

April 10, 1978

TO THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE

The attached communication to Jack is a summary of a discussion he and I had on the question of unemployment. This Thursday the PC will be discussing unemployment and the secretariat thought it would be useful for the comrades to read this as a basis for the discussion. There are some points that won't necessarily be discussed but this is viewed as an initial discussion on the subject. At the end of the letter there is a reading list that may be helpful. Another article that is useful is in Vol. 1 of Capital in the section entitled "Industrial Reserve Army."

Maceo

X: PC

Feb. 28, 1978

Jack,

I'm outlining some of the points that you and I discussed yesterday evening. The major point I believe we're concerned with is how to bring forth this social problem of unemployment more into focus into party propaganda. We want to more consistently deal with it beyond the question of just mere statistics (even though that's quite important), but how is this question affecting our class and what a small party as ours can do to x "raise hell" on this issue.

The major sector of this society that's hit hardest with unemployment is Black youth and youth in general. (I tend to think that you're right on the question of raising the "Jobs For Youth" slogan as opposed to "Jobs for Black Youth" slogan. But I still want to give it more thought. I'm extremely concerned with the monstrous crushing of Black youth who are unemployed i.e. the extreme numbers who are unemployed). I believe this question graphically reveals how racism depresses the entire working class. The fact that in a number of cities 80% or more of Black youth are unemployed, correspondingly a large percentage of white youth are also without jobs (as high as 30% in the same cities). This is being totally ~~xx~~ covered up.

What were the major ~~xx~~ points we thought had to be dealt with:

1. How to take this into the labor movement. We say we want to take all of our campaigns into the labor movement. That's our arena of work. If we can take the issues of Bakke, abortion, Marroquin can't we also take the issue of unemployment into the labor movement as well?
2. How do we use our campaigns in general to deal with this question? What about our election campaigns, our work in helping to build NSCAR, and the Militant? As an example, wouldn't this help the Militant become more of a workers' paper? The YS could write an article on the "Permanent Depression Among Youth."
3. How is large scale unemployment destroying the social fabric of our class? In other words, isn't it creating a whole layer of pariah out of our class - the youth? How does prostitution, drugs, the destruction of the family for example fit in to all this? In essence how does unemployment affect the morale of our class and its willingness to struggle?
4. If we think this is an important issue how do we take such a campaign and reach those who are affected by it; the unemployed youth?
5. How does this all tie into getting our people into industry? What does this say about the character of our jobs committee? Should there be joint YSA/SWP jobs committees to get ~~xx~~ unemployed youth who come around the YSA into industry? Doesn't this also point the way for what the union movement should be doing?
6. What type of slogans should be raised? Should it be "Jobs for Youth," "Jobs for Black Youth," or some other slogan all in addition to the "Jobs for All" slogan?
7. And finally how does this all tie into our proletarian orientation and to our turn?

These were the major points we discussed. But in grappling with this question we also thought it would be important to look at some historical examples like what the CP, YCL and others dealt with this.

We should also review what Trotsky said about it in the Transitional Program. What did we say about the parish problem in Prospects for Socialism? What did Marx say about this in the Communist Manifesto and in Capital? What did Engels say about this in the Conditions of the Working Class in England?

I believe this condenses the discussion we had.

*Maces*