

AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR A  
1980 ELECTORAL STRATEGY CONFERENCE

December 13, 1978

Dear Herman Baca,

Bert Corona suggested I contact you concerning the upcoming 1980 Electoral Strategy Conference. The conference is to be held on January 6th in New York City at 777 United Nations Plaza. The Ad Hoc Committee would like you to be a guest speaker at the conference.

The Conference is geared toward the development of a national electoral strategy for the 1980 elections. As rightwing forces organize and gain ballot status, and ex-liberals-turned conservative like Carter push austerity, it is important that poor and progressive people have a strong and well organized electoral voice.

Bert Corona will also be a guest speaker at the conference as will Sam Iaccio, Vice President of the International Machinists Union, and Conrad Lynn a progressive civil rights lawyer. As well, we have invited several politicians, and other community leaders to speak.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

*Nancy Ross*

Nancy Ross (Coordinator)

1133 Broadway, rm.#517

N.Y., N.Y. 10010

212-243-7300

662-4064

# Ad Hoc Committee For a 1980 Electoral Strategy Conference

November 27, 1978

Dear Friends,

As we look toward 1980, it's clear that we as progressive community leaders, activists, politicians and trade unionists, must seriously consider how and what electoral alternatives and options are possible to build at this time. Many groupings and individuals around the country are already talking about the 1980 elections. Some are talking about the development of a people's platform, others about lobbying tactics, and many of us are seriously considering the possibility of running either pro-socialist or socialist candidates, on an independent platform in local and national Democratic primaries. The Democratic primary can be used as a platform to address pressing social issues, and as a location for progressive leaders to provide a voice for our constituencies.

This discussion about electoral tactics is an important one, and one in which we, as well as yourself, have been a part. We feel, it is time to share this discussion amongst many groupings and individuals toward the development of a 1980 electoral strategy.

Towards this end, we invite you to attend the 1980 Electoral Strategy Conference to be held on January 6, 1979, at 777 United Nations Plaza, from 9 am to 4 pm. As well, we would like to extend an open invitation to interested individuals and organizations to join the Ad Hoc Committee in preparation for the strategy conference. Please see enclosed brochure for details.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Nancy Ross*

Nancy Ross

Community School Board #3  
(Manhattan)\*

*Freda Rosen*

Freda Rosen

Coalition of Grass Roots  
Women\*

\*For identification purposes only

Join the Ad Hoc Committee for a  
Strategy Conference for the 1980 Elections!

**Electoral Strategy Conference**  
to be held  
**January 6, 1979**  
from **9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**  
at **777 U.N. Plaza, 2nd Fl.**  
(44th St. and First Ave.)  
Tickets—\$10.00

for more information, call:  
Nancy Ross - 662-4064  
Freda Rosen - 243-7300

or write to:  
Ad Hoc Committee  
1133 Broadway, Room 517  
New York, N.Y. 10010

— Sponsors —

Neter Brooks - Member, Central Queens Community  
Corporation Board\*

Conrad Lyn — Civil rights attorney

Mike Crumrine - Local Representative, Newspaper Guild,  
New York City\*

Mark Picard - Alternative Delegate, the National Union  
of Hospital and Health Care Employees,  
District 1199\*

Nancy Ross - Member, Community School Board,  
District 3, Manhattan\*

Freda Rosen - Coordinator of "Don't Mourn,  
ORGANIZE!"; Coordinator, International Task  
Force of the Coalition of Grass Roots Women

Jackie Salit - Community organizer, New York City;  
Coordinator, Neighborhood Labor Relations Task  
Force of the National Association of Neighborhoods\*

\*organization listed for identification purposes only.

I would like more information.

I want to attend the January 6th Electoral Strategy Conference, enclosed is my \$10 registration fee.  
 Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ (number of people) who will be attending the conference.  
(Please list names and organizational affiliations)

Organizational Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

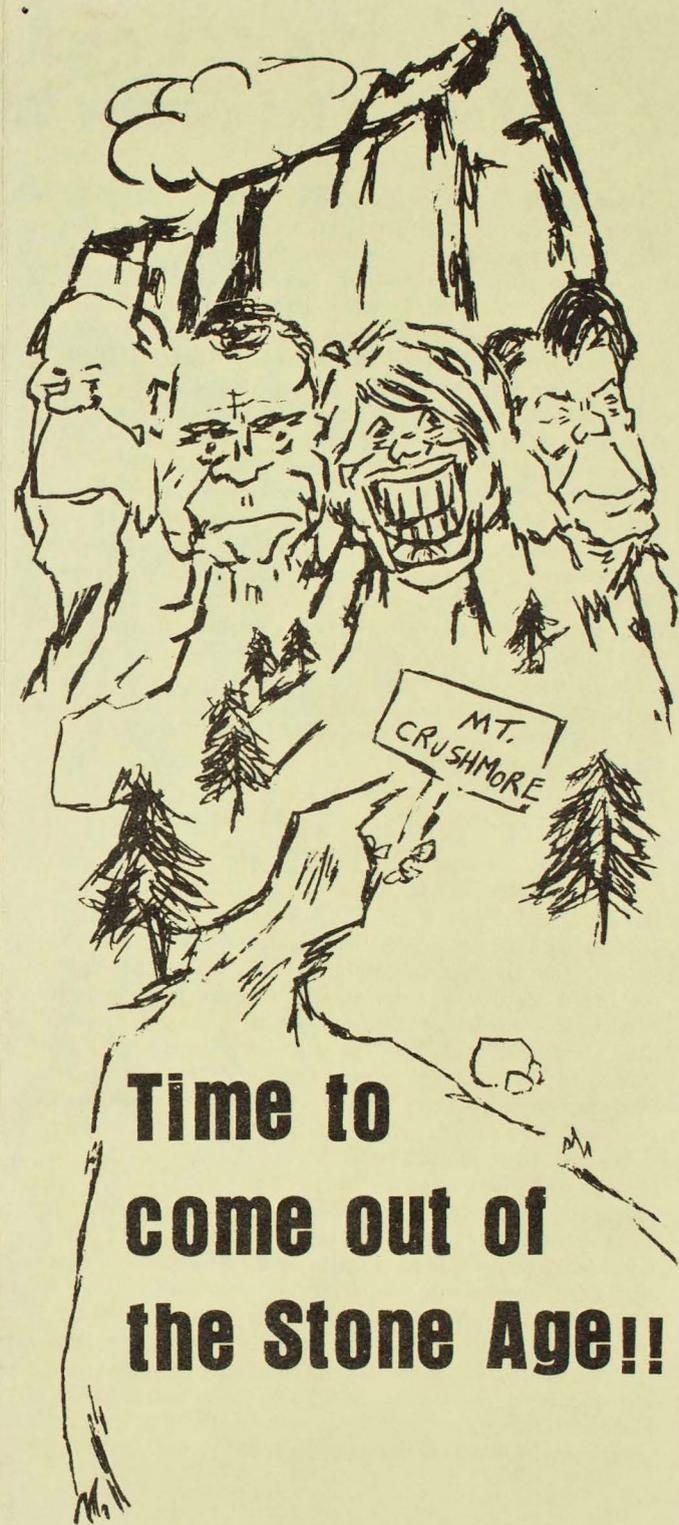
Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

— Registration Form —  
January 6, 1979 Electoral Strategy Conference



# Come to the January Conference to Develop a Strategy for the 1980 Elections!

Despite the progressive social activism of the 1960s, the 1970s began with Richard Nixon's scowling face in the White House and poverty, racism, sexism and imperialism **on the rise**. Watergate bounced Nixon, bumbling Gerald Ford took over, forgave Nixon, and immediately intensified the attacks on the gains of the 1960s. Millions became more and more demoralized, Ford tripped, carrying the Republican Party banner going down to defeat at the hands of the smiling Georgian. "Get the Republicans out of the White House" was the frustrated and frightened cry as economic conditions worsened. The Democrats offered us their Trilateral candidate, Jimmy Carter, who made promises of liberal reforms. Labor, Blacks, other minorities, women, middle class liberals, and others reluctantly bought the promises (the alternative was Ford!), enough to put Jimmy in office. In short order the Democratic Party began splitting apart at the seams. The crisis of U.S. society at home and abroad made it impossible for the pro-business Carter and his Democratic Party to keep their promises and thereby to buy off its constituencies as it could in the 1960s. Labor, Blacks, and other minorities, women and liberals, rapidly realized that they had no friend in Peanuts.

## Past to Present

The Democratic and Republican parties established themselves following the Civil War as the dominant parties of big business—the Republicans favoring emancipation; the Democrats the party of the former slave owners. Both parties developed during an epoch which saw the **extraordinary** development of U.S. big business. The Democratic Party over the decades gained the reputation as the more progressive (and eventually became the more dominant) by virtue of the electoral coalition it formed. While that coalition is rapidly dissolving, it was still sufficient for Carter to ride to victory (albeit a narrow one!) on the coat-tails of organized labor, the poor, Blacks, women and middle class liberals. In these times, the task of the two dominant parties is to **save the rule of big business**; a task that many believe to be ultimately impossible, not to mention undesirable. As the 1970s wear on and more and more promises are broken, many are becoming completely disenamored of the Democratic Party, including those liberal progressive politicians within it who find it harder and harder to come back to their communities and face their constituencies with empty hands.

Understandably then, nothing is being talked about more these days than inflation, unemployment, crime, etc., **and** whether the two party system can survive.

Many have said for years that we must register people to vote. But masses of people have resisted, recognizing that there are no real choices and therefore the vote is meaningless. Finally, progressives are realizing that in order for people to exercise their voting power it is necessary to develop electoral alternatives that people believe in. Many progressive groupings and individuals throughout this country are already talking seriously about the 1980 elections and are considering running progressive (socialist or pro-socialist) candidates in the Democratic primaries. In various ways such organizations and individuals as the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), Doug Fraser and the United Automobile Workers of America (UAW), William Winpisinger and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), Associated Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), supporters of Congressman Ron Dellums, National Association of Neighborhoods (NAN), the New York Poor and Working People's Party (NYPWPP), and others are discussing these matters.

## A Plan for the Future

The Ad Hoc Committee for a Strategy Conference for the 1980 Elections wants to participate in this growing dialogue and hopefully in the ensuing political activity. It is very important that we exacerbate the ever-present contradictions within the Democratic Party for two primary reasons: (1) on a defensive level, it is necessary in order to combat the well organized center right-moving tendency within the Democratic Party, so that there can be as much support as possible for the more liberal progressive elements within it who are working for reforms such as real job programs, anti-poverty programs, ERA, free abortion, etc., and (2) we believe it is necessary to attract the most viable elements currently in it towards a more progressive independent politic. Therefore, Don't Mourn, ORGANIZE! (a communications network of grass roots organizers), the NYPWPP and other concerned political activists and labor and community leaders have formed an Ad Hoc Committee for a Strategy Conference for the 1980 Elections, to be held in January, 1979 in New York City. The Ad Hoc Committee hopes to form a new electoral coalition out of

this conference. The coalition will participate in the developing coalition of coalitions which was discussed at the UAW-sponsored conference this Fall.

The general perspective going into the conference is to support candidates entering Democratic primary races in 1980 (national, state and local) who would campaign on a pro-socialist independent platform. If these candidates **lost** the Democratic primary, they would be encouraged to run in the general election as an independent socialist or pro-socialist candidate. If they **won** the Democratic primary (on pro-socialist platforms; a real possibility in certain local elections and not out of the question in national primaries if, for example, we attract a candidate like Ron Dellums for president) they would appear on the ballot in the general election as the Democratic Party candidate **and also** be encouraged to run as an independent candidate on a separate line (where possible). The cutting edge of the campaign at that point would be to educate people to vote for her/him as a pro-socialist independent, rather than as a Democrat. In other words, she/he would campaign as the Democratic primary winner (who won the primary on an independent platform, including the call for an independent party) and who therefore wants to be elected as an independent. We envision employing this tactic at the local, state and national levels. While this perspective has been thought about by many coming to the conference, the meeting will be open to a wide range of ideas for a 1980 electoral strategy.

## Join Us Today!

We urge all of you to join in this very important effort by joining the Ad Hoc Committee and representing your constituencies at the Conference. Join us in the beginning stages of building a new third party, a genuine people's party which must be built by the most progressive elements of organized labor, independent unions, organizations of the poor, Blacks, other oppressed minorities, Asian Americans, Native Americans, women, gays, anti-imperialist groupings, prisoners, etc.

The right, with much support from Big Business, is organizing for a showdown. We must make sure that the 1970s do not go out as they came in. A scowling Richard Nixon and a smiling Jimmy Carter are but two faces of conservatism. We must begin building a genuine People's Party today! Join the Ad Hoc Committee now and begin building for the January Electoral Strategy Conference.