

The People Protest

The Mess in Reagan's Backyard



by MAURICE JACKSON

25¢

Chairman, D.C./Virginia District, Communist Party, U.S.A.

Statehood for D.C.!

Support The Nuclear Freeze



Maurice Jackson is a Ward I delegate to the Statehood Constitutional Convention and Chairman of the D.C./ Virginia District of the Communist Party, U.S.A. A long time resident and activist of the Adams Morgan neighborhood, Jackson first got involved with the Civil Rights movement in the 1960's. He worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) founded by the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and later became a youth counselor and social program evaluator and researcher at the United Planning Organization (UPO). He has been a shipyard, longshore and construction worker, has travelled extensively, attended Fisk and Cambridge Universities and graduated from Antioch College. Jackson ran for an At-Large City Council seat in 1980 on the Independent "People Before Profit\$" ticket. He anticipates another bid for a City Council seat in the upcoming 1982 elections.

Washington, D.C. A City Fighting for Its Life

Washington, the District of Columbia, the capital of the world's richest capitalist nation, is known the world over as a base of power and a tourist's paradise. Within a few blocks of the White House are beautiful monuments in tribute to Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington, and the headquarters of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). A block or two in either direction are Connecticut Avenue (the Wall Street of D.C.), the U.S. Mint, FBI headquarters, and the U.S. Capitol.

Yet, also a few blocks from the White House one is astounded to find what seems like quite another Washington. Here pornographic moviehouses and massage parlors—where teenage boys and girls lure well-dressed businessmen—abound. One block over, one is more likely than not to spot female and male “impersonators” climbing into cars bearing the tags *Member of U.S. Congress*.

However, neither of these two seemingly different scenes represents the real Washington. One could say that they are just two sides of the same old coin. In the main, the worlds described above are not the worlds of the majority Black population of D.C. The *real* Washington is a city fighting for its life. This is the part of Washington that the Reagans never speak about or visit.

Washington, D.C., is, as one famous writer said a long time ago, “a city where the American dream and the American nightmare pass each other on

the street and do not speak.” In fact, the contrast between the rich and the poor in this city brings to mind Emerson's drab description of life: “Evermore beauty and disgust; magnificence and rats.” One is continually amazed to find that this city—from which the human rights of peoples all over the world are avowed—so casually denies these rights to its own citizens.

Life here need not be so bad for the poor and working people. The people of D.C. are a hardworking, racially and nationally mixed, culturally active people. And they are demanding that solutions be found to their many problems.

SOME REVEALING FACTS

In 1970 the population of D.C. was 756,000; in 1978 it was 684,000; and, according to preliminary census reports, in 1980 it fell to 635,000. This translates into a loss of 121,000 people (16 per cent) over the last ten years.

In 1970 D.C. was the ninth-largest city in the country, but by 1980 it had fallen to fifteenth-largest. Also worthy of note is that in 1970 the Black population was between 85 and 90 per cent of the total, but today it is down to 72 per cent. This drop is primarily due to economic hardships faced by the Black population. Also hard hit are the Latino people who, along with Blacks, have been forced out of the city in search of cheaper and better housing and lower prices in general.

Big Business in D.C. has devised a clever plan to drive the Black and the poor out of the city. Formulated by the Board of Trade, the “Year 2000” plan calls for the making of D.C. into a middle/upper-class, lily-white city by the turn of the century.

HOUSING PROSPECTS

How is this plan to be accomplished? A great deal of the answer centers around landlords driving up rents and converting apartments to condominiums, thereby pricing housing far out of the reach of the average citizen. According to the

Washington Post of February 3, 1981, condo conversion for 1980 far exceeded construction of new housing units by a figure of 12,253 to 3,571. Many landlords are not oblivious to burning down their buildings to push out long-time tenants who have been protected in part by rent control laws and then collecting fire insurance. There is also a trend among some landlords to offer tenants up to \$10,000 to move from choice property.

Overall, the problems of decent housing affect a majority of D.C. citizens. Consider the following:

"Officially" more than 11,000 families pay over 35 per cent of their incomes for rent. There are over 10,000 families on the public housing waiting lists, with an average wait of five years. The average cost of a home in D.C., according to the *Washington Star* of February 1, 1981, is \$117,500, which is up from \$103,000 in 1980, a jump of 13.6 per cent. Actually this is just the average figure for new and used homes. According to the *New York Times* of July 26, 1981, "now it costs an average of \$167,118 to buy a 2 bedroom house in the capital,

"Many landlords are not oblivious to burning down their buildings to push out long-term tenants who have been protected in part by rent control laws and then collecting fire insurance."

and housing costs rank with those in the most inflated real estate markets in America which are largely on the West Coast." To build a new home in D.C. costs well over \$200,000.

There are many other conditions that affect the housing market. For example, 65,000 of 200,000 D.C. rental units are in serious need of repair, as are over 14,000 houses. Additionally, 12,000 boarded-up housing units, most privately owned, mock the city's homeless. And, while a limited

form of rent control exists, the City Council recently passed a law which allows for a 10 per cent increase in units once a year after vacancy.

A devastating footnote to the above facts is that wages in D.C. are not keeping up with the spiraling cost of living. The latest figures from the U.S. Department of Commerce show that the personal income for D.C. residents rose only 10.3 per cent in 1978, compared to about 12.1 per cent nationally. During the same period prices rose 8.8 per cent against 7.9 per cent nationally, and now out-distance income. The private sector payroll in D.C. had the lowest rise in the nation at only 7 per cent.

According to the *Washington Post* of July 27, 1981, the spendable income, after taxes, per household for the metropolitan area (Maryland and Virginia suburbs and D.C.) is \$29,648. Montgomery County, the nation's richest county, has an average income of \$35,732 per household. The same article reports the after-tax average income in D.C. to be \$25,824. This average of course includes the incomes of Washington's superrich: its millionaire politicians, the owner of the *Post*, etc. According to census figures, the average income for a family of four is \$19,783 annually, and the average income for a Black family of four is only \$10,237 per year. Yet, according to the *Washington Afro American*, it costs the average family of four over \$20,000 a year to live decently. Only Boston and San Francisco have higher housing costs, and D.C. has higher living expenses and lower wages than either.

HEALTH CARE

The overall health of the people of D.C. is on a steady decline. The tuberculosis rate is 49 per 1,000. This is four times the national average of 13 per 1,000. A hospital room in D.C. costs over \$350 per day; \$700 per day for intensive care treatment. Medical costs in D.C. are rising yearly 50 per cent more than nationally.

The infant mortality rate (which, according to experts, is the most widely used medical statistical indicator of the overall health situation in all countries) is over 20 per thousand for Blacks which is higher than that of Cuba (18.6); the Federal Republic of Germany (18.6); or Canada (14.3). This figure

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for D.C. is higher than that for many developing countries, most capitalist countries most developed socialist countries. The infant mortality for white babies in D.C. is 13 per thousand.

Black people in D.C. are 30 per cent more likely to die of cancer than whites and the cancer rate for Blacks in D.C. is 20 per cent higher than the national average—the highest in the entire country. D.C. also has the lowest life expectancy in the nation (Black males, 58.5; white males, 66 years; Black females, 68.3 years; white females, 74 years).

In addition to this the public hospitals in D.C. are overcrowded every night.

POLICE BRUTALITY.

According to the *Washington Post* and *Star*, in 1979 over 200 cases of police brutality were reported (though the ACLU says that this figure is only the tip of the iceberg)—only 8 were brought before the review board. No figures have been released for 1980 or 1981.

- Serious crime was up 11 per cent in 1980 (the rate for August 1980 was 34 per cent higher than for August of 1979)—and even police department officials admit this is due to inflation and unemployment, not to a lack of police personnel.

- D.C. has the highest incarceration rate in the nation—600 per 100,000 population—which is 3 times the national rate of 210 per 100,000. In fact it is said that only South Africa has more people in jail per thousand than D.C.

YOUTH

The treatment of young people could properly be called the shame of the city. Youth unemployment for Blacks and Latinos is between 75 and 80 per cent; and 90 per cent of all of D.C.'s unemployed are Black, with the official Black unemployment rate near 18 per cent as compared to 7.1 for the population in general.

The public education system is in a crisis yet 1,000 teachers have been laid off, and teachers, parents and students are blamed by officials for the crisis in learning. Classroom sizes average well over 30 pupils.

D.C.'s population is 72 per cent Black, yet the public school system is over 95 per cent Black. Recent figures released by the D.C. school superintendent show that 10,646 of 21,538 children (50 per cent) fail to master skills needed for promotion, yet the education budget has been cut by tens of millions of dollars. (*Washington Post*, Jan. 31, 1981.)

In addition, higher education continues to be placed out of the reach of many here. Tuition at the University of the District of Columbia (D.C.'s public university) doubled last year, and at Georgetown University general tuition is \$8,500 annually; \$15,000 for medical school.

SENIORS

The elderly of D.C. are also confronted with many problems. Social Security benefits do not nearly meet their needs and yet Reagan plans to cut benefits. While the city government has insufficient plans or concerns for the elderly with respect to housing, rising energy costs, etc., clinics are also being closed and Medicaid to the elderly

has been sharply curtailed. Many seniors experience grief and premature death through neglect. Condo conversions force them out of the city; common criminals prey upon them. And elderly women are subject to even worse living conditions.

WOMEN WORKERS

Washington, D.C. has the highest proportion—45 per cent—of women workers among major metropolitan areas. Sixty per cent of all women, seventy one per cent of Black women, work.

About 4 out of 5 women workers are white collar, mostly typists and secretaries. A handful hold high-powered and handsomely paid jobs, but the great majority hold low paid and unorganized government or private office jobs. Large numbers of Black and Latino women still work as domestics; they receive no legal protection and are often omitted from official figures.

Working women are subject to vile discrimination. They usually are paid less for the same work

than their male counterparts. Sexual harassment goes unchecked. The city's Human Rights department has a backlog of thousands of cases, as does the federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission.

Walk into the Hilton or Sheraton hotels, or other service industries. You will see Black and Latino charwomen doing most of the work which keeps them running, and, at the same time, makes the owners of these giant enterprises rich.

TAX RIPOFFS

The tax burden placed upon the average working man and woman in D.C. is enormous. Consider the following:

- D.C. residents pay over \$2,000 per capita federal taxes—\$491 above the national average and more than 49 states. All told, D.C. pays over \$2 billion in taxes annually.
- D.C. residents pay more in local (city) taxes than residents in all but three cities in the nation, and D.C. is not even a state. "Citizens in the U.S. paid an average of \$934 in taxes to state and local governments in 1979: with Alaskans paying a high of \$2,546. New York had the second highest per capita burden, at \$1,370, followed by D.C., at \$1,336." The *Daily World* ran an article about a study done by a Michigan research firm which showed that from 1981 to 1986 D.C.'s tax burden for national defense will be \$20 billion, or \$27,000 for a family of four.
- While homeowner taxes went up 157 per cent in the last five years, corporate property taxes are up less than 50 per cent.

Yet, as one would only imagine in a capitalist society, Big Business is blessed with a free ride. Since 1976 (the last year for which figures have been released), 147 companies which made over \$1 million a year in revenues paid no taxes. The government refuses to reveal the names of these "welfare" companies. Hotels and large corporations pay taxes only on land (and sometimes not on that), thereby getting away with millions in



Photo by Doris Lasher

*Maurice Jackson with Afro American liberation leader
Angela Davis*

property and building tax loopholes. And even though the working-class districts' property taxes spiral, hotel cartels get off almost scott-free. One example is the Hyatt Regency which bought a piece of land for \$4.8 million and built a \$33 million, 850-room hotel. Taxes were paid only on the land, thus the owner of the Hyatt got a \$333,000 tax loophole. The Hilton bought a \$4.6 million piece of land, built an \$18 million hotel and paid no taxes.

THE ROLE OF BIG BUSINESS

Much of the blame for the present crisis of everyday living lies with the capitalist system, which puts profits before people and the military budget before social services. Big Business in D.C. is reaping profits like never before and oversees the city of two worlds. Unlike many urban areas in the Midwest, industry plays a small role here. Almost half of the population works for the federal government and a large section works for the city government.

Last year, according to the *Washington Post's* list of Annual Top 60 Moneymaking Corporations in the area, profits were over \$2 billion.

The Washington Board of Trade (BOT is D.C.'s Chamber of Commerce) and the Washington Board of Realtors are the unstinted voices of capitalism and corporate greed. While the BOT reveals its racist edge in many ways, a striking reflection of its policies is its 3 per cent Black membership in a 70 per cent Black city.

Both organizations wield considerable influence by lobbying the City Council, writing bills for that body and giving generous campaign contributions. The activities of these corporate bloodhounds were documented a few years ago in a book by former City Council member Rev. Douglas Moore. The expose, *The Buying & Selling of the City Council*, proved complicity on the part of some councilmembers in approving large favors for bus-

iness interests. Vicious media attacks on Moore because of his anti-monopoly positions were in part responsible for his defeat in a bid for reelection.

WASHINGTON POST

Giving recognition to the BOT's 100th anniversary on April 22, 1959, the *Washington Post* said in a rare moment of truth, "The Board of Trade covets its own influential role in local affairs and thus betrays the broadest interests of the community."

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This statement has as much relevance today as yesteryear. In its candidness however, the *Post* forgot to mention its own mouthpiece service to the BOT. *Post* editorials have pushed repeatedly for reduction in the city's workforce. They have assailed the 9.1 per cent federal wage increase for city workers and have demanded a dismantling of workers' compensation and an end to rent control.

Additional insult was made to the city's large unemployed sector when the *Post* last year constructed a huge \$68 million printing plant in the Virginia suburbs. Never to be forgotten and still to be avenged is the *Post's* successful union-busting efforts of 1975 against its printers.

This once small family newspaper now owns a paper in Everett, Washington; Herald and Trenton, New Jersey *Times* newspapers; *Newsweek* and *Inside Sports* magazines; four TV stations; interests

in the *International Herald Tribune*; a news print operation and a news service.

RIGGS BANK

Another Board of Trade bulwark is D.C.'s most powerful financial institution, Riggs Bank. Riggs, the D.C. bank with the largest amount of deposits, has the lowest percentage of loans to D.C. residents and businesses of any commercial bank in the city. And where is Riggs investing the money deposited by D.C. residents? Some of the people's deposits have been loaned to the South African white supremacist government and to the military dictatorships of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. Of the \$78 million lent to repressive regimes, Chile received 20 per cent in 1979. In the same period, Riggs' profits went up nearly 22 per cent. These earnings, laced in blood, were made at the expense of D.C.'s Afro-American population and the people of Latin America.

Riggs redlines predominantly Black areas of the city. In Anacostia, the capital's poorest section, Riggs made only 4 residential mortgage loans from 1976 to 1978. In 1977 four neighborhoods with more than 50 per cent Black residents deposited \$68 million in deposits at the branches in their neighborhoods, but received less than four million in home mortgage loans.

The bank maintains close connection with government officials. Mayor Marion Barry, who has himself criticized Riggs' record in hiring Blacks and women, named Daniel Callahan III, the institution's president, to chair his Economic Development Committee. Unfortunately, Mayor Barry also chose to invite Carter Dove, another high Riggs' official with him on an African goodwill tour last summer, even though the bank's South African connection has been widely publicized.

Credit must be given to the D.C. Bank Campaign for its excellent research in documenting



Solidarity Day, Washington, D.C., September 19, 1981

and exposing Riggs' financial tentacles. This group has not confined itself to the library. It has called successful demonstrations against the bank's policies, and fought against new branches being opened until those policies are changed. They have been successful in getting some depositors to close their accounts, withdrawing more than \$100,000. This campaign against Riggs and other banks which do business with apartheid South Africa deserve our full support.

A QUESTION OF STATEHOOD

In November 1980 nearly 60 per cent of those who voted in the presidential and City Council elections cast a "yes" vote for the Statehood Initiative. The citizens of D.C. began to move toward the statehood possibility when a proposed con-



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stitutional amendment, calling for D.C. congressional representatives, got hopelessly bogged down in state legislatures.

Also lending popularity to statehood were the following: The nation's capital is more populous than seven states; statehood would complete the process of home rule by giving the city power over its own budget; thus the city would be more in control of its fiscal and legislative agenda and would not be subject to the whims of congressional veto power.

Other advantages to becoming a state include the ability to institute a reciprocal tax on those who work in the District but live in Maryland and Virginia. These people would pay their state taxes to D.C. This would not be an extra tax burden on the higher-income suburban workers who constitute

67 per cent of the District's work force. Statehood leaders and the city's Finance Department believe such a tax, already existing in many states, would bring in at least \$323.7 million.

A most important aspect to the statehood question relates to the fact that Congress has the "right" to veto all legislation passed by the D.C. City Council. What this means in effect is that a Ronald Reagan Congress, coupled with international and local Big Business, call all the shots in D.C.

Congress also has control over the city budget. Each year Congress "allots" to the city the federal payment which is supposedly a reimbursement from Congress for the use of services and properties in D.C. However, while the U.S. government and Congress own, exempt or otherwise control

55 per cent of the land in D.C., this federal payment accounts for only 17 per cent of the city's operating budget. (This stands in sharp contrast to Gary, Indiana, where U.S. Steel owns 51 per cent of the property and pays 51 per cent of the taxes.)

Even the *New York Times* acknowledges the discrepancy between the Federal Payment and the costs of services rendered. According to an article in the *Times*, July 26, 1981, "Disbursement [federal payment—Ed.] to the city in place of the theoretical \$500 million a year that the United States would pay in taxes are pegged by law at a maximum of \$300 million a year. But congressional appropriation of even this amount customarily lags behind the city's needs."

This payment has increased only 5 per cent since 1975 and operating expenses in the city have gone up over 50 per cent. To solve this problem, progressive Congressman Ronald Dellums, a member of the Congressional Black Caucus from California and chairman of the House D.C. Committee, along with Congressman Walter Fauntroy, D.C.'s nonvoting delegate, have introduced a formula-based federal payment calculated on actual increases incurred by the city in maintaining and exempting these properties.

Many national organizations with headquarters in D.C. receive tax exempt status. Among them are the Veterans of Foreign Wars who are annually exempted \$236,253; the Daughters of American Revolution, \$250,710; the National Guard Association and the National Rifle Association. Many of these organizations are Right-wing, racist, sexist, and anti-union.

The total exempted taxes of national organizations in D.C. adds up to well over \$3.5 million each year. Acquisition of statehood would end the taxation of the people without representation.

THE PATH TO STATEHOOD

Of course, there are serious hurdles to overcome on the way to statehood. An election for

delegates to the Statehood Constitutional Convention was held in November where 45 delegates were elected by the entire D.C. electorate. They are mandated to convene a constitutional convention scheduled for 1982.

The convention will have the duty of drafting the proposed constitution proposing a name for the state as well as determining the structure and make-up of the state's legislature and the term and powers of its governor.

After the constitutional convention another election would have to be held to give the people the right to either accept or reject the proposed constitution. During this same election, two U.S.

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senators and representatives to the U.S. House of Representatives (the number to be determined by state population) would be elected. If the people of D.C. ratify the constitution, an application to Congress for statehood will be made, where a simple majority in both the House and the Senate is needed to carry the procedure to the next step. The last step requires either the signing or vetoing of the bill by the President. This is the way for citizens of D.C. to achieve representation in Congress.

THE LATINO AND CARIBBEAN PEOPLE

A growing number of our city's residents have fled to D.C. from Latin American and Caribbean

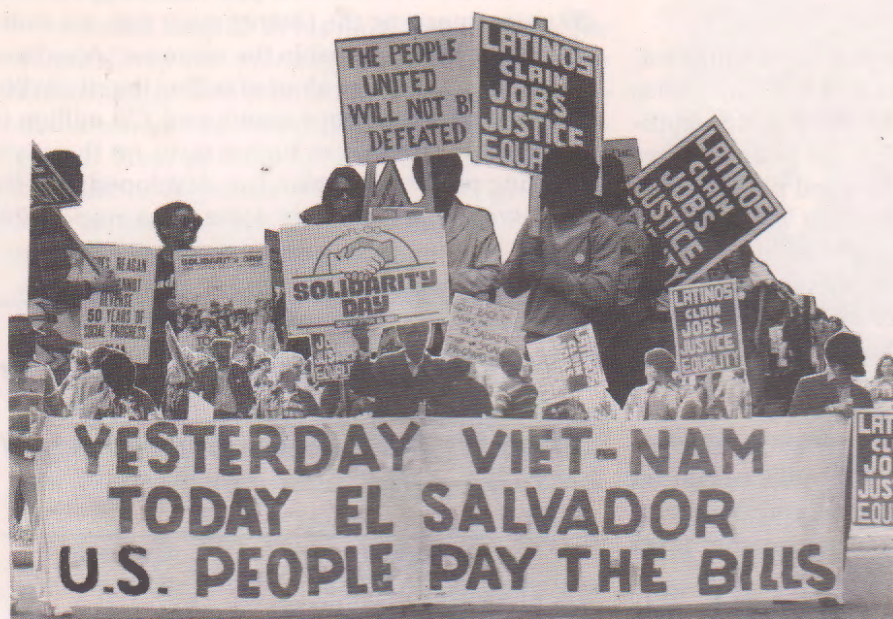


Photo by Jorge Luis Gaviola

Solidarity Day rally. Faces blacked out of Salvadoran refugees who fear deportation.

countries which have worse political and economic conditions, most notably from repressive regimes of El Salvador, Haiti, etc. Overwhelmingly working class, they often work at two and sometimes three low-paying jobs to make ends meet. While they face problems similar to those of other workers, their situation is compounded by their lack of immigration documents, the language barrier and a foreign culture. These factors leave them wide open to brazen exploitation by landlords and racist bosses.

A study done last year by city planners in the Mt. Pleasant and Adams Morgan neighborhoods, where a large Latino population is concentrated, found their problems to be acute. For example, fear and inability to communicate in English prevented them from reporting severe housing violations. The survey found that many documented workers, when eligible for unemployment com-

pensation, do not apply so that undocumented relatives or friends remain undiscovered in their overcrowded apartments.

The unemployment rate for Latinos is 16 per cent and is noted as being twice as high as the "official" rate in the city as a whole. Income distribution, in an area where the average price of a house is over \$100,000, finds Spanish-speaking people ranked last. *Reported* average annual income for Latino households is \$10,037, as compared to \$10,237 for Black families and \$19,783 for white families.

The Communist Party rejects the notion that the Latin and Caribbean people are to blame for any social ills forced upon the indigenous population by profit-seeking monopoly corporations. We see it as our internationalist duty to welcome the Latin and Caribbean population into the ranks of our country's national minorities.

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The City's Financial Crisis

Perhaps the most serious problem facing residents here as elsewhere in the nation's major cities are the severe budget cutbacks. Previously insufficient jobs and services vital to the people's lives have been further reduced. Needed public clinics to curb one of the country's highest TB rates have been closed. It is reported, as if from some underdeveloped country, that medicines and bandages are in short supply in other clinics. Over 1,000 badly needed teachers have been laid off and some dozens of schools closed. In the next two years, 4,600 city jobs are scheduled to be cut.

At the heart of the matter is what city officials claim to be a budget deficit of \$409 million. Instead of raising remarkably low taxes on corporate profits, city officials plan to raise homeowner taxes and reimpose regressive food taxes.

In short, working people of D.C. will have to face service cuts and tax increases while Big Business continues to get off easy. In addition to 147 corporations (which made over \$1 million last year) that pay no taxes at all, there are countless others that owe back taxes to the tune of over \$23 million.

The mayor has introduced a plan which calls for borrowing from the federal government to solve the crisis and to repay the money over a number of years. However, he has no plan to restore services or jobs. The chairman of the council finance committee calls for more taxes on the people and the nonvoting delegate to Congress calls for the indebtedness of the city to bankers on the bondmarket. Similar plans have failed in New York and in Cleveland.

Just recently, in what top city officials labeled a "compromise," a jointly introduced plan which calls for the selling of bonds to private investors was offered. The plan calls for the selling of \$184 million in bonds. Overall the proposal, according to the *Washington Post* of February 6, 1981, would

"cost the city an estimated \$600 million in the next 30 years, meaning the District must raise an additional \$20 million a year in the revenue." Needless to say, this is nothing short of selling the city to Big Business and the above mentioned \$20 million is expected to come from higher taxes on the city's working people. This plan was developed by Felix Rohatyn's firm; the very same folks responsible

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for NYC's financial mess.

The mayor continues to deny municipal workers their yearly salary increase. Usually, the practice in the city is to grant its workers the same yearly increase as federal workers. Last year federal workers received 9.1 per cent, which in itself is far below the 13 per cent needed to keep up with inflation and the spiraling cost of living.

Instead, the mayor offered 5.5 per cent and refused to negotiate with the bargaining unit of the 14 united public workers unions. The employees affected by these decisions are teachers, school cafeteria and maintenance workers, sanitation and white-collar workers and many others. The courts have upheld the mayor's decision. Meanwhile, high-salaried government bureaucrats continue to get their raises.

The mayor's plan was accepted by the City Council with the exception of 2 members. Needless to say it was rejected overwhelmingly by the workers who have had militant demonstrations in front of City Hall.

The Fightback

Frederich Engels, in his monumental work *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, stated, "Every great city has one or more slums where the working class is crowded together. True, poverty often dwells in hidden alleys close to the palaces of the rich but in general, a separate territory has been assigned to it where, removed from the happier classes, it may struggle along as it can." (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London 1845, p. 26. Emphasis added.) From the description given of D.C. at the beginning of this article, the situation that existed in England's great cities in the last century exists now in the capital of the United States of America. The sad fact is, however, that this poverty reigns in every "great" U.S. city.

The effects of the Reagan budget cuts on D.C. are disastrous. Over 1,200 CETA jobs have been eliminated. AFDC, food stamps, day care and other services for needy people are being cut or eliminated. Unfortunately, city officials, the city council, the school board and the mayor are doing very little to mobilize the people of D.C. against the cutbacks.

The energy and militancy of those who are "fed up and won't take no more" must be tapped, harnessed and unleashed against the Reagans, Stockmans (and those who call their tunes and pull their strings) as well as against Big Business and all those standing in the way of real progress.

Recent struggles in D.C. show that the working people are seeking answers and solutions to this situation. Their struggles have taken the form of hundreds of city workers demonstrating in front of City Hall against the city administration's refusal to grant a decent and deserved raise. Further indication of this sentiment was evident September 19 when thousands upon thousands of the people of Washington, D.C. took to the streets in the "Solidarity Day" demonstration against the Reagan, Big Business, Right-wing assault upon



U.P.I. Photo-Reprint from D.W.

Maurice Jackson with Gus Hall, Secretary General of the CPUSA.

the working people. This demonstration was called by the AFL-CIO and endorsed by most of the nation's leading civil and social rights organizations.

The nature of the struggle in D.C. also shows the absolute historic necessity of a strong and vibrant Communist Party that will continually fight for the broadest unity of *all* forces against the Reagan assault on the quality of life of our people. The Party is steadily increasing its impact on the political scene in Washington, D.C. The 8,500 votes for the chairman of the CP of D.C. and Va., who ran as an independent candidate for the City Council, were a testament to this fact. This candidate received 20 per cent of the vote in his home district as well as the support of such local and national figures as the Reverend Ben Chavis, noted human rights activist; Ms. Isabel Letelier, a human rights activist and wife of slain Chilean martyr Orlando Letelier; George B. Murphy, Jr., retired editor of the *Afro-American* newspaper; of trade unions and most importantly of many members of Council 211 of the American Federation of Government Workers, which represents over 10,000 workers in D.C.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY PROGRAM FOR WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Communist Party of Washington, D.C. and Virginia has put forth a 15 point program designed to provide meaningful and immediate solutions to the problems faced by the people.

- ★ Tax Big Business, not the people.
- ★ End tax exemptions except for religious, labor and educational organizations.
- ★ Pass a more effective rent control bill, end speculation, stop condo conversion, roll back rents to no more than 25 per cent of working people's income.
- ★ Defend public workers' right to strike.
- ★ Maintain real wages of public workers, including immediate inactment of the 9.1 per cent increase for public workers. Recall laid off public workers.
- ★ Statehood for the District of Columbia.
- ★ Public ownership of the utilities under democratic controls.
- ★ Meaningful jobs for all at trade union wages, enacting affirmative action with clout.
- ★ Massive job training programs for young people.
- ★ Full equality for women, including equal pay for equal work, full maternity benefits, and quality day care. Punish employers who harass women at the worksite.
- ★ Keep the schools, libraries, recreation centers and public clinics open.
- ★ A decent life for our elderly citizens including no cuts in social security or other benefits, free transportation on public facilities and aid in rents and mortgages.
- ★ Slash public transportation fares.

★ Outlaw racist acts and racist organizations.

★ Make the City Council and other officials elected by the people responsive to the peoples needs, or elect people who will be.

With the implementation of this 15 point program which objectively meets the needs of the majority of the people of the city, life would be much better in the nation's capital. Many of those now unemployed would have meaningful work. It would mean converting the boarded-up old buildings into livable homes, clinics, recreation centers, etc.

The important thing to realize is that there is money in the city it's just in the wrong hands. With statehood for the district taxing all those who use the corporate loopholes and instituting a reciprocal tax, the necessary monies are there to solve the city's problems.

Coupled with the national fightback to drastically cut the military budget by billions and the drive to curtail corporate profits, this is a winning strategy. It is a message to all elected officials who do not join in the fight that if they do not take the "high road" to struggle then they will take the "low road" to election defeat and forced unemployment.

The solutions lie in the development of a broad based, anti-monopoly, multi-national coalition led by labor that will organize and mobilize the spontaneous and many-sided efforts now unfolding. The solution lies in an anti-monopoly program that will appeal to all honest and serious people who want to get the boot off their back. The solution lies in the *fightback*.

Socialism

Socialism is an idea whose time has come. It is long overdue in the United States, yet it is a living reality from Moscow to Havana, from Ethiopia to Vietnam. Other newly liberated countries like Angola, Mozambique, Grenada and Nicaragua are well on the road to the socialist path to equality.

Socialism means an end to the exploitation of the poor and working people by big business and the rich. It means an end to racism and oppression, and the realization of complete equality for Black, Latino and all minority peoples, and for women and youth.

Socialism means that the wealth of our beautiful country will at long last be used to end unemployment, and to secure meaningful jobs for all. It means for everyone free, comprehensive education from kindergarten to graduate school, and the guarantee that all profits be used for the good of the people.

Socialism means clean, crime free streets, full stomachs, decent housing and most of all Peace. The Communist Party is leading the fight for jobs, peace, equality, and socialism in the United States.



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Dear Friend,

This pamphlet represents the views of a working class party, the Communist Party of Washington, D.C. and Virginia. Our organization is made up of people like you and I who are active in the daily struggle to make life better. We are a Party of women and men, young and old, Black, Latino, Asian, Native American Indians and white; public and transit workers, teachers, secretaries, students, lawyers, nurses and the unemployed. We hold the common belief that capitalism and big business is the source of poverty, racism and inequality and that it is time that we as working people, finally bear the fruits of our labor and become masters of our own destiny.

As people active in the communities, offices and shops, we especially would like to receive your opinions, questions and comments on this program. We hope you will find yourself in agreement with many of our ideas and join with us, knowing fully that nothing can be won without struggle.



In Solidarity,

Maurice Jackson

Maurice Jackson

Yes, I would like information on the Communist Party, USA

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