



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Pamphlet: Put People Before Profits

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[[red print]] "BUT IF THEY REALLY DO WANT US TAXPAYERS TO GIVE CHRYSLER CORPORATION A BILLION DOLLARS, THEN LET THEM GIVE US CHRYSLER CORPORATION..."[[/red print]]

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You can imagine just how much the many other Chrysler executives receive in salaries and benefits. They want our taxed to pay them a thousand million dollars to run that corporation into the ground. That is obviously a crisis of confidence.

But if they really do want us taxpayers to give them a billion dollars, then let them give us Chrysler Corporation. Then we, the taxpayers, can give it back to the Chrysler workers who will then be able to pass the profits back to the taxpayers. Or else we could eliminate profits from the industry entirely and thereby lower the process on automobiles.

There is one problem with this solution - they would call socialism - putting people before profits. But reflect upon the situation: If we took over Chrysler, I can guarantee you that we would not have a crisis of confidence.

What Chrysler Corporation proposes to do to the Dodge Main workers is nothing less than genocidal. A week ago today, I spent a few hours with a group of Dodge Main workers. As I listened to the many stories they told about workers already laid off; as I listened to their accounts of the future they themselves faced if the plant really shuts down, I became enraged beyond words.

How dare Chrysler tell thousands of workers to forget about their families, forget about the houses they are buying and turn over their mortgages to

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the banks for foreclosure! Forget about their cars - just let them be repossessed!

How dare Chrysler leave men and women stranded within their own desperation!

Can we expect any of these sisters and brothers to place any confidence whatever in the monopoly corporations of this country? As far as the Dodge Main situation is concerned, we are going to do everything in our power to prevent the shut-down. I want you to know that the workers at Dodge Main are charging you with the responsibility to organize all the pressure necessary to force the federal government to stipulate that Chrysler must - and they must absolutely - keep the Dodge Main plant open. And they must not shut down any of their

remaining operations, leaving the workers stranded.

And what about the 40-80 percent (depending on where you get your statistics) of the Black youth of our cities who have no jobs nor even the prospects of jobs? Is it any surprise that they have no confidence in the government? Meantime, the government, which has caused double-digit inflation through its military spending and support of corporation superprofits, says that inflation is the number one problem. And they say that to solve it, we have to experience a recession with an "acceptable" figure of eight to nine percent unemployment overall.

This means two or three times as much unemployment for Black workers and three or four times as much for Black women.

Can you have confidence in a President who has cynically broken every promise he has made about his commitment to developing jobs for youth?

Can you have confidence in a President who uses the human rights banner to promote anticommunism, while he remains absolutely silent when his white Southern countrymen don white robes and pointed hoods, as they set out from Selma to demand "white rights" in Montgomery? How can an advocate of human rights fail to stand up in opposition to racism?

Can we really have confidence in that kind of "confidence" man?

And how about the Rev. Ben Chavis who cannot be with us today because he continues to be imprisoned in the dungeons of North Carolina as the

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leader of the Wilmington 10? Should we really have confidence in this kind of system?

What about David Truong? - the young Vietnamese brother and patriot, sentenced to 15 years in a bizarre case of alleged espionage, in which he was entrapped on false charges by warrantless wiretaps and acts of the Carter Administration that go further than the acts for which Richard Nixon was removed.

Should David Truong have confidence in this system? Should he have confidence in the man who presumes to be our president.

Should Rev. Ben Chavis have confidence in this system and in this president? Obviously, Ben has no confidence; he labors under no such illusions. About two weeks ago, I was here in your city of Detroit and spoke to Rev. Chavis on the telephone. He asked me to appeal to you to assist him in achieving his freedom. We have formulated a petition - You should all sign it and moreover be responsible for acquiring a certain number of signatures immediately!

Last week a distinguished panel of international lawyers and judges from Sweden, India, Nigeria, Senegal, Chile, Trinidad and England completed a 20-city tour to investigate the status of human rights in these United States. They visited a score of prisons from the women's prison in Alderson, West Virginia, to the behavior control unit at Marion, Illinois; from San Quentin to the proposed Lake Placid prison on the site of next year's Winter Olympics. They were here at the invitation of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice and the U.S. Peace Council. They are now in Geneva to deliver their finding to the United Nations Subcommission on Human Rights. Let me just say that they found no grounds for confidence in this system. And they reflect world public opinion.

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[[red print]] "WE CAN BREAK THIS VICIOUS CIRCLE OF RACISM, SEXISM, UNEMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION CREATED BY THOSE WHO ALWAYS PUT PROFITS BEFORE PEOPLE..."[[red print]]

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