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Phoenix SWP
1243 E. McDowell
Phoenix, AZ 85006

OCT 29 1979

October 24, 1979

Political Committee

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is material pertaining to Proposition 200 to appear on the Phoenix municipal ballot on Nov. 6 of this year. This proposition is the most debated item in the elections. The local campaign we are running was not originally planning to pay much attention to this, or any other ballot issue as we had conceived of a rather low-key campaign speaking entirely to the labor party issue with whatever press time we might have gotten. However, as you know, the mayor's race has shaped up differently than expected with only the SWP challenging the incumbent.

Therefore, we are having to get more involved in the local issues. We should have sent this information to you earlier for your recommendation on our position on Prop. #200. Now we find ourselves in a very tight time crunch with the election only a couple of weeks away.

The proposition addresses itself to transportation. Already existing and scheduled for implementation is the Papago Freeway Plan. Basically, it provides for completion of the national freeway system into and through the west side of the city. We, of course, are not opposed to this completion as it does two things. One, it makes interstate travel more convenient. Two, it provides for easier cross-town commuting for growing working-class residents in that part of town. This plan will go into effect if Prop. #200 loses.

Passage of the ballot item, called the Grid Plan, will accomplish basically the following. It will substitute widened major streets across town for the freeway system. Also, it will provide for the purchase of additional city buses. Presently, there are less than 250 buses on the road, making the bus system useless for the vast majority of people. For this latter reason, many working people support the Grid Plan. However, it does not provide for the personnel for maintaining an increased bus system. Therefore, we assume that a higher tax will ensue to implement an increase in the number of buses.

While we have tried to analyze the question of higher taxes as the bottom line on these two plans, we have not been able to determine which, if any, would actually include a tax hike. Both rely on federal funding. The Freeway people say federal funds have already been earmarked for the freeway completion and cannot be applied to the Grid

Plan. The Grid Plan proponents say the same funds can be used for street improvements and mass transit. We haven't the facilities to determine which is correct.

Our position, which is asked on almost every campaign occasion, is that neither plan answers the needs of working people in Phoenix. Both leave it completely up to the individual to provide the transportation. We are focusing on the fact that inflation makes car up-keep increasingly difficult, that the ruling class should provide and pay for an extensive mass transportation system, and that workers should abstain on this vote. We qualify this position by adding that we don't oppose highway completion nor wider streets, but prefer to speak instead to the real problem of transportation. In short, we feel that neither plan goes far enough.

It is unfortunate that we neglected to seek your concurrence sooner. Hopefully, the P.C. can give this question rapid consideration.

By the way, the official position of the Central Arizona Labor Council is in favor of the freeway plan with no reason being given. Both plans provide jobs.

Please advise us of your opinion. I can be reached at home (602) 252-7591 and Dan Fien, our mayoral candidate can be reached at (602) 243-3481. Both of us are frequently at the bookstore.

Comradely,



Caroline Fowlkes
Phoenix Organizer