

ERAP NEWSLETTER

April 8, 1965

1100 E. Washington Ann Arbor, Mich.

DAY LABOR AGENCIES GET RICH WHILE THEIR WORKERS STAY POOR by a man who lives
on Kenmore

Reprinted from JOIN Community Union Newsletter

Most people don't know what spot labor is. It is commonly called slave labor. I know. I worked there. For example, a person gets up in the morning at 5:00 a.m. in order to get there before 6:00. Then you may stay there until 9:00 or so trying to get a ticket to work. Then they may say to come back in the afternoon, around 2:00 they say, which incidentally may mean double car fare. If you are lucky, you are sent out on a job. You may work four hours or six or eight. Then you must wait till the next day to pick up your check. If you're lucky, you may wind up with 8 dollars before you take out car fare, lunch, and taxes. You buy lunch from the company for 50 cents. The tops I ever got was \$1.25 an hour. A family man can't make it on that. (5)

Sixteen months ago, I was injured on the job. I was paid for approximately 2½ weeks. Although I was unable to go back to work and continue my job, this compensation was stopped. So it was either starve or try to get on welfare which I didn't want. So I was forced to sue them. The doctor which the company gave me said I was fit for work when I couldn't even get up out of bed. It took about 16 months to get any money. When it finally came it was only 500 dollars.

No insurance company will insure a spot labor company. There are too many accidents. So the companies have to put up a cash bond to cover compensation. All those companies should be shot down because they make money off of men's bodies. They drive around in new cars and live in expensive houses while they

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do it.

People cannot save money while they work at spot labor so they can never get a decent job. The trouble is that some people are so hard up that they can't wait until they find a regular job or get welfare.

STUDENTS HELP JOIN DURING THE SUMMER

This summer, there will be many students who will want to volunteer to work for JOIN. On May 1,2,3, there will be a conference given by JOIN and CORE for summer student volunteers who want to work in movements of poor people in Chicago and other cities. It will teach the summer volunteers about the problems poor people face and how to get people together to solve these problems.

RETRAINING EXPERIENCES AFTER BEING AUTOMATED OUT OF JOB by a Winthrop St. man

I had the opportunity to take an aptitude test for clerical work. I failed this test - but was not informed as to which subjects I needed "brushing up" in order to have another opportunity to take this aptitude test and pass it so that I could improve my ability to do clerical work. This was a test given at a federal agency, whose purpose is to "help(?)" those who have had the misfortune to be replaced by automation. The questions which must come to anyone though, is: "Why doesn't the federal government really make it possible for people to improve their standards, as long as these people are trying to help themselves?"

(6)
John King

These people realize fully they need trained guidance and instructors - but what happens when they fail the tests? You no doubt guessed the answer to that question - "Nothing." They don't even refer people to another department or agency that may be able to help them! So these people - who do possess enough ambition to want to improve their own standards of earning ability - are turned away, without any further aid or advice as to how to improve their abilities.

If any people who take these government aptitude tests are veterans, they are given the privilege of an interview with a Veterans Administration agent who reviews, in a sense, the results of the tests. This is all fine, but what are these veterans told if they fail these tests? "Your background does not 'fit' this kind of work". Primarily, "background" or the lack of the "proper background" is the reason why many people with ambition enough to want to improve their financial conditions, so that as a final result they would not be compelled to live in poor, run-down neighborhoods and deplorable housing conditions.

Anonymous (C9)

JOIN BEGINS TO ACT ON FOOD STAMP PLAN by Frank Blalock (5000 block, Winthrop)

At the meeting Wednesday night, the food stamp plan was brought up.

(5)

Examples

Why poor

The Food Stamp Plan in Cook County is a plan to permit families with low income to purchase bonus stamps for increased food purchases. The purpose of the plan is to use agricultural surpluses for people on ADC, welfare, and social security. To be eligible and not receiving assistance, if you're single you cannot make more than \$139 a month. If you have a family of 10, you could not make more than \$490 a month. In addition, you cannot have more than \$400 savings for a single person or \$600 for a family.

To be eligible for it, you practically have to be starving. For an example, a family of 5, whose income is \$299 is eligible, but as soon as he starts getting ahead a little bit, he is taken off and is in the same position as to start with. A man with a family of five making \$300 a month is still a poor man, but not according to the food plan.

The plan should be widened to include more people who are in low income groups; for an example, a family whose income is less than \$8000 a year. On the income tax, if they can put everyone less than \$10,000 on the small form, why can't they put them on this?

At the meeting Wednesday night, the people felt that it wasn't enough and we should try to achieve some changes, such as raising the limit to \$625 per month which is now considered too high according to the plan but actually if he has a family of five or six, he needs stamps.

It was also suggested that at the next meeting, if all our petitions for day care and the food plan were completed, we would go down to the Urban Progress Center and present it then.

If the Urban Progress Center is there to help fight poverty, then they should increase the program to include more people than just the one's that's practically starving.

WELFARE SUGGESTION

Mrs. Dorothy Perez, another JOIN member is testifying before a federal board investigating welfare practices in cities like Chicago. Mrs. Perez gives examples of inadequacies in welfare grants and mistakes that the welfare department in Chicago makes. She points out that people have many problems with welfare -- one of these problems is that some people must wait a long time for their check, even though they might be starving.

(5)

Mrs. Perez' most important recommendation is that poor people should sit on welfare boards instead of other officials who don't understand the problems of people on welfare. Mrs. Perez feels that poor people "alone know what it is like to be in need, and to fear hunger". She also feels that welfare recipients "have a right to help make the decisions that affect their lives so radically".

Barney

WHY ON A.D.C. by Elizabeth Thompson 4900 Winthrop

I think the Welfare is disgusting because they want to interfere into your personal life. My responsibility is to work and take care of my son. I don't want to sit down and wait for the money to come every month. My idea is that every person should be responsible, but some mothers have to get welfare so they can give their children everything he needs.

NEWARK

POOR PEOPLE TO RUN POVERTY PROGRAM HERE

Forty people from NCUP (Newark Community Union Project) were at the Area Board meeting of the Poverty Program two weeks ago. Here's what happened: (5)

The new name for the area board is People's Action Group. Thurman stood up and said the meeting was for poor people, and they should run it so poor people can understand what's going on.

Then we started talking about the constitution of the People's Action group. The meeting got so confusing that lots of people left - but NCUP stuck with it because we knew it was important.

Some people wanted everyone who lives in the area to be able to be on the board. But we know that means poor people won't be in a majority so we made a motion that poor people must be in a majority on the board. Walter Dawkins got so mad he called Tom an outsider and said he was leading the people wrong. Tom told everyone to notice who was against the NCUP motion (that the poor should be a majority on the board). He pointed to all the people from City Hall and told us who they were. Then we voted on the motion and it passed. Poor people must be a majority on the board. That was a victory, but now we have to go back to the next meeting and make sure they don't try to change it around. WSP

SOUTH JERSEY

We went to Trenton on Tuesday to talk with some people about organizing farm workers in South Jersey. These farm workers live in terrible poverty. Four out of five of their children die before they get to be 21, because they have bad food and no medical care, and they live in unhealthy conditions. They work a 10-12 hour day for slave wages, and their schools are the worst in the state. We hope we'll be able to work out some way that the War on Poverty could put SDS staff into South Jersey to help the people organize themselves to get better working and living conditions. If you ever picked in the fields, you know what it's like.

LIFE WITH LYNDON IN THE GREAT SOCIETY

JACK MINNIS -

On March 25 Lyndon got a report from his main civil rights pacifier, Leroy Collins, about discrimination against Negroes by Lyndon's boys in Alabama. Collins reported that "fair employment and nondiscrimination do not appear to be applied to Federal agencies" in Selma. He mentioned, among other agencies, the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The next day when Lyndon delivered his message about the KKK and the murder of Mrs. Liuzzo to a nationwide TV audience, who should be standing at his right hand but J. Edgar Hoover himself. In his statement Lyndon said: "I cannot express myself too strongly in praising Mr. Hoover and the men of the FBI for their prompt and expeditious and very excellent performance in handling this investigation. It is in keeping with the dedicated approach that this organization has shown throughout the turbulent era of civil rights controversies."

Lyndon, it seems, appreciates everything that sweet little old J. Edgar does, even if it is discriminatory. There is no record that Lyndon enquired of his top cop how many black faces were among those "dedicated" gumshoes who brought the Kluxers to bay. Nor did he, apparently, make any enquiry about why the Kluxers were brought in after the killing, and not before. One supposes that even such dedicated and efficient Dick Tracy's as the lily-white FBI agents must have had some reason to suspect the men they arrested, before the crime was committed, or they wouldn't have been able to put the arm on them so quickly, after the murder.

The Kluxers have been charged under a federal statute which the U.S. Courts have twice in the past year declared to be inapplicable in similar cases. So we might as well prepare for more of the elaborate excuses explaining why the Great Society can't make killing a crime in the South, when it's a black man or a civil rights worker who gets killed. This is known as the Rule-of-Law. There was a similar Rule-of-Law in Germany at one time.

Remember?

SOUTH ***** AFRICA

The ability of Lyndon's Great Society to get along with racism, when there's profit involved, was made very clear during this past week. Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corp. announced it was investing \$1,400,000 in a new plant in South Africa. The announcement came from two Owens-Corning executives who flew into Johannesburg with what the South African Government called a "message of hope for South Africa."

The two executives were Lauris Norstad (former NATO commander who, when he headed that organization, provided U.S.-contributed arms to Portugal which were used to enforce the slave-labor laws in Portugal's African possessions, Angola and Mozambique) and Harold Boeschenstein.

Norstad said on his arrival: "We have full confidence in South Africa - not only we as individuals but the United States and the American people." Boeschenstein's contribution was: "Any boycott moves do not reflect the general opinion of the people of the United States nor of its businessmen. We have great appreciation of South Africa's importance as an ally and as an economic force in the free world."

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Two questions arise: Is South Africa changing for the better, or is its racism getting worse? Do these two men speak for a significant body of businessmen in Lyndon's Great Society?

The first question is easily answered. On March 9th, the American and British Ambassadors to South Africa were publicly attacked by the South African Minister of the Interior because the two ambassadors had invited non-whites to embassy functions in Johannesburg. On March 26 the Washington Post reported that the multi-racial Progressive Party in South Africa had lost all 12 of the elections in which it had candidates; and that representatives of the racist Nationalist Party (the governing party) were elected for the first time in the "English" strongholds of Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Thus the racism of the South African Government is getting worse, not better.

The second question is also rather easily answered. Boeschstein and Norstad were elected as chief executive officers of Owens-Corning by the directors of the corporation. In a formal sense the two represent the businessmen on that board. Who are they?

Deane W. Malott - President Emeritus of Cornell University; director of General Mills, Inc.; director of Pitney-Bowes, Inc., director of B.F. Goodrich, Inc..
Howard J. Morgens - President of Proctor & Gamble; director of General Motors; director of Morgan Guaranty Trust Co..
H.C. Nolen - Chairman of McKesson & Robbins; director of American Optical; director of B.F. Goodrich, Inc.; director of Bankers Trust Co.; director of International Paper.
L.W. Cabot - President of Cabot Corporation; member of the Corporation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Trustee of Norwich University, Northeastern University, and Brookings Institute.
John E. Bierwirth - Chairman and President of National Distillers & Chemical Corp.; director of First National City Bank of N.Y.; director of Deering-Miliken; director of Colgate-Palmolive Corp.
James M. Kemper - Chairman, Commerce Trust Co. of Kansas City; trustee of Kansas City University.

Thus the men who are officially and formally represented by Boeschstein and Norstad are clearly well-entrenched members of the elite of the Great Society's business community. A careful reading of the pedigrees listed above indicates that, if the other corporate connections of the Owens-Corning board were traced out, they would be intimately associated with the entire corporate elite of the U.S., not to mention the most prestigious universities in the country.

Boeschstein and Norstad also serve other corporations in an official capacity, and, in some sense, can be said to be speaking for their associates in those other corporations. Boeschstein is on the board of:

National Distillers and Chemical Corp.; American Electric Power Co. (whose president, Donald Cook, was Lyndon's first choice for Secretary of the Treasury); Dow Jones & Co. (publisher of the Wall Street Journal); International Paper Co.; Ohio Bell Telephone (subsidiary of American Telephone and Telegraph); Ford Motor Co. (whose president was an endorser of Lyndon in the 1964 campaign, and whose chairman, Henry Ford II, created a sensation by announcing for Lyndon early in the campaign).

Norstad is a director of United Airlines and of McKesson & Robbins.

The answer to the second question, then is a resounding "yes". It was no idle boast when Norstad and Boeschstein assured the racists of South Africa that they spoke for the American business community. Indeed, in the Great Society, the business community could hardly express other sentiments, considering that U.S. sales to South Africa in 1964 totalled nearly \$500 million. And considering that businessmen have always been ready to whip up a quick morality to justify any deal that will turn a profit.

It was somewhat presumptuous, however, for these two pillars of righteousness to state that they spoke for "the American people". That term customarily includes more than 20 million black Americans, whose experience with native American racism makes them rather ill-disposed toward South African racism.

This, of course, assumes that Norstad and Boeschstein consider Negroes "people". Many of their South African friends and admirers do not.

Lyndon says he does.

WAR ON POVERTY

Another corporation has jumped on Lyndon's "profits from poverty" bandwagon. Packard-Bell Electronics Corporation, of Los Angeles, got a \$3,600,000 contract from Lyndon to operate a Job Corps program at Charleston, West Virginia.

Packard-Bell says it will train 300 young women in some of the basic service-skills - food preparation, clerking in retail stores, laundry and dry cleaning work, electronic work, etc. This comes out to a cost of \$12,000 per young woman for the training. Maybe this high cost stems partially from the fact that Packard-Bell is in Los Angeles, and the young women are in Charleston, West Va. It looks like Lyndon could've found someone a little closer to do the job.

Of course if you want to be really difficult, you could suggest it would be better just to give each of the 300 young women \$12,000 in cash. Wouldn't that be the most direct way to relieve their poverty? But that wouldn't do anything for Packard-Bell's poverty, though, would it?

And Lyndon has already proved he's worried about Packard-Bell's poverty. We mentioned in the first of this series that Lyndon's Agency for International Development had given Neil Jacoby, Dean of the UCLA Graduate School of Business Administration, \$25,000 to do a story about how much U.S. aid has helped Chiang Kai Chek and his family and friends on the island of Formosa. Jacoby is an official of Packard-Bell.

When he finishes with the Chiang Kai Chek story, perhaps he'll do one on those 300 young West Virginia women his firm is going to lift from poverty. He might even hire some of them to work in his company - since they'll be all trained and everything.

Lyndon's roving Ambassador Averill Harriman had some bad news for Tshombe this week. He told Tshombe that Lyndon had decided not to send anything but helicopters, trucks, bazookas and small arms to help Tshombe suppress the Congolese people. Harriman further told Tshombe that the Great Society would not send more than 400 American "advisers" to help with the military efforts of the "International Uncle Tom".

.. We used to call them "advisers" in Vietnam, too, if you recall.

CORRESPONDENCE

March 30, 1965

I offer the following questions, and views, for discussion within the organization:

(1) Of central importance, I think, is the question of what we are about. Are we a student organization that happens to also run community organizing projects? Are we a group of radical intellectuals, some of whom have a deeper commitment to the people than others, but whom the others support? Are we a left-wing group that has both campus and community branches? Are we, or do we view ourselves, as a movement?

(2) Should this organization, which grew out of the campus, have ever gone out to try and organize the urban poor in the first place? It is quite possible that we are working in the outside community because we do not have the courage to work in the campus community. After all, should not SDS members and those akin to us view themselves as a student movement and dedicate themselves first and foremost to organizing students? How can the walls outside be broken down if we cannot break down the walls of the campus?

And why do we run from the middle-class communities? True, SDS seemingly rejects the values of middle-class America. But it is also true, it seems, that any way one would define middle-class, the vast majority of SDS members come from middle-class backgrounds. Why don't we set up a project in a typical middle-class community, perhaps a suburb, and attempt to organize those people around relevant social issues? Are we afraid of failure?

(3) Someone brought up the point at the December NC that we are unintelligible. SDS has developed a rhetoric alien to non-members and non-social scientists. Additionally, we feel compelled to legitimize any action intellectually. Are we not so hung up in jargon and the need to intellectualize that we refuse to deal with problems on the level of basic human wants and needs? Is it not possible that at times we become so concerned with analysis of the system that we forget our basic objection as to what the system does to people?

Why, to attack it from another direction, do most of us feel it necessary to present the statement of some academic as a public legitimization of our views? Is it not sufficient that these views are ours?

Why do we quote numbers of weapons captured, the true nature, as we see it of the National Liberation Front, the love of all Vietnamese for Ho Chi Minh, and numerous other statistics in an effort to justify our position on Vietnam? Few lines are spent, in our call for this march, in dealing with what the war is doing to the American people....not only the people being organized by ERAP, but the psychological effect on the great middle-class. We are denying the humanity of the Vietnamese and denying our own humanity. Every American who does nothing is as guilty of genocide as any German who let Hitler do his dirty work. Why don't we speak of the psychology of the American soldier? Is the entire system amoral? If we believe it, why don't we say it?

(To depart from sobriety, why doesn't the NLF adopt non-violence? They'd win within weeks).

(4) Ninety-nine per cent of all Americans don't understand at all the idea of cooperation between human beings to build a better life together. It seems that we don't understand it either. A constant exchange of letters on whatever current crisis seems to necessarily turn into a game of intellectual one-upmanship. At the December NC, Tom Hayden asked why we all couldn't love one another. If we can't do this, how can we ask others to do this?

Many of these are old questions within SDS. Some of them are undoubtedly the wrong questions. I am not certain that my position on any of these is correct, and I would point out that each question does not necessarily reflect my personal viewpoint.

I do believe, however, that there has been a serious absence of dialogue on the state of SDS itself during the past year. I hope this memo will stimulate such a dialogue.

Steve Bookshester
Roosevelt University SDS
Chicago, Illinois

COMMUNITY THEATER

506 East 6th St.
New York 9, N.Y.

Dear Roger Mancla:

Thank you very much for your letter. I am not so sure that I am the right person to answer your questions and to make positive suggestions. The situation is clear and I agree fully with the conclusions that you draw. The nature of radical theater is fitting to the setting of urban slums.

We started to play-much too late - last fall in the streets of the Lower East Side. We built ourselves a gold-glittering, sort of cheap television imitation stage and played modern Punch and Judy, supertall, hit the landlord and the cop on the head - for which we got blamed and had to leave them alive as much as possible. I ran around with a one-man band - drums, cymbels, kids horns, etc. - outfit and a big frightening animal mask on me and rounded up the kids in the street. The other show that we did in the streets during this fall project was the rat movie: a paperscroll or cranky, as we call it, where a story is pulled through a little wooden machine - a comic book take off. Both were radical social message plays - and so are more or less obvious - all of them. But they are all more happenings than plays - never written down and could not possibly serve as a pattern for another group. Both music and dialogue are improvised and I start often enough rehearsals just with some puppets and no story line at all. And let me utter one bit of scepticism towards a socially-politically oriented theater: the unconscious message, your own conviction, the things that you really believe in - they express themselves in your theater anyway, you need not advertise them with a political cliché of the day.

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I feel that the revolutionary items of our theater are clearer and clearer in the plays where we didn't care for them - rather than in those plays where we try to persuade. But: we are still learning and I want to learn more about the street and how to really play for everybody, not loosing our track and own convictions. So this year, April and May probably, we will put on the Crucifixion as a street play.

What you say you'll try sounds very good and healthy to me. Unfortunately I am a poor man myself and besides having to feed my theater, have trouble feeding my own large family of six. So I plan to go around with some little puppet shows this summer. Else I would love to work with you.

Good luck and let me know what you are doing.

Peter Schumann
The Bread and Puppet Theater is at 148 Delancy (corner Suffolk) OR 7-6380.

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Third Class

MARCH ON WASHINGTON

APRIL 17

To End The War In Viet Nam

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