ben-Gurion's aversion to Begin was so intense that he was declared taboo and excluded from any Israeli government. Begin was thus forced into, and kept in, the parliamentary opposition (except for a brief period after Ben Gurion's long reign) until the present electoral housecleaning.

Begin's post-election statements have not softened his reputation outside Israel. They have led, in fact, to a sharp confrontation between the Carter Administration and its few allies on the one side, and the Israeli establishment (including Rabin and Labor) and Israel's unquestioning supporters in Congress on the other. The day after the Israeli elections Begin led a victory celebration in the militarily occupied West Bank -- in an illegal Israeli settlement no less! When asked by a television interviewer if his government would be willing to negotiate the return of the occupied territories in exchange for peace, he responded that the territories had been liberated, not occupied. He went on to say that there would be no more illegal settlements. His government would encourage and support the settlements. His subsequent appointments of Moshe Dayan as Foreign Minister and Milton Friedman as chief economic adviser have been consistent with his hard line position and his desire to establish capitalism in Israel on firmer ground.

It should be remembered that international law outlaws the establishment of colonial settlements on conquered territories. More than 65 illegal settlements were established by Israeli right-wing and nationalist forces since the 1967 conquest. Many of these settlements have been built and occupied by the Gush Emmunim (Bloc of Faith) despite the ostensible opposition of the Labor Government. In the diplomatic context these settlements, established on lands expropriated from their former Palestinian owners and inhabitants, were seen as the creation of "facts." Families -- and voters -- with their roots and ties in conquered territories would provide another major obstacle to Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai Peninsula. No Israeli government would lightly order Jews to leave their homes or accept
Arab sovereignty over Jewish villages. The fear of such eventualities led the settlers to support the most belligerent of Israeli policies.

At the same time the illegal settlements have done nothing to hearten Palestinians in the occupied territories, as the daily reports of riots and strikes attest.

Begin has, however, modified his tone in more recent statements to U.S. Senator Richard Stone and the Jewish Agency. He has said he is willing to negotiate with the Arab states, and that there was no position and no step which could not be negotiated freely. These statements seem more a part of the propaganda war than Israeli Government policy. In organizing his coalition government he was unable to induce the Democratic Movement for Change to join with him, despite the fact that they support many of the proposals for restructuring Israeli society along capitalist lines which Begin has advocated. The stumbling block was Likud's refusal to return any of the conquered territories. The DMC favored limited return of lands in return for a peace agreement with the Arab states. Neither favors negotiations with the PLO.

THE ARAB REACTION

Arab reactions to the Likud victory have been predictable. Iraq and Libya, long supporters of the Palestinian Rejection Front and advocates of the most belligerent of positions, are calling for war. Iraq has proposed a new united front of the Arab states (with its own government playing a leading role -- of course!), and Libya has offered its stockpile of Soviet weapons as a common arsenal in a new round of fighting.

The PLO's rhetoric has been sharp, but it has been too restrained in Lebanon to do more than encourage strikes in the West Bank. Farouk Kaddoumi, the PLO's foreign minister in all but name, said that the "probability of war is now greater" with the election of the "terrorist" Begin. The PLO representative in Geneva called the election results "a declaration of war." Even officials in Jordan, Israel's tacit ally, were shocked by the election results. Prime Minister Mandor Badraine said that the election demonstrated that "Israel does not want peace." He said if the election had been held in the West Bank, he would have pulled out all of the PLO forces there.

Egyptian, Syrian and Saudi officials have been more restrained in their public statements; they are more likely to share the consequences of a collapse of diplomatic motion and a renewal of fighting. Immediately after the elections King Khaled of Saudi Arabia and Presidents Assad and Sadat of Syria and Egypt met behind closed doors in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to discuss their strategies. Since that meeting, Sadat has unsuccessfully tried to improve Egyptian relations with the Soviets in order to obtain weapons needed for a new round of war. The Syrians have increased their support of the PLO forces in the proxy war in Southern Lebanon's Arkub region on the Israeli frontier.

The Arab states are, however, hardly in a position to successfully fight another war. Palestinian troops in southern Lebanon, under the strict orders from their Syrian "allies", are not sending any stray mortars or rockets into nearby Israeli settlements, lest they spark the renewal of general fighting. Nearly 30,000 Syrians are tied down in Lebanon. The Egyptians are, at this time, too tied to the American economic and diplomatic systems to move independently, and they are too poorly armed to risk another round of fighting.

Dr. Clovis Maksoud, former envoy for the Arab League, has, however, pointed out one bright spot for Palestinians and Arabs in the Begin victory. The election results "will end the era when the criticism and questioning of Israeli policies was easily dubbed 'anti-Semitic.' It should sharpen American awareness of the issues and clarify U.S. thinking about being responsible for Israel's security.

THE NEW COALITION

Most Israelis did not vote for war. Many thought they were voting out a corrupt old establishment, and in many ways they did. In many circles the May election is referred to as a Labor loss rather than a Likud victory. This may be true, but Likud and its coalition partners have exercised power, the Labor Alignment is playing the role of loyal opposition, and the capitalist world faces a crisis unknown in periods of Labor's ascendancy.

Labor ruled Israel since independence, and it led the Jewish community in Palestine for many years previous to 1948. Too long in power, its leadership and organization grew flacid. The old boy network made the decisions or faced one another off in indecision. Corruption grew, leading to a series of scandals which surfaced in the months prior to the election. Rabin's secret Washington bank account was among the last of the scandals to be revealed. It wasn't terribly exciting when compared to dramas that led to suicide and long prison sentences, as in the other cases. But it certainly hammered the nails into Labor's coffin.

Labor had been well for a long time. Since the 1973 war inflation in Israel has been running at nearly 38% a year. There have been many devaluations of the Israeli currency and a sharp decline in the standard of living leading to an alienation of western Jewish Israelis from the government. Sephardic, or Oriental, Jews long excluded from the benefits of Israeli society, voted overwhelmingly for Likud, despite the fact that Labor is supposed to represent the interests of the laboring class. It didn't.

People thus voted against Labor at least as much as they voted for Likud (or the Democratic Movement). Likud gained only four seats in the Knesset while Labor lost 19. The real electoral winner, if there was one, was the Democratic Movement for Change, a newly-formed right-of-center party committed to honest administration and a stricter free market economy. Organized just prior to the elections, they captured 15 seats, nearly all those lost by Labor.

To piece together a parliamentary majority Begin reached to his right. At the risk of alienating more secular Jews in Israel and in the United States, he joined with the National Religious Party and the ultra-orthodox Agudat Israel. Both these parties support the annexation of the occupied territories and placing more settlers there. The price they demanded in
Joining the coalition was a greater move on the part of the Israeli state toward theocracy. They bargained for strict enforcement of the sabbath for businesses and factories, more orthodox control over the Israeli educational system (Zevulun Hammer, Minister of Education, is a member of the National Religious Party who derives his support from the Gush Emunim), and greater restrictions against abortions, autopsies and Christian missionaries. Ironically, they have also called for more freedom for women to refuse induction into the Israeli army.

STRUCTURAL CHANGES?

There are indications that this election, like the wars of 1967 and 1973, may signal something more than an ephemeral phenomenon in the ooze of Middle Eastern time. Oriental Jews, the majority of the Israeli population, voted overwhelmingly for Likud, as did war-hardened young people and the military. While there is no guaranteeing the Likud will be able to hold these constituencies indefinitely, the election returns shatter several shibboleths and promise an effort on the part of Likud and Israel's capitalist elite to restructure the society.

Many on the left had hoped that Oriental Jews, who constitute 60% of the Israeli population, and who are an exploited lower class in Israel, would provide the basis for a progressive alliance with the Palestinian proletariat, or between Israeli and Arab cultures. (Nearly all the Sephardic community migrated to Israel after 1948.) In fact the Sephardim, many with frightening memories or tales of life in the Arab states from which they or their parents fled, have become exceedingly nationalistic. Coming from more authoritarian cultures, they voted for Likud despite its call for increased capitalism and austerity measures, which will surely have their

hardest impact on the Israeli and Palestinian poor. But this is not a unique phenomenon in the 20th century.

The second dream seemingly shattered was that of some Arab "moderates". They had hoped that native-born Israelis would begin to identify as people of the Middle East, rather than as Western or European Jews. It was their hope that this new and growing majority would provide a link between other peoples of the Middle East and the people of Israel. Instead they voted for Likud, and we have the resulting confrontation.

With state power and the advantages it brings, plus the demographic patterns apparently on his side, we can expect Begin to attempt to restructure Israeli economic and political institutions, as well as the social changes demanded by the religious parties. Such restructuring would conform to Begin's ideological visions, and they would guarantee long-term Likud control over Israel. Begin's self-perception as one of the four founders of Israel (Herzl, Weizmann and Ben-Gurion being the other three) provides him and his allies a sense of legitimacy for the task.

But Begin, Friedman and Likud will have anything but a free hand. While they can expect the cooperation of Yadin's Democratic Movement in pushing structural legislation through the Knesset, his electoral base may be smaller than it seems. He has only a two-vote margin, and he is not a well man. Agudat Israel might pull out of the coalition over any number of issues. And the electoral pendulum might swing back against him. The vote for control over Histadrut (Israel's A.F.L-C.I.O. which owns nearly half the nation's production facilities) which followed the national elections resulted in a Labor victory, despite its lack of new leadership, faces or policies. And Begin faces the possibility of desertion by his constituents as the right-wing alternatives fail to produce either peace or economic security.

THE PUPPET MASTER BEHIND THE SCENES

Even if the United States were not the power which holds all the cards in this game, as President Sadat likes to say, and even if we did not care about the fates of the Israeli, Palestinian, and other Arab peoples, we would still have an enormous stake in the outcome of the Middle East confrontation.

Another Middle East war may well bring about another super-power confrontation which may, or may not, be contained. We need not look back too far to remember the possible consequences of such a confrontation. In 1973, during the last days of the October war, President Nixon put the U.S. military on a full nuclear alert. We shouldn't imagine the Soviets sat idly on their hands.

Even if we do not move to a nuclear confrontation -- or holocaust -- there will be a high price to pay. The United States is importing more than twice as much Arab oil today as it did in 1973. Another oil embargo could cripple the West (even most of the food consumed in the West is grown with petroleum-based fertilizers) and bring the capitalist world to the brink it faced in 1973 and 1974. The likelihood of such an em-
bargo is providing the impetus for President Carter's new work on standby "oil emergency" measures.

But the United States is the imperial power with hegemony over the Middle East. The U.S. assumed control over the region with the collapse of the colonial powers during the Second World War, and is not about to relinquish that control if it is not forced to do so. The United States subsidizes the Israeli military and economy to the tune of $5 million a day. Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iran and many of the region's mini-states are pursuing the Brazilian model under U.S. tutelage.

U.S. weapons sales and technology are flowing into the region to regain petro-dollars and increase U.S. control over the area. The U.S. is selling more weapons to Middle Eastern nations than all other nations combined, providing Washington with enormous levers of control. American technicians are sitting behind many of the buttons. Whose orders will they follow should there be another war? These nations will be dependent on the United States for the resupply of parts -- as Israelis know only too well from their experiences of 1973. Under what terms will the parts be sent? Will they be sent? And what about the technicians and politicians the CIA and other U.S. covert agencies are recruiting through the sales and training programs?

And the United States continues to define the rules by which American based trans-national corporations invest in, and profit from, the enormous markets and cheap labor pools of the Middle East. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is administering Saudi Arabia's $144 billion development program. Syria, Cairo, Kuwait and Jerusalem are crawling with U.S. executives and engineers.

Begin is nobody's fool. Immediately after his victory he correctly perceived that his coming to power would upset opinion in his most important bases of power: the American Jewish Community, the U.S. Congress and the White House. To respond to these fears and to unite Israel's traditional allies, he met with Senator Richard Stone of Florida and Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in Jerusalem. He dispatched his press aide, Schmuel Katz, to Washington to build a fire under his critics. Katz duly registered as a "foreign agent", and bent the ears of people in Congress, the press, the American Jewish Establishment and even in Carter's White House.

Stone, Schindler and Katz did their work well, molding a temporary unity in the Jewish establishment behind the relatively unknown Begin. They sharpened the confrontation between Israel's Congressional supporters and Carter. On June 28 Senator Javits, with support of fellow senators Brooke, Packwood and even some of Carter's Democrats, blasted the Administration's Middle East policy.

Carter is in a difficult position. His job is to keep Middle East oil, investments and profits flowing smoothly under the trilateral dominion. He is expected to increase U.S. power and influence throughout the Middle East by supporting autocratic Arab elites (strange we haven't heard the words "human rights" in relation to Middle Eastern governments) while at the same time assuring Israel's minimum needs for psychological and military security. On June 27, before pronouncing his moratorium on further Middle East related comments, Carter reiterated his position that the Israelis would have to withdraw from the occupied territories if there is to be peace. At the same time both he and Vice President Mondale sought to reassure Israel that they were committed to Israeli security, and that they were in no hurry to address the Palestinian question.

Carter has moved concretely, as well as verbally, to reassure Begin and his supporters. He has recommended shipping another $115 million worth of sophisticated military equipment to Israel in advance of Begin's July visit to Washington. This hasn't satisfied Israel's unquestioning supporters. The "New York Times" reports that 90% of the Middle East mail flowing to Washington is criticizing Carter for being unresponsive to Israel's needs.

WHERE DOES THIS LEAVE US?

The situation is perilous. Even without Begin's victory the possibility for continued momentum toward peace, let alone a negotiated settlement, looked slim. The Middle East and the world are drifting toward a war no one wants, and whose destruction may be cataclysmic: Haifa for Damascus, Tel-Aviv for Cairo ... Seattle for Vladivostok.

There can be no real peace in the Middle East until the most fundamental question and need is addressed: the fate of the Palestinian people. Kick, scream and stomp though he may, if American policy clearly favored the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, Begin and the Israeli government would have to accept it. The alternatives would be too costly -- even for Begin.

The problem, obviously, is that the U.S. government doesn't support the two-state solution. Secretary of State Vance has led people to believe that Carter's "homeland" statement means a Palestinian entity under Jordanian control -- hardly a hopeful prospect for people who remember "Black September." Congress is still somewhere back in 1948, seeing only Auschwitz and the Exodus.

Given the peril, and the reality of American responsibility, the burden is again on us to force changes in American policy. Unlike the Brookings Institute or the Trilateral folk, we must not only work for the short term goals of resumption of Geneva, Israeli withdrawal and the two-state solution, we should also be addressing the imperial system, which since the Indochina war has seen its greatest growth in the Middle East.
Left With the Democrats

Frank Joyce

There is little more than a little irony in Tom Hayden's recent efforts -- so elaborately defended in the Newsletter series by Dick Flacks and to some degree Paul Lauter's article -- to win the Left into the thoroughly capitalist Democratic Party (see issues #110 thru 113).

SDS, which Hayden helped founded, emerged after all as a rebellion against the "conservative" politics of Michael Harrington and others in the (Student) League for Industrial Democracy. Now, 15 years later, we find Hayden to Harrington's right insofar as Harrington is in one of his phases of vigorously adding the call for socialism to his predominant anti-communism. Hayden prefers the nebulous Campaign for Economic Democracy (CED).

There is of course much that is positive about these developments. They reflect growing mass sentiment for reform and discontent with the prevailing economic and political order. The inclusion of the word "socialism" in legitimate political debate can be a step forward.

But for those who do not wish the struggle in the electoral arena confined to the Democratic Party there is another ominous side to the coin. It is one thing to urge people into the Democratic Party as the place to struggle electrolytically -- that debate will have to wait for another time. In Michigan, however, there is a little-noticed but very important effort to preclude any alternative.

Unknown to most, and ignored by even the Left press, in March of this year the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a 1976 Michigan election law amendment that will exclude all but the Democratic and Republican parties from the ballot for the foreseeable future.

The law, known as Public Act 94, adds a new, virtually insurmountable obstacle to the already onerous petition requirement. Now, those parties successfully complying with the old petition requirement are presented to the voters in a newly-created and unprecedented "Party Qualification Section" of the August Primary election ballot. Voters may vote for any one of the parties' right to present candidates on the subsequent November ballot. No names of proposed candidates or prominent persons associated with the party may appear in the Party Qualification Section. Those who choose to vote for the right of a "minor" party to appear on the November ballot are disenfranchised from voting for candidates in either the Democratic or Republican primaries.

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In the August, 1976, election in which the law was tried for the first time, five parties -- the Libertarian Party, the Communist Labor Party, the Socialist Workers Party, the Socialist Labor Party, and the U.S. Labor Party (NCLC) -- met the petition requirement and appeared in the Party Qualification Section of the ballot. The combined vote of all five parties fell far short of the votes necessary to qualify any one of them for the November ballot.

Politically, the motivation for the new law is clear. There has obviously been a growing interest in electoral activity both to the left and to the right of the two major political parties. In Michigan in 1976 more parties than any in fifty years sought access to the ballot. (This permitted the state to argue that they would exceed the capacity of voting machines, and thus claim a simple, quantitative motive for the passage of the explicitly restrictive new law). The objective basis for a turn to the left was certainly easily found in popular discontent with government, together with the onslaught of an especially severe overproduction crisis in the auto industry and the continued flight of capital from Michigan to the non-union, "right-to-work", cheap labor areas of the south, Puerto Rico, Mexico, etc.

In addition, the sixties has proven that Michigan election law was too open to defections from the Democratic Party. Zolton Ferency, Michigan Democratic Party Chairman, split over the issue of the war in 1968 and went on to help lead the Human Rights Party to a number of local election victories and significant statewide races. On the Right, George Wallace's American Independent Party continually embarrassed the Democrats by its strength during the 60's. Had the new election law been in effect then, it is virtually certain that the Human Rights Party would not have gotten off the ground, and the American Independent Party would have had a hard time.

Most observers agree that the fledgling Communist Labor Party demonstrated the greatest left electoral strength. Founded only in 1974, the C.L.P. got twice the required petition signatures in a six-week campaign, and then came in second to the right wing anarchist Libertarian Party in the PQS. The C.L.P. received more votes than any of the other left parties -- all of which had been on the ballot before, some for many years.

Permitted access to the November election ballot by a federal court decision which held that the new law had been passed too late to apply to the 1976 election, the C.L.P. ran one candidate, General Baker Jr., for state representative. Baker, a founder of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM), the heart of the defunct League of Revolutionary Black Workers, ran a vigorous campaign in a multinational working class district embracing parts of Detroit and all of Highland Park, Michigan.

Despite harassment, Baker finished second in a four-way race, defeating the Republican and U.S. Labor Party candidates. His nearly 10% of the total vote represented the highest percentage of votes for a communist candidate in the U.S. in over 30 years.

But unless a campaign currently underway to force repeal of Public Act 94 succeeds, that will be the last election for some time in which a Communist or anyone else unwilling to be confined to the Democratic or Republican parties has the opportunity to use the electoral arena in Michigan.

And the U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of the law means that those in other states where the Left has prospects of building a real base had best beware the passage of similar laws in their states.
GRANTS

NORTH CAROLINA WOMEN'S PRISON BOOK PROJECT
PO Box 27, Durham, North Carolina 27702

Formed at the sole request of the women at the North Carolina Correctional Center for Women, the Prison Book Project is now promoting the 2nd edition of Break De Chains of Legalized Slavery. The book was written by 10 women and contains articles, poems, graphics and photos resulting from the June 1975 protest at the prison. In mid-December, 1976, the book was banned by the N.C. prison officials. This action is being publicly protested by the women inside and outside the prison and may result in a legal suit. Our grant to the Project will assist their educational work within the state concerning prison conditions for women. Copies of the book are available for $2 each from the address above.

BOSTON COALITION FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
PO Box 101, Boston, Massachusetts 02123

The Boston Coalition was formed by a number of groups active in building support and solidarity with the MPLA in Angola. This summer the Coalition hopes to build an ongoing campaign around the First National Bank's involvement in South Africa. Resist's grant will help toward the cost of shipping badly needed clothing to the Zambian Patriotic Front.

PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY HALL
926 St. Stephens Rd.,
Prichard, Alabama 36610

Long active in struggles affecting the lives of black people in Mobile, Alabama, the PCH is now working with Immates for Action. Their particular focus is the abolishment of the death penalty in the state of Alabama. The PCH is also continuing to provide direct services to the community in the form of free meal programs, tenant advocacy, etc. Resist's grant (our last was in 1974) will assist general operations of the PCH office which has frequently been attacked.

NORTH DORCHESTER TENANTS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
584 Columbia Rd., Dorchester, Massachusetts

NDTOC began in 1974 working with tenants in the beginning struggle over rent control in this racially mixed working class neighborhood. The Committee has always made a priority of reaching black and hispanic tenants - many of whom had been bypassed by largely white tenant action groups. Today the work of the Committee centers on building tenant unions and fighting cutbacks in all areas of human services. NDTGC also hopes to create community facilities for battered women. Resist's grant will assist with office maintenance costs.

U.S. KOREA RESEARCH AND ACTION COMMITTEE
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Korea Commentary, published bi-monthly, is the product of this recent merger of two organizations with 8 years combined experience doing educational work around U.S.-Korea relations. The Committee works primarily among the Korean population in the U.S. In addition to slide shows, speaking and general educational work, the Committee has been active in calling for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea and for an end to U.S. aid to the Pak dictatorship. Resist's grant will help cover the cost of a promotion campaign.

To those of you who responded generously to our summer appeal, THANK YOU! Because of your support, we were able to lend assistance to the groups and organizations you see listed on this page. We would like to hope that you won't forget the needs of many more worthwhile political projects who are counting on us for support in August. Please send whatever you can AND mention the work of Resist to a friend. Again, we appreciate your commitment to helping small but exciting projects get off the ground.