

SDS ASSAULT ON LABOR

HON. JOHN R. RARICK

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1969

Mr. RARICK. Mr. Speaker, reports now indicate a concerted effort is underway to unite the professional students from the campus riots with the organized labor movement in a continued timetable to terrorize and disrupt our society.

The escalation of bloodshed, riots, sabotage, and anarchy by design continues—soon even our national leaders will not be able to ignore or mitigate the war at home in our cities and on our campuses.

How bad does it need become before we act?

I ask that a report by Victor Riesel and an article by Robert Dudnick from the Marxist Guardian for March 8, 1969, follow:

[From Human Events, Mar. 8, 1969]

STUDENT REBELS SET TO DISRUPT NATION'S BIG INDUSTRIAL PLANTS

Youth power apparently is finding the world of the campus too confining. The youthful lions of the SDS, the Black Panthers, and an assorted alliance of self-styled revolutionists are moving their direct action over into the less esoteric world of work—onto the picket lines, into the giant plants of the industrial belts, and even into big union headquarters.

From Long Beach and Los Angeles, Calif., to the "rag jungle" of New York's skyscraper garment area, extremists have taken time out from upending their university grounds to stir upheavals on picket lines. And where they've found no picket lines, they've invented them.

Shots have been fired. Police have been attacked. Blazes have been started in Detroit auto factories. At least one Chrysler plant labor relations representative has been stabbed.

In January, SDS activists from local campuses fanned Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers picket lines. Plant personnel were hit. Fuel trucks were shot at, cops were jumped. The SDS slogan, obviously worked up from pads belonging to the Maoist Progressive Labor faction, said, in effect, the hell with the picket lines captains, we are starting a student alliance with the working class.

Not all SDS is united on this activist working class ideological coalition. But there are enough extremists to whip up and man the new movement within the movement.

In the Detroit area, which I just toured, the student support springs mainly from Wayne State University. There the militants are really up tight and turned on. Their publication, the "South End," recently was characterized by the university president as "disturbingly reminiscent of Hitler Germany." Some of the extremists talk of the truth and accurate reporting as fairy tale stuff of the Establishment.

Local 961, which has jurisdiction over the plant. Local union leaders, not wishing any disturbance, let the movement people sit in.

Two weeks after the wildcat strike on February 10, ELRUM's operators picketed Solidarity House, the big union's national headquarters in Detroit. Again, Black Panthers were reported on the picket lines.

Finally they were admitted and conferred with Shelton Tappes, one of the UAW Fair Labor Practices Department staff. Some of the talk was rough and unprintable, even by today's uptight standards.

Actually, there's no dealing with the RUM

crowd. It won't have it. Though over 60 per cent of one plant is manned by black workers, RUM asks for more and then curtly demands full managerial control.

One of the city's most respected leaders simply gave up any attempt at mediating the Panther-protected bands' alleged grievances.

"It's futile," he told a caller. "Those young people of DRUM say democracy doesn't work and they'll physically destroy the existing establishment. Obviously that unprogrammed so-called revolutionary action is moving from the colleges into the industrial field.

"We've had fires and stabbings in the plant, where thousands of workers are being trained. We do our best to upgrade, to train foremen and move as swiftly as we can in a modern industry. But nothing helps. It's those university fellows over at Wayne State here—and you'll see it flare around the nation."

Grimly he suggested that soon SDS will be known as Shut Down the Shops. It could well be. Those chaps always seek new horizons. And who can deny that picketing was their best course at college?

[From Guardian, Mar. 8, 1969]

BLACK STORM RAGES IN AUTO PLANT

(By Robert Dudnick, Guardian staff correspondent)

"The change we speak of is nothing more than taking the ownership of the means of production out of the hands of a few who don't work and putting it into the hands of the workers who do all the back-breaking work that makes the nigger-hater in this country rich." Dodge Revolutionary Movement.

DETROIT.—A specter haunts Detroit that tomorrow will haunt the nation. It is the specter of black revolution in basic industry—the unity of national struggle and class struggle. A week of investigation here indicates that the Detroit black workers movement is the most important revolutionary action in the country.

All the elements are here. The vanguard is here. The workers are here. The guts of monopoly capitalism's production are here. And the conditions are worsening in Detroit's auto plants.

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers operate from an office at 9049 Oakland in one of the city's black ghettos. It is made up of three black worker organizations—the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM), the Ford Revolutionary Union Movement (FRUM) and the Eldon Ave. Revolutionary Movement (ELRUM), at Chrysler Corp's only gear and axle plant. Joining it soon will be JARUM, the Jefferson Ave. Revolutionary Union Movement, at another Chrysler plant.

Since DRUM started at Dodge Main in Hamtramck, a suburb surrounded by Detroit, the movement has caught fire to the extent that the league plans to organize black workers wherever they are—not only in Detroit and not only in auto.

But the black insurgency would have a tremendous effect even if it were limited to this city's auto plants. If they can be shut down, steel, rubber and glass will totter, too. And there is enough black muscle here to shut them down tight.

Those in the driver's seat of the multibillion dollar auto industry are worried. The United Auto Workers union, run by Walter Reuther from the seek Solidarity House here, is also worried. Both have tried to buy off the workers.

"We have also been informed by a reliable source that the company (Ford) has instructed some union officials (of UAW Local 600) to kill one of our people as an example and they have promised that the Dearborn police will not even arrest them," Mike Hamlin of the league's central committee said. Two factors appear to have led to the

black labor insurgency. One is the general black liberation movement, which has increased its pace and deepened its analysis since the old civil rights movement. The other is DRUM, FRUM and ELRUM's ability to link that struggle to immediate conditions facing black auto workers.

PRAYER MEETINGS

At Ford's Rouge complex in suburban Dearborn, a town even worse than Dodge's Hamtramck, there is particular concern about the engine plant, where some of the hardest work is done. Before FRUM, conditions were so bad that some workers who are part-time preachers were holding prayer meetings during breaks with company consent. One assembly line is supposed to have a maximum production of 136 units an hour. But it often runs at as much as 172 units an hour. Even the lower figure is considered dangerous to health and safety.

The UAW, born of violence and militancy in the 1930s, finally organized Ford in 1942, the last major auto producer to sign a union contract. Since then, it has done nothing for the black worker. In the Ford engine plant, for example, few grievances are filed for black workers. The contract says union shop stewards are supposed to work the line four hours a shift and attend to union business the other four hours. But in return for not filing grievances, the company allows them "to spend the entire eight hours doing nothing," a FRUM spokesman said.

Meanwhile, conditions at Dodge Main had led to five wildcat strikes before some young blacks helped lead a walkout on May 2, 1968. Although Detroit's black revolutionaries had always had a working-class outlook, they had not had much success until that month.

Vanguard elements were grouped around the Inner City Voice, which started publication in September 1967 after the city's black rebellion as the successor to the Black Vanguard, which ceased in 1964. The tiny Voice group had a long history in the black struggle and was able to mobilize its base around the paper.

THE ORIGINAL NINE

Nine assembly line workers came to the Voice group in 1968 and began working with a staff member who was fired from an auto plant for participating in a wildcat. They developed a revolutionary analysis and began publishing the DRUM newsletter.

At first the newsletter was written entirely by the workers, exposing conditions in the plant. But because, as one of the Voice staff members put it, "you can't build movements on exposes," the Voice group began "integrating ourselves with the workers" and writing political articles for the newsletter. Blacks from the streets and the Voice group distributed the newsletter at the plant, leading the company to charge that the Northern-style cotton choppers were being stirred up by "outside agitators."

"By the eighth week of the newsletter," Hamlin recalled, "the plant was in an uproar." Black workers were seething for a strike and DRUM membership was growing. "The company began to walk softly and the union was in chaos," he said.

The leadership agreed with the demand to strike and Dodge Main was hit on July 8, 1968. The nine workers and the Voice staff mobilized militant community elements and manned picket lines, with the in-plant leadership talking to workers 100 yards from the picketers. Had they been any closer at that stage, they would have been fired.

The picketers stopped only black workers—about 70% of the workforce—and the wildcat was a "tremendous success," closing the plant Friday and Monday (weekends are not worked). This was possible because nearly all black workers stayed out.

"We were learning," Hamlin said. "We struck because the workers demanded a strike," but did not continue past the two

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days because DRUM did not have the organization to run a protracted strike. The strike was seen as a test of what DRUM could do.

A surge of membership hit DRUM after the walkout—from Dodge Main and other plants as well. The organization went into a "very serious" effort to tighten structure while increasing organizing activities.

Meanwhile, DRUM began to move on the UAW another way—in Local 3 elections. Although DRUM considers itself an independent black workers organization, not an old-fashioned caucus, it tries to keep its tactics supple to fit the situation. DRUM entered union politics to demonstrate its power and raise consciousness.

DRUM candidate Ron March led in the preliminary election for trustee, winning 653 votes to 521 for Joe Elliot, a white man backed by the Local 3 leadership. But even this was in doubt—DRUM charges many votes were stolen from March.

Cars with March posters were ticketed and delayed on election day by Hamtramck police. Cops swept through bars near the union hall, beating black workers. White workers and cars bearing other posters were not harassed.

About 50 black workers went to the Local 3 union hall to talk it over. The police, led by UAW official "Carn'nball" Selski, invaded the hall and maced the workers. They also used ax handles.

March lost the Oct. 3, 1968, runoff by what Local 3 claimed was about 700 votes. Local 3 has 10,000 members, of which 60% are black. But the local managed to mobilize more than 1300 white retirees, who are allowed to vote in UAW elections even though they no longer work.

From the beginning, DRUM had included workers at the allied Huber Ave. Foundry because they also belong to Local 3. Workers from other plants also attended DRUM meetings. "We took plants as workers came to us," Hamlin said, and workers at several area plants are beginning to organize against the auto industry's Big Three.

FRUM started when Ford workers who had been attending DRUM meetings came out with their own newsletter. The situation there was more difficult, however, because Dearborn is a company town. Ford even owns the highway into the plant. The factory is hardly as accessible as Dodge Main. "The few copies that were able to be distributed promoted an immediate and vicious reaction by the plant and the union," a central committee member said. Aside from the kill-and-go-free deal, one FRUM organizer was challenged to a duel and some UAW shop stewards have taken to waving guns in work areas.

ELRUM, the next unit, was started by one man. "We began with this one fellow," Hamlin said, "and we started publishing a newsletter at the plant. The response was the same; as a matter of fact, the response was even greater than at Dodge."

Some problems developed in ELRUM—the workers did not at first have the theoretical background of the DRUM leadership and their tactics showed it. Furthermore, ELRUM grew too fast for the structure to keep pace. But conditions were bad enough so that ELRUM had to take a revolutionary line.

Things came to a head about two months ago, when, during the eighth week of the ELRUM newsletter, 300 black workers descended on UAW Local 961 and demanded to be heard. The local's president tried to fob them off, but the workers presented a list of demands anyway.

The local adjourned its regular executive board meeting and the bureaucrats, with the 300 workers, went into a general meeting which lasted long enough for those on the afternoon shift to miss starting time.

When they returned to work the next day, 66 of the 300 were disciplined immediately and more were hit later. The discipline ranged from five days to a month off. The

workers struck, using the same tactics that had been employed at Dodge. "The plant was stopped cold, meaning that if we had shut it down for a couple of days, Chrysler would have had to start shutting down plants all across the country," Hamlin said. Chrysler has no other gear and axle plant. "It was just one day to let Chrysler feel the impact of the workers' strength."

"Chrysler moved immediately. They discharged 26 workers. Now, mind you, none of the workers at Eldon manned any pickets," Hamlin said—the support cadre did that. Among those fired were four workers with at least 20 years of seniority each.

Workers, joined by black and white radicals, resumed picketing at Solidarity House, Chrysler headquarters in Highland Park also has been picketed.

Additionally, a national boycott of all Chrysler products is being mapped so that by 1970 anyone who drives a new Chrysler Corp. car through any black ghetto "will be placing himself in grave danger." Hamlin predicts that 90% of Detroit's black people will support the boycott.

SURPLUS VALUE

Most intensive organizing has been at Dodge and the company has threatened to move the plant—built in 1924—from Hamtramck. "Wherever they build these plants," Hamlin said, "the nature of the work is such that black people will be required to do that work because the white people will not do the hard-ass work." Besides, he added, it is more profitable to use cheap labor than to automate because there is more surplus value extracted from live labor than from a machine at this point.

The league is an umbrella group for DRUM, FRUM, ELRUM and JARUM. It does not dictate policy to any of them (or to its high school affiliate, Black Student Voice), but provides a broad framework in which they can operate.

The league's central committee handles technical assistance and resembles a working general staff. Within each revolutionary union movement, however, there is a structure which covers everything from the department to the overall plant. Constituent organizations are represented by the central committee, the members of which are responsible for specific areas—editorial, treasury, intelligence and security, internal education and so on.

The leadership plays down personalities, learning from the experience of some other black organizations. Central committee members teach each other whatever particular skills they may have to develop leadership depth.

What makes it all go, however, is the base. "DRUM has no intention of abandoning the man on the line," central committee member John Watson said, "because the man on the line is DRUM: the man on the line is the basic unit of DRUM."

ABM FOLLY

HON. WM. JENNINGS BRYAN DORN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 1969

Mr. DORN. Mr. Speaker, a thin ABM system around the United States would be utter folly, comparable to building a barbed wire fence around our country to keep out enemy forces.

Mr. Speaker, if we are going to spend billions on ABM, why not put ABM in areas to intercept missiles when they are launched rather than when they begin to fall—on us? If these things really work, why not put them on barges and

ships around potential enemies rather than around ourselves?

Mr. Speaker, the following is from an address I made before the House of Representatives on March 9, 1967:

ADDRESS BY WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN DORN ON ABM SYSTEM

Mr. Speaker, such a purely defensive missile system would create a defense complex in the minds of our people, which is the first step toward defeat and destruction.

Centuries ago England made her decision to use her science and technology for offense. She built a navy that controlled the seven seas of the world for generations and even centuries. A small island with several million people—through the British Navy—influenced for good the destiny of the entire world. British art, culture, standards of living, Christianity, and representative government were spread throughout the world. If England had refused to use her science and technology, but had instead built a wall around her borders and manned it with artillery, England would not have survived and the United States as a great Nation would not be here today.

My colleagues, I cannot recall any truly great nation or great civilization in the history of the world who built an impregnable defense. France placed her hope and her destiny in a Maginot line which was crushed in a matter of hours by the offensive might of Germany—parachute troops, panzer divisions, and dive bombers. Herman Goering, commander of the German Air Force, proudly proclaimed and boasted that no bomb would ever fall on Germany. They had an anti-aircraft defense that could not be pierced. Germany was virtually destroyed by American and British airpower raining death from the skies.

The military history of our own Nation points to near tragedy. We courtmartialed Billy Mitchell because he warned the American people about airpower. When Hitler started to build panzer divisions and fleets of bombers, many of our leaders did not believe a bomb could sink a battleship. Our men were still being trained in horse cavalry, and tanks could be seen few places other than in museums. If Japan, at the time of Pearl Harbor, had had the same industrial potential as the United States, we would have lost that war in 10 minutes. We must not make that mistake again.

Greece and Rome developed offensive instrumentalities of war as the best method of defense. Alexander conquered the world with the Greek Phalanx. The Roman Legion protected for hundreds of years Rome, the eternal city, and the Italian peninsula by offensive tactics and operations in foreign lands.

The great wall of China has been pierced many times by invaders and conquerors.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe that not only the best way but the least expensive way to protect all of the American cities—not just a few cities—would be to develop spacecraft and further refine our capabilities to destroy, on a moment's notice, any potential enemy anywhere in the world. A deterrent force is our only real security. It is too late when the bombs and missiles begin to fall.

An attack base on the moon or in space will provide more security for all of us than a missile system on the ground around 25 or 50 cities. Stations or bases in space that can control the weather and currents of the sea might well deter a madman dictator and provide peace for the entire world. Spacecraft capable of raining atomic warheads from 50,000 miles in space could be an instrumentality of peace for all mankind. Manned bombers and fighters, highly trained pilots, control of the seas, and a highly trained, skilled, mobile, and modern army, and Marine Corps ready to be rushed anywhere in the world where they might be needed—these are the elements of a sound defense.