

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Democrats skirt responsibility

The Multnomah County Democratic Central Committee failed miserably in its responsibility to Democratic Party members and the citizens of Oregon in general when they so watered down their resolution against a sales tax and its supporters that they might as well have stayed home.

The amendment approved by the executive committee, and referred to the body, said the county party would not acknowledge legislative candidates who vote for placing the sales tax on the ballot and would announce their lack of support prior to the primary election. It too generously forgave those legislators for their wrong votes during the session just ended.

The final version, adopted by the Central Committee, says, "the Multnomah County Democratic Central Committee provide all precinct committeepeople with the voting records of all Multnomah County State Representatives and Senators on the priority issues adopted by the State Central Committee on January 29, 1983 at least eight days prior to straw balloting for MCDCC endorsement of candidates in the next primary elections...."

Bid deal! The committee endorsements are a

farce because many times only half a dozen people are present to vote on a specific race and most voters never hear about the endorsement anyway.

The only way the Democratic Party will have any influence over the office holders who use its name is to punish those who blatantly ignore the party platform: denounce them, withhold money and volunteer help, advise the voters not to vote for them.

This namby pamby skirting around the issue will not help the people of Oregon or the party. The proof of this is that the Democratic legislative leadership is right now advocating placing a sales tax on the ballot, while the Republican legislators and a Republican governor are opposing the sales tax.

The Democratic Party cannot condemn the Democratic legislators for abdicating their responsibility while avoiding its own.

The time has come for the voters to organize, to form committees and coalitions, and to find and support their own candidates. A real grassroots movement could replace many of those who are elected again and again based on a familiar face and a pocket full of money.

Workers still struggle for rights

Labor Day, September 5th, has been christened Solidarity Day III by the AFL-CIO and rallies are planned throughout the nation to protest the racist, militaristic, anti-poor, anti-labor and sexist policies of the Reagan administration.

The conditions of today closely parallel those that existed when the first Labor Day was declared in 1882 by the New York Central Labor Union. This was a 10-year period of violence against labor, increasing technology, increasing exploitation of workers and increasing monopolization.

The root of the militant and independent ideology of labor leaders was the failure of the Civil War to emancipate the working people of the in-

dustrial North. Organized labor had supported the North and filled the ranks of the Union Army, believing workers could not be free as long as slavery existed. William Sylvis, organizer of the first national union, repeatedly spoke of the need for free Blacks and for workers of all races to unite in unions. When the war was over the soldiers found the industrialists had made fortunes and they were returning to be industrial slaves.

An all-out drive to break the unions and cut back wages and benefits is underway, using the Reagan administration-induced unemployment and poverty as leverage against workers who are fighting to retain their hard-won rights.

Letters to the Editor

Fadeley supplies tax facts

To the Editor:

Oregonians have heard only about twenty percent of the facts about the last legislative session. Here are important facts they haven't heard.

The sales tax passed by the House in the last session was designed to increase State of Oregon General Fund taxes by \$800 million a year. This represents a proposed increase of over one-half in state general fund taxes. The sales tax was much broader in coverage than either California or Washington sales taxes. Most services like dry cleaning, hair cuts, a house call by your plumber, etc. were to be taxed at 4 cents on the dollar, as well as retail sales. Some have said failure of that proposal was a failure to provide tax relief.

The State of Oregon has not levied property taxes for over forty years. However, local governments and schools' property tax levies have increased statewide by 51 percent in the last three years. At the same time the income of all Oregonians statewide has remained about level. It is easy to understand why people feel pinched by the local property tax growth rate and by tax increases in general. They don't have any increased ability to pay taxes.

The Legislature provided property tax relief, despite claims to the contrary. Direct property tax relief totalling \$411 million will be paid to or for homeowners and renters in this two-year budget period through the existing HARRP program and the general all home-

owners and renters program.

Other state payments for the next two years which reduce the demand for property taxes are \$917 million in aid to local school districts, \$104 million for community colleges, \$25 million of local court costs, and millions of dollars of other state payments. All of these latter state-paid amounts have increased since the last state budget.

Did the state have money to pay these increases? Only by continuing cigarette and income tax increases made in 1981-82, and by increasing the tax per person. These totalled \$419 million. Direct payments to homeowners and renters were \$411 million which, with administrative costs, almost equals the amount of increase voted.

Did the state government need this money for its own operations? No. General property tax relief was started by state government in 1978. Since then it has applied five billion, one hundred forty-five million dollars of state-collected taxes to fund direct property tax relief and basic school support and other aids to local government. If state government had kept back this money, it would be enough to fund all state government activities at current levels for the next six years — without another nickel of state taxes being collected during that time span.

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Portland Observer

The Portland Observer (USPS 959-680) is published every Thursday by Exie Publishing Company, Inc., 2201 North Killingsworth, Portland, Oregon 97217. Post Office Box 3137, Portland, Oregon 97208. Second class postage paid at Portland, Oregon.

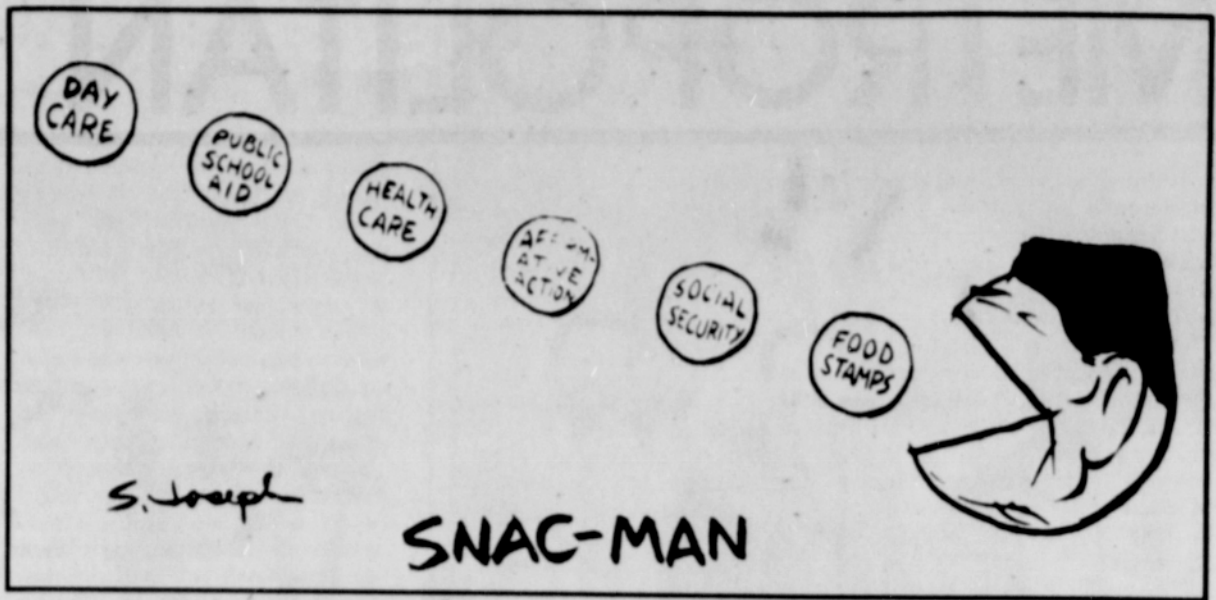
The Portland Observer was established in 1970. Subscriptions: \$15.00 per year in the Tri-County area. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Portland Observer, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, Oregon 97208.



283-2486

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United Nations hears charge of United States' Black genocide

Nelson Johnson, Co-Convenor of the National Black Organizers Committee, and plaintiff in the Greensboro Civil Rights Suit, charged genocide of Black Americans by the U.S. government in a speech before the United Nations Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination meeting in Geneva, Switzerland.

Mr. Johnson decried "the dramatic growth in racism and racist violence in the United States which... is fostered by the U.S. government and has profound implications for racial groups within the U.S. and for the peoples of the world."

The conference was the second to be held as part of the "Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination" sponsored by the United Nations. Its goal is the eradication of racism worldwide and in particular the end of the policies of apartheid in South Africa. The conference was attended by officials from over one hundred countries, with only the United States and Israel boycotting the assembly and the decade.

Mr. Johnson cited at least 30 acts of Ku Klux Klan violence and racist terror occurring in his home state, North Carolina, in 1983. He referred to the evidence of federal involvement in the Ku Klux Klan that has surfaced in investigations of the November 3, 1979, Greensboro Massacre, as demonstration of links between the growing terror and federal police agencies. Since 1979, media reports and court testimony have revealed that two federal agents were actively organizing the Klan and Nazi groups that came together to shoot and kill a Black woman and four white men at the anti-Klan demonstration in Greensboro. All five killed were textile union and community organizers in the area.

The attacks on Black people, however, are not limited to Klan violence, according to Johnson. He referred to widespread legal attacks on Black leadership that have left more than 50% of all elected Black officials under investigation or indictment. "This makes a mockery of the electoral process, not to speak of the right of the African-American nation to self-determination."

The broadening of FBI powers to conduct domestic investigation of political groups under the new "Smith Guidelines" — "to spy, tap phones, frame, and even murder Black leaders" — is a potential escalation of the FBI's present illegal conduct toward Black people and their leadership.

In 1951 a petition charging genocide of Black Americans was presented to the United Nations General Assembly by 94 United States citizens including Paul Robeson and W.E.B. Dubois. The petition documented thousands of incidents of racist violence and discrimination. No action was ever taken by the U.N. on the charge. Mr. Johnson said that his statement was a renewal of that original protest.

The United States government's refusal to participate in this conference or in the associated Decade to Combat Racism was denounced in a statement read by Johnson that was prepared and signed by a group of individuals and Non-Governmental Organizations attending the conference from the United States. According to that statement, "In refusing to participate in this conference or the Decade, the United States government is underscoring its insensitivity to the causes and effects of racism and racial discrimination. This insensitivity comes at a most critical time for race relations within our own country; deteriorating economic conditions are foster-

ing even more open and violent manifestations of racism."

The citizens group denounced the "extensive economic, social and political ties with the apartheid regime of South Africa, lending support which is critical to apartheid's survival." The statement called on "people of the United States of America to demand that our government constructively participate in future United Nations programs to combat racism and racial discrimination and in plans of action coming out of this conference."

Johnson, in his speech, also attacked and drew parallels between racism in the United States and support of apartheid by the U.S. government and interventionist plans in Central America. "The United States government has to intensify racism and repression domestically in order to continue to strengthen its support of racism, apartheid and oppression internationally." He cited a merger of the ideologies of racism and anti-communism by the Reagan administration as cover for its policies.

A call was given to the body to "condemn the dramatic increase in racism, racial discrimination and racist violence perpetuated and supported by the United States government against racial groups within its own borders," to be coupled with an acknowledgement of the definite relationship between the increase in racism, racial discrimination and racist violence within the United States and the ability of the United States government to support apartheid in Southern Africa; that it is only with the strengthening of the ideology and practice of racism within the United States is the U.S. government able to keep its people confused, divided and unable to effectively combat the continued support of that criminal South Africa."

CIA busy in North Africa

While great attention is being given by the U.S. press to the role of Libya in the civil war in Chad, the role of the CIA in setting up the situation that now threatens to spread into a major confrontation goes largely unnoticed.

The United States has had a long-standing interest in Chad as part of its effort to expand U.S. presence in North Africa. The current escalation of U.S. aid to Chad has met with opposition by the Organization of African Unity, which has asked for withdrawal of all foreign troops and a negotiated settlement. France, also, is angry because of reported U.S. pressure to increase its own military aid to its former colony.

A review of the history of Chad's conflict demonstrates that the U.S. has had direct involvement as well as using surrogates.

In 1960, Chad gained independence from France along with other African nations. The landlocked desert country had little opportunity for economic development and remained dependent on France. Ngarta Tombalbaye was named president, but there was mistrust between the French-influenced south and the Muslim north, which had really never been conquered by the French.

In 1965 the Chad National Liberation Front (FROLINAT) was formed and the rebellion began. French troops intervened in 1968, but the Front remained active.

President Tombalbaye was removed by a military coup in 1975 and replaced by General Felix

Malloum.

FROLINAT, in which Goukouni Quedde and Hissein Habre were rivals, gained control of the northern third of Chad. Habre joined Malloum's "national reconciliation movement" but FROLINAT continued to fight under Goukouni's leadership. Another French intervention prevented victory.

By the time the government of Malloum fell, in 1979, Habre was his defense minister. The neighboring states of Nigeria, Libya, Sudan, Camaroon and Niger set up a peace conference under OAU auspices. The Transitional Government of National Unity (GUNT) was established, including eleven major groups, and Quedde became president.

Later that year Habre attempted to overthrow the legitimate government, GUNT. In October of 1980, at Quedde's request, Libya sent several thousand troops to support GUNT and by December Habre's troops were pushed back to Sudan, where they received aid from Sudan, Egypt and the CIA.

Both France and the U.S. were concerned about Libya's involvement in Chad. When Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Mitterrand met at Cancun in October of 1981, France pushed for the establishment of an "inter-African" peace force to replace Libyan troops. Reagan pledged \$12 million in military aid and sent \$10 million to Habre through Sudan and Egypt.

In December Quedde and the OAU agreed to the peacekeeping

force and Libyan forces withdrew. France's former colonies, Zaire and Senegal, sent the first troops. The Reagan administration transported these troops to Chad and used its aid to justify stationing U.S. military personnel in Chad to "monitor" its use. GUNT was still recognized as the government of Chad.

As soon as Libya withdrew Habre, bolstered by \$10 million in U.S. covert aid and arms for Sudan and Egypt, launched an attack and easily overcame the government troops. Habre made himself president.

This summer, GUNT, led by Quedde launched an effort to retake Chad. Quedde called together the leadership of the organization, religious and ethnic groups and they formed the "National Liberation Army."

The Reagan administration immediately approved \$25 million in military aid to Habre. This effort was accompanied by troops from Zaire, which are trained by Israel and transported by the U.S. Foreign mercenaries who have fought in Congo, Angola, Seychelles and Samores under the leadership of Bob Devand, a man under a death sentence in many nations in Africa, were recruited along with Belgian and French mercenaries.

The Reagan administration is lined up with some of the most reactionary forces in Africa, opposing the legitimate government of Chad, and blaming the whole affair on Libya's Moammar Khadafi.



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